

# RANCHI BULLETIN



76/10

Ranchi Jesuits, Sadbhavna P.B. - 4, Ranchi - 834 001, Jharkhand

OCTOBER 2017

## Fr. Provincial's Programmes

### October 2017

Oct. 2-17 : Visitation – Guyana Jesuit Mission along with the Provincial of Karnataka

Oct. 21-30: JCSA Meeting in Ahmadabad

### November 2017

Nov. 7-11 : Off to Delhi

Nov. 11 : Back to Ranchi

Nov. 16-19: Visitation – Sogra-Jharain-Rengarih

Nov. 22-23: Visitation – Bardih-Noadih-Tongo

Nov. 24 : Visitation – Soso

Nov. 28-29: Joint Meeting of Major Superiors with Bishops and CRI (GB Meeting of various Registered Societies in November-December)

## Appointments by Fr. General

(1) Fr. Amrit Lakra, SJ, as the Rector of Manresa House, Ranchi. He will take office on 15 November 2017. Fr. General has also promoted him to the four vows.

(2) Fr. Xavier Soreng, SJ, as a Province Consulter in the place of Fr. George Kerketta, SJ

**Priestly ordinations:** Deacon Rajesh Sandil, SJ, on 7 January 2018 at Bundu Parish

Deacon Pradeep Soreng, SJ, on 15 January 2018 at Jampani Parish

Deacon John Jyoti Kujur, SJ, on 21 January 2018 at Rengarih Parish

Deacon Bipin Lugun, SJ, on 28 January 2018 at Pandripani Parish

Congratulations for taking the final vows in the Society of Jesus!

1. Fr. Laurentus Kiro, SJ, took his final vows on 30 September 2017 at Manas Bansbari, Assam

2. Fr. Florence Guria, SJ, took his final vows on 15 October 2017 at St. Ignatius' HS, Gumla

## St. Ignatius' HS, Gumla

On the very first day of the month a disheartening news came from Delhi Football Stadium that our Team under 14 had lost in the Quarter Final by 0-1 to Mizoram. Better luck the next time! The 2 September was the pilgrimage day to Karondabera. Our Apostolic boys went there in two buses. The Death Anniversary of Fr. Van Nuffel, SJ, falls on 3 September. But that being a Sunday this year, it was observed jointly on 4 September in front of his life-size statue by the AROUSE and the School. Br. J. Prakash went to Ranchi for Brothers' Meeting on this day.

Sister Anita Braganza, the Provincial Superior of the Loreto Sisters visited with Sr. Marione, two of her sisters at St Ignatius' on 4 September. We missed the Birth Day of Br. Prakash on 5 September, just an oversight by the office of Fr. Rector. It is regretted. So we wished him on 6 September, we shall not to forget the next year. This year the Teachers' Day was boycotted by our school because of the non-payment of government salaries for nearly six months. So as a mark of protest they tied black ribbon and carried on with the usual class routine. The English Medium School, however, celebrated it with great fun. Fr. John Lakra lost his eldest sister at the Lalganj Village, Tongo. Fr. Pradeep and Rector accompanied John to go home for the burial. Fr. Rector, Headmaster, Praful and Anuranjan went to Ranchi Manresa House for one day strategic planning seminar.

This year Our Munna Cup Tournament was played from 8 to 10 September where 24 teams had come. It was concluded on 10 September with the final match. Prabhat Tara Dhurwa was the champion and St Ignatius' was the runners-up. On the same day was a grand Karam Milan organized by the AROUSE in the campus where 28 teams, even from villages participated. Mr. Punai Oraon, former DDC Gumla, was the Chief Guest. The rain disturbed the function, so the teams rushed to the School Hall where it was concluded around 5.00 pm. Our Football team was champion in the Basia Day and Night Football Tournament. The Headmaster, Manohar, Praful and Florence witnessed the match in the flood light. The

School Teachers all the same celebrated the Teachers' Day on 12 September. The CHILDLINE team went to Jashpurnagar to visit the Collab. Centre over there. Fr. Erentius went to Don Bosco School Gumla as a team member of **Adhyayan** to do the internal evaluation of the School for three days. On 15 September there was the final vows ceremony at the Ursuline Convent where three of us went to the solemn Mass in the Cathedral. On 8 September there was the School Managing Committee meeting. Mrs. Sabina was thanked for her service for one term and Mrs. Jayanti Tirkey was welcomed as a new member *in absentia*. The President thanked Fr. Headmaster as he was going to retire on 30 September 2017. Four of our Religious Staff and other government approved staff went to Ranchi for a Dharna and *juloos* to the *Vidhan Sabha* on 19 September in protest against the non-payment of salary. They were assured of disbursement very soon. There was an interview conducted on 20 September for a Project Coordinator in the AROUSE where 6 candidates turned up. Two were short listed. In the Hostel "A" block Gandhi House celebrated the Day on 21 September in anticipation of 2 October when they would be in Holidays. The Puja Holidays began from 23 till 2 October. Fr. Florence went to Jharna Namkum to make his retreat before his final vows fixed on 15 October 2017. Mr. Roudolf, our retired Teacher, had invited our community to the House blessing on 24 September and the engagement of his daughter on 25 September. On 26 September the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** came to the AROUSE and under the name of Sadbhavna Manch shot photographs of the oath taking ceremony. It was published in the Hindi daily, The Hindustan. On 27 September Fr. Vijay went for a home visit for three days. On 28 September evening some four of us went to the Ursuline Convent to hear confessions of 45 retreatants from all over Gumla Province. From an excursion trip our school returned from Hyderabad on 30 September morning. All were safe and sound! Welcome back home, sweet home!

Fr. Christopher Lakra, SJ

## St. Mary's High School, Samtoli

SXC Simdega had organized a Karam dance competition for the students of Inter and Degree Colleges of this area on 10 September 2017. The Chief Guest for the day was the DSP of Simdega. Five Colleges participated in the competition. St. Pius' Inter College, Rengarih, bagged the first prize. The Ursuline Inter College, Samtoli received the second prize and the third prize was won by SXC, Simdega. After the programme snacks were served to the staff members. It was the first time such a competition was organized at the initiative of SXC, Simdega.

Late Fr. Ignace Bara was remembered on the day of his martyrdom, 12 September as the 13<sup>th</sup> death anniversary at Banabira Parish. There was a huge crowd. Bishop Telesphore Bilung, Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi, was the Chief Guest. Together with him Bishop Paul Lakra, DD, Gumla, Bishop Vinay Kandulna, DD, Khunti and Bishop Anand Jojo, DD, Hazaribag were present on the occasion. The boys of Class X of the Apostolic School and of the Hostel, together with the regents witnessed the ceremony.

All the Government approved teachers of Primary, Middle and High Schools went to Ranchi for a rally on 19 September. From the community, Fathers John, Sikander and Ireneus too went to participate in the rally. The High School was closed that day, but there was class for the Inter College. Fr Isaac, the Vice Principal handled the routine of the day for the Inter college.

The Apostolic School organized the English Spoken classes for the students. Five Scholastics from Manresa House had come to help in the programme. The boys were kept engaged with speaking in English compulsorily which at times proving as a penance for them.

Fr. Gilbert D'Souza went to Jharna, Namkum, on 24 September for his annual retreat, and Fr. Emmanuel Barla went to Ranchi for a meeting of the Higher Education. Fr. Albert Dungdung started his retreat here itself at Samtoli. Fr. John went to Rourkela to visit his relatives and came back on the next day.

Fathers Britius Ekka and Ranjit Horo from Khunti came to Samtoli to discuss about the MAGIS programme to be held at St Mary's High School. Fr. Vinod Bilung came to bless the newly built house of his relative at Konmenjara.

*Fr. Linus Dungdung, SJ*

## DIGLIPUR

On 27 August, the Mothers' Day was observed as the mothers celebrated the feast of their patroness, St. Monica. There was a solemn mass on this occasion which was presided over by the parish priest. After the Holy Mass the felicitation and cultural programme was held for the mothers. They were honoured with bouquets and garlands by their dear ones. At the end tea and bun was served to all.

On 8 September, the Birthday of Mother Mary was celebrated with great joy and devotion. Prior to the feast, a novena prayer was made at both the places: at the parish and in Keralapuram. On the feast day itself, the faithful went to Keralapuram in procession praying the rosary and singing hymns. The procession reached its culmination with the Holy Eucharist. At the end of the programme a sumptuous meal was served to all sponsored by Mrs. Celina.

On 12 September both the Fathers departed for Port Blair in order to take part in the annual programme of the diocese, namely : a meeting, seminar and retreat. The parish priest came back to Diglipur. Fr. Anil stayed back in Port Blair for he wanted to consult a dentist, but due to the illness of Sunil, the cook, he came back to Diglipur without the treatment.

*Fr. Anil Kandulna, SJ*

## Ramnagar, Andamans

The feast of St. Monica was celebrated with pomp and pride on 27 August, the Mothers' Day. Prior to the feast, the mothers made a Novena to St. Monica for nine days in preparation for the feast. The Novena started on

16 August and the mothers from Kalighat too came to Ramnagar to join the Novena. There was a flag hoisting before the Novena to remind each mother that the special days have started, and if with the open mind and heart participated in the Novena, God will shower His blessings upon them. The flag was hoisted by the Sabha Netri of the parish (central) Mahila Sangh, Mrs. Roshan Kullu. Each day of the Novena ended with the Holy Eucharist. The parish priest being alone could not go to Kalighat for the daily Mass during the Novena. One day recollection was arranged for mothers in preparation for the feast on 20 August. Fr. Joseph Suman Baxla, SJ, the parish priest of Diglipur was kind enough to help Fr. Benedict for recollection. However, he had to leave after lunch for a meeting at Keralapuram concerning the celebration of the feast of Velankani Mata. The Novena ended two days before the feast on 24 August. The mothers came to clean the parish campus on 26 August. The Catholic Sabha, the youth and Crusveer contributed a lot for this feast by participating in the singing practice.

27 August was a great day for all the mothers and children, and even for the fathers. The choir and others made a good contribution in celebrating a meaningful Holy Eucharist. The Children felicitated the mothers with songs, garlands and bouquets. It was a happy day for all. The mothers were very generous, and so they provided with a meal for all.

The Adivasis from Chotanagpur, residing in Andaman and Nicobar Islands are commonly known and called as Ranchi, even those Adivasis from Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, all have the Ranchi label. Most of them have forgotten their dialects. The parents who know the dialects never taught their children. If the language/dialect is taken as the criterion to be called Adivasis, then they are not so. This is the very reason why every year the Karam Feast is celebrated so that they may not forget their culture, drums, dance, songs and the style of wearing clothes.

This year the Karam Feast was celebrated on a Sunday, 10 September. The people had already been informed a

month earlier so that they could practice their dance for competition. Usually, the rain continues in this month, and so there was a rain but not much. The youth, children and even the grownups went to the Karam tree to bring the Karam branches in a solemn procession dancing and singing. The branches were brought at around 8.00 am. The B.D.O., Lalita Madam, too, was present in the procession while bringing the branches. The choir started singing as the branches were brought: “आइजे तो करम आवै, लोरते लहसाते करम हमर माझे आवै” and all joined in the singing. After placing the branches, the Pahans: Remis Lakra, Gerald Tigga and Bernard Barla did their job. After the introduction, Benjamine Barla narrated the traditional story of seven brothers and sisters-in-law. After this the Eucharistic celebration proceeded. This year more people participated than the previous one.

There was a dance competition after the Holy Mass. The B.D.O, Madam Lalita was the chief guest. She was also asked to evaluate the steps of dancing. Unfortunately, there were only four groups for the competition: Two of the grownups and two of the Crusveers. Everybody liked the competition. The people were served with tea and biscuits in the middle of the programme. The Parish Priest declared the result: Between the two grownups group, Ramnagar C Plot was the first and Kalighat the second; Between the two Crusveer groups: Ramnagar C Plot was the first and Ramnagar B Plot the second. The prizes were given away by the B.D.O. as a token of encouragement and were asked to keep up their culture.

*Fr. Benedict Kira, S.J.*

## **Prothrapur**

Fr. Anthony Andrade, SJ, the Diocesan Spiritual Director, practically completed his visitation to various Parishes and Convents in North, Middle and South Andamans within a few weeks after his arrival to cater to the spiritual needs of the Fathers, Sisters and lay faithful. Finally he landed to Prothrapur Parish on 7 September 2017 and that was a great blessing for the Prothrapur Parish and the Fathers

and Sisters. On 8 September he availed himself to give a talk to the Jesuit Fathers and Cluny Sisters at Cluny Sadan Birdline. On the theme “Community life” on which he dealt with is very relevant today for the Religious. He elaborately explained what could be our weaknesses and drawbacks and how we can make our community a lively one.

Fr. Tony also availed himself for the recollection of youth at Prothrapur on 9 September 2017, prior to the feast of Karam as a preparation for it. About 40 boys and girls benefitted spiritually with talks, adoration and individual confession. He basically concentrated on the theme “Service Minded” inspired by Biblical passage from St. Mathew 25:35 and the following. Thanks to him for his availability, generosity and adaptation in accordance to the situation and demand of the time.

The feast of Karam was celebrated meaningfully and enthusiastically on 10 September 2017 after a due preparation. The Day began with the celebration of the Solemn Eucharist. Fr. David Bara explained the meaning of all the symbols, the Salvation history of the Tribals and the importance of Karam feast in the life and culture of the Adivasis. The Choir consisting of the youth played a vital role in making the liturgy meaningful and lively. Just after the Eucharist, the village-wise Karam dance competition was held. Only three teams participated. Barud Godam, Daudnagar and kamrajnagar won the first, second and third prizes respectively. Later men, women, youth and children enjoyed themselves with the tribal dance. Fr. Tony graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and gave away the prizes, whereas Dr. Ashirvadam, the President of Tamil Community, Mr. I. Arul Swamy, the Catechist of Tamil Community, A. Joseph, S. James and Jesudas were the dignitaries on the occasion. All the responsibilities were shared by various villages and sanghs which made the works easier and everything went on smoothly.

Finally Fr. David proposed the vote of thanks, expressing his gratitude to guests, participants and audience for their presence, cooperation and efforts to make the day successful. All enjoyed the programme thoroughly. Special thanks to Mrs. Binita Bage, the President of the

Catholic Maha Mahila Sangh, Port Blair Diocese who conducted the stage programme smoothly and attractively.

All the Fathers and Sisters working in Port Blair Diocese without fail and exception rushed to Port Blair for the diocesan annual meeting and seminar. The Programme consisted of Priests Senate meeting, joint meeting of Fathers and Sisters, CRI meeting, DPC (Diocesan Pastoral Council) meeting, a seminar and finally a retreat for Priests only. On 13-14 September Priests senate meeting was held, followed by a joint meeting of Fathers and Sisters on 17 September where the reports on SCC and Sunday Catechism were especially presented from all the 15 Parishes. Each Congregation of Sisters too presented their reports on their apostolate, besides the pastoral work. The Birthday of Fr. David on 15 September once again provided an opportunity for the Jesuits to come together for the celebration and also to share our joys and various experiences. This year the seminar was organized from 18 to 21 September for Fathers and Sisters on “Practical method and aids for counseling in Pastoral situation” and Rev. Fr. Joseph Abraham, CSSR, a Redemptorist priest from Goa, was the resource person. The topic was quite appropriate as the people come to the parish with various problems and difficulties. Finally, all the Fathers started their spiritual journey on 21 September evening under the guidance of Fr. Joe Abraham which ended on 29 September 2017 evening with the Holy Eucharist. The theme was “where are you, I love you?”. All the participants benefitted a lot spiritually with his talks and shared experiences, and we began our renewed lives by “letting go” which helped us to forgive and forget.

*Fr. David Bara, SJ*

### **Jesuit Bhavan (Curia) & Gana Chetana Samaj, Tezpur**

Fr. Pius Xalxo, the new delegate of the Provincial in Assam, was quite busy in visiting different Jesuit Communities, Institutions and Centres. He completed one round of visits to Mushalpur, Manas Bansbari, Kathalguri, Pengaree and

St. Xavier's College, Sonabheel. He tried to understand the situations of the fathers in different mission stations, ministries being carried out and the plan made. He made sure to meet all the Fathers, Collaborator Sisters, staff, students and faithful. He participated in the North East CRI meeting which was held in Guwahati from 5 to 7 September. He is elected as the CRI Coordinator for the Tezpur Diocese. He also attended the Pastoral Council Meeting of the North East States in Guwahati itself from 8 to 10 September. It was a good opportunity for him to get introduced to the Heads of all the Congregations, Bishops and Provincials working in North East States.

Fr. Anup Chand Kiran Minj, the treasure of Assam Mission Curia, has decided that all the treasurers of different communities make regular accounts in Tally Programme. He has been visiting Jesuit communities to teach the Tally Programme and keeping Accounts to the responsible persons. His mission seems to be successful as the Fathers from different communities keep on asking clarifications.

Fr. Thomas Barla and his team were busy in teaching Karam songs and dances in different villages of Balipara Developmental Block and Dhekiyajuli Developmental Block. There were two trainer teams for each Block. It has helped a lot to our Adivasis to learn their cultural songs, dances and culture. Karam Celebrations were organized in three places namely: in Chepaguri village on 10 September where all the rituals were followed minutely as the karam Puja was performed by the Pahans. The second celebration was organized in Tetenbari Parish on 24 September where Fr. George Soreng, the Parish Priest of Rengarih had come to help the Parish Priest and faithful to organize the celebration. Fr. Pius Xalxo was the main celebrant and chief Guest in that programme. The third celebration was organized in Banderhagi village under Missamari Parish on 27 September. Fr. Ashok Sandil was the Chief Guest and the Main celebrant in the Eucharist. Fr. Ranjit Kujur was the Pahan to tell the Karam story. All the celebrations were very successful.

Fr. Swaran Tigga is recovering from his illness. He is able to eat boiled food and sleep well. He has to gain strength now. He is prohibited to eat many items and he is following the instructions faithfully. He was looking quite improved and getting ready to participate in the final profession of Fr. Laurentus on 30 September, but started feeling some pain in his legs. He will be going to Guwahati for a check up on 5 October. We hope and pray that he will get well soon.

*Fr. Thomas Barla, SJ*

### **St. Xavier's School, Manas Bansbari**

The month of September was filled with ups and downs of life. There was a lot of problems with regard to the enrolling of the names of the untrained teachers for training, and that created a lot of worry about the future of many teachers. But at last it was solved and all the teachers got enrolled. On 5 September the Teachers' Day was celebrated in a grand way. There were many creative programmes, and the students showed their talents and made the teachers happy. This proved that the hard work of the teachers has not gone in vain. There was the second unit test from 15 to 26 September. The test helped the students to see their improvement. Then after the Unit test the school remained closed for the Durga Puja holidays from 27 September to 2 October. 30 September was the Red Letter Day in the life of Fr. Laurentus Kiro as he took the final vows. Fr. Pius Xalxo, the provincial's delegate of Assam mission, received the vows. Brothers, nephews and nieces of Fr. Laurentus Kiro came to witness the ceremony in Manas. Some Fathers and Sisters also came from many different places. On that day, though there was a heavy rain, Jesuit Fathers from all the communities came to congratulate him.

*Sch. Lazarus Basumatary, SJ*

### **Pangaree**

The month began with a sorrowful note as Fr. Patrick received the sad news of his mother's departure from her

earthly life. Fr. Patrick rushed home on 3 September to say “Goodbye Mom for whatever you had been to me and the family.” He managed to reach home before the burial. On the other hand the month began with a joyous mood as the 5 September celebrations, “The Teachers’ Day” which was at hand. All the students who honoured their teachers for the wonderful love and service they render to them throughout the year. The children sang and danced with melodious music to appreciate their teachers and offer them small, but precious gifts to all of them in gratitude. However, Fr. Foshan was all busy in the School preparing questions for the children and teachers for the September Unit Test.

The month of September being the month of Karam celebrations, Pengaree Jesuits led the Karam Celebrations in the neighbouring parishes.

On 16 September Fr. Telesphore was invited to Tongna parish where he spoke and narrated about the importance of Karam Feast in the life of the Adivasi people. Fr. Patrick animated the same Karam celebrations in Jagun Parish on 23 September. He too spoke of the importance and meaning of Karam celebration to the people in Jagun.

As the Puja holidays began, Fr. Alois and his team of five Sisters of the Daughters of St. Anne organized a seminar for the parish Crusveer Children. Almost 130 participated in the seminar and learnt a lot. At the end of the programme, the Crusveer group was officially installed in Pengaree parish with the renewal of promises of Senior and Junior Crusveers.

*Fr. Telesphore Lakra, SJ*

## Rome

Ravi Hemant completed one month of French language course in Brussels on 8 September. He was grateful to the Arrupe Community for their warm hospitality and cordiality. On the occasion of *to walk for Kishor Nagar* (for 5 kilometers, 12 kilometers and 42 kilometers), he had the opportunity to meet and interact with the

Benefactors and Family members of Belgian Missionaries of Ranchi Province. The walk was organized to raise funds for Kishor Nagar. He joined Fr. Aurel Brys to complete the shortest walk of 5 kilometres. Despite a bad weather, many young and old people joined the *walk for Kishor Nagar*. He came back to Rome on 15 September. Edwin Ritesh too came back to Rome on 19 September after completing his one month German Language course in Munich. From 26 to 29 September, both of them participated in the Community Orientation Programme organized for the Scholastics of International College of Gesù in Rocca di Papa situated on the outskirts of Rome.

Edwin Dang had a peaceful and relaxing time in September after completing his assignments and submitting them on time. He then went to a pilgrimage-cultural tour to various places in France and Spain, such as Paris, Versailles, Madrid, Loyola, Salamanca, Avila and Toledo. The tour gave him an opportunity to discover and understand the spiritual, historical and cultural heritage of those important cities related to the glorious past of Europe, and in particular, the history of the Church and the Jesuit legacy. He met Edwin Ritesh in Paris, who had already arrived there a couple of days before him. Jyoti, David and Subodh received them warmly and had a wonderful occasion to exchange their experiences of learning new language, acclimatizing to a new culture of study and life, etc. They celebrated the Holy Mass in the Church of Saint Peter of Montmartre, where the First Companions of St. Ignatius pronounced the solemn vows of lifelong commitment to the Lord. In Madrid, Schs. Anuj and James left no stone unturned to give them comfortable stay in spite of their busy college schedule. Edwin Dang came back to Rome on 13 September and immediately engaged himself in preparing for a new academic year. This year is his final year of psychological studies. Although he is relieved from the pressure of regular exams, he will have to spend more time on therapeutic sessions, supervising junior students in their personality assessment sessions and seminars.

During the first week of September, Linus had rich experiences by visiting the birthplace of the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens, SJ, in view of writing the “Positio”, which would narrate his Christian virtues as a faithful follower of Jesus Christ. Understanding his background is one of the important elements. He was amazed to see how Belgium has managed to develop its own distinct linguistic and cultural identity despite being a small country, which was unthinkable in the time of Lievens. It was only a part of this movement.

He seems to be very happy with the healthcare system of Italy. The doctors look into all details of his health until they are satisfied and then suggested what could be better for his health. They have proposed a kidney transplant for him whenever it is available. That is why he stayed back in Rome during July and August. All the medical expenses are covered with the Insurance. With the same Health Card, he benefitted health care also in Belgium. He feels that such system makes each participant transparent and responsible.

As the Director of the Indian Section of Vatican Radio, Sanjay Dilip is working hard to live up to the expectations of the new Management Body, which has tried to reform the administration and function of the Radio. In the course of reformation, many major changes are gradually taking place and are visibly evident. Five European languages are being given more importance as part of the reformation and they have shifted to the block which was being occupied by the Indian Section. The Indian Section has moved to the fourth floor. On 29 September, Fr. Andraej Majewski, SJ, the Programme Director was given farewell by the new Administration. He would return to Poland. Similarly, at least 6 Jesuits companions are being transferred from the Radio to assume other responsibilities in their respective Provinces.

During summer vacation, many Curia members were out, either for their holidays or for their Annual Retreat. From 1 September all resumed their office work and once again the life in Curia became normal.

On 29 September, R.P. General called a meeting of all the Curia members including the lay staff and exhorted all to support other colleagues around the world, who deserve the best help from the Curia. He put forth 4 priorities: 1) helping R.P. General to impart an imaginative and discerning leadership; 2) Assisting various Conferences, Provinces and Regions to develop structures and policies that promote discernment, collaboration and networking; 3) Developing financial and institutional resources so that the Jesuit missions could become more sustainable and effective, and finally, 4) Supporting and promoting a deeper formation of Jesuits and of our partners in mission for a better service of the Gospel.

After two and half months of Pastoral Ministry in Keontanr Parish, Kulwant came back to Rome on 20 September along with Prem to start his licentiate studies in Canon Law in Gregorian University. His interaction with the Parish Community and the Parishioners has taught him some precious lessons which could be very handy while learning the Codes of Canon Law. After a long time, he will have a company of 6 Jesuits, who will be studying Canon Law with him. And that would be indeed very enriching by means of sharing and group studies. Now, everything is set to start a new Academic Year from 2 October with a rejuvenated spirit.

*Fr. Prem Xalxo, SJ*

## Spain

After three months of long summer vacation, we came back to our respective communities to start our new academic year 2017 – 2018. We started our classes from 4 September. This year is very important for both of us as we start “Tiempo Arrupe” (Arrupe Year, as it is the custom in Spain to do it throughout the year). This is one of the stages very significant in the formation of the Society of Jesus. We had an inaugural mass on the 5 September to start the academic year. The Mass

was celebrated by the Archbishop of Madrid with the Gregorian Chant. Sch. Anuj on the 6 September went for his knee treatment. He had pain in his knee for the past few months. The treatment will continue till October.

We were very happy to receive our province men from Rome. Fr. Edwin and Sch. Edwin arriving on 7 September and stayed in the community of Anuj. Sch. Ravi Hemant arrived on 10 September and stayed in the community of James. It was a time for us to share our joy and happiness and also our struggles and achievements in

Europe. They stayed here nearly for one week visiting historical places of the Society of Jesus as well as of the church.

On 15 September Anuj’s community went to Alcalá for the community orientation programme. We spent two days sharing our vacations and life in the society. The purpose of the community orientation was basically to know one another in order to build up a better community. James’ community went to Avila on 22 September for the same.

*Sch. Anuj Minj*



**Ireland**

As I joined the European Tertianship, the School of Heart, in Dublin, Ireland, my sincere thanks and gratitude goes to Fr. Paul Martin, SJ, the Regional Superior,

Guyana and Fr. Damian Howard, SJ, the British Provincial, for all their support and encouragement. I also extend my hearty thanks to all my companion Fathers and Ursuline Sisters from Ranchi for their continual support and guidance in my ongoing formation

in Guyana. On 5 September I arrived in the Gatwick Airport London where Mr. Paul Chitnis, the Director of Jesuit Missions Wimbledon accorded me a warm welcome. Since it was my first visit to United Kingdom, I was blessed with many friends who came forward to assist me in my need. I was still waiting for my Irish Visa. Fr. Paul Soka, SJ, the professor from California, accompanied me up to the Irish Embassy in London. On 6 September, Ms. Ann Mary, one of the staff members from Jesuit Missions, came to see me off in the King's Cross Railway Station as I was going to York for Sr. Theodora Hawksley's First Profession. Fr. Peter Scally, SJ, the Parish Priest of Edinburg presided over the Holy Eucharist in the Bar Convent York at 4.00 pm in the evening and Sr. Theodora Hawksley pronounced her First Vows in the Congregation of Jesus. I visited the York Minster Cathedral, one of the largest Cathedrals in the World. Scholastic Joel Thompson, SJ, from Guyana was a great help for me to introduce some of the important places in London. I stayed in Jesuit Missions Wimbledon for 15 days and visited all the historical, cultural, religious and politically important places in London: West Minster Cathedral, West Minster Abbey, The House of Parliament, Big Ben, London Eye, Tower of London, Tower Bridge, River Thames, London Bridge, Museum of London, The British Museum, St. Paul's Cathedral, Charring Cross, etc. I had an ample opportunity to visit the British Jesuit Communities in London. On 18 September I attended Fr. Provincial Damian Howard's talk in the Mount Street where I had a chance to meet some more Jesuits and Lay Collaborators. On the same day I got my Irish Visa and on 19 September I landed in Dublin at 2.35 pm and joined the Tertians group. We were very privileged to have a very mixed international tertians group from different parts of the globe. We are eleven from eleven countries: Andrew Downing (USA), Elias Surin (India), Sanjeeva Fernando (Sri Lanka), Gabriel Khairallah (Lebanon), Jean Claude (Madagascar), Michel Lessard (Canada), Niccolo Steiner (Germany),

Oleksii Bredelieve (Ukraine), Pavol Trgo (Slovakia), Peter Musekiwa (Zimbabwe) and Zong Jiang (China). On 20 September we had the introductory session on Tertianship by our Tertian Directors: Fr. Jan Van de Poll (Netherlands) and Fr. Paul Pace (Malta). In the evening, the Manresa Jesuit Centre of Spirituality was invited to join us for dinner. Fr. Michael Drennan, the Rector, Fr. Piaras Jackson, Fr. Peter Hannan, Fr. Patrick Green, Fr. Finbarr Lynch, Fr. Brendan Comerford, Fr. Thomas McGuinness, Fr. Laurence J. Murphy and Br. Joseph Ward came to Cardonar House, the European Tertianship, so that we become more familiar with one another as we live in the same campus. On 21 September, Fr. Richard Ebejer, SDB, inspired us with his talk on transition during our tertianship. Your prayers are highly appreciated.

*Fr. Elias Surin, SJ*

## ISRAEL

Every year in September a special and intensive course on Bible, languages and archaeology is offered to the students of Biblicum, Rome. Some non-biblical students too from the Gregorian University joined this programme. Being a summer holiday many students applied for this one month programme so that they can fulfill their academic requirements. Similar to previous years, this time the total number of students was thirty-five altogether. We accommodated twenty two of them at PBI community while the rest stayed with the Capuchins' guest house nearby. Those who stayed with us hailed from many different parts of the world. There were five students from African countries, three from India, while Mexico, Columbia, South Korea had two students each and from Sri Lanka, Madagascar, France and USA one each. Thus the community became really International. As it was more of an academic programme, they had classes on regular basis. They had also time for visiting holy places and archaeological sites as part of their

studies. The tour was divided into two parts. The first part included the historical-religious sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Qumran, Masada, Beersheba and Lachish. The second part of the trip was all the pilgrimage places and the archaeological sites in Galilee and Nazareth. They had full five days at their disposal. All had a unique experience of walking on the shore of the Lake of Galilee as they went on visiting those very spots where Jesus did the miracles of loaves and preached the Sermon on the Mount. Other places of interests were the ruined cities of Bet Shean, Caphernaum, Sippboris, Megido, Dan and Banias. All expressed great satisfaction after these visits because now they are able to read and understand the Gospels' narratives from the historical and archaeological points of view. This insight was something new, enriching but challenging.

On 21 September they came back from the tour. Few classes were held for about four days and then they had examination on 25 and 26 September. 28 September was the day of departure. The end of the month of September brought the beginning of the Jewish New Year.

*Fr. Camil Kerketta, SJ*

## Munich

The month of August brought us a lot of happiness. We were glad to receive Sch. Edwin Dungdung in Munich. He stayed in the Berchmans College community. He and other ten Scholastics had come for one month long Basic German Course. It was a wonderful experience to see Edwin and other Scholastics doing their best to learn German. His coming to Munich was like a 'Mini-Ranchi-Gathering.' The arrival of Sch. Hemant Kujur on 8 August in Hurtado Community, Sch. Sameer's Community, added greater joy to this small gathering. He was on the way to Belgium for his one month French Course. On the evening of 11 August, we gathered in the Hurtado Community with other Jesuit Friends

and cooked a sumptuous meal in a Jharkhandi style. After the meal we Ranchiites shared our joys and sorrows with one another. It was a good time to share our life with our elder brothers. This short presence of our brothers from Rome has really been a big support for us. Sch. Edwin finished his language course on 30 August and left Munich to go to his other holiday destinations.

Speaking of the academic side of our life, we spent the month of August mostly preparing for our University Language Exam. On 23 August we had DSH (Deutsche Sprachprüfung für den Hochschulzugang/ German Language Exam for Admission in the University). That is the Exam we need to pass with almost 70% for Philosophy. We passed the exam but did not have enough percentage. That is why we will be writing this exam once again on 18 October. We are preparing ourselves for that. We hope to make it this time with a good percentage.

For a few days from 31 August to 6 September Sch. Sameer was in a city called Lindau with Fr. Christian Kummer, Rector, Berchmans College Community, Munich. There he enjoyed his holidays and renewed himself physically and mentally for the continued Language Courses. Sch. Ajay Paulus went to Prague on 30 August, a beautiful city of Czech Republic. He stayed in the Jesuit community of Prague and enjoyed his holidays. He came back to Munich on 3 August and resumed his Language Course on 4 August. On 16 October we are supposed to begin our Philosophy.

From 27 to 29 August there was a meeting of Munich and Krakau, Polish Scholastics. The Meeting was really packed with seminar on different topics. We discussed about some of the nagging social issues like ecology and immigration. We also discussed about the possible solutions in reference to the "Laudato Si." This seminar helped us to be more aware about the problems in the present society.

*Sch. Ajay Minj, SJ*

### A Day to celebrate

#### OCTOBER

- 04 Tirkey Anil Kishore  
 06 Kerketta Sukesh  
 08 Lakra Ignatius  
 Ekka John Fabianus  
 09 Beck Walter  
 11 Toppo James Ignatius  
 Minj Anthres  
 Beck Suman  
 Minj Erentius  
 12 Surin Victor  
 Minj Billianus  
 Kerketta Pradeep  
 14 Tete Callixtus  
 Soreng Jyoti Bhushan  
 15 Baxla Suman J.  
 16 Ddungdung Albert  
 Lakra Xavier  
 19 Ekka James  
 20 Minj Abraham  
 21 Barwa Solomon  
 22 Ekka Anselm  
 24 Tirkey Francis  
 26 Soy Raphael  
 Kujur Florence  
 27 Guria Florence  
 Tigga Mahendra Peter  
 28 Kujur Sudhir  
 Soreng Kennedy Prabhat  
 30 Aind Alphonse  
 Kindo Ravi Sushil

#### NOVEMBER

- 04 Jaecques Raymond  
 05 Kerketta Camil  
 Minj Damian C.  
 06 Lakra Peter C.  
 09 Kerketta Ranjan M.  
 Minj Sudhir Kr.  
 10 Kujur Augustine  
 Soreng Ajay R.  
 Toppo Alok  
 Lakra Sunil  
 12 Soreng Vinod S.  
 Tirkey Alexander  
 13 Bage Roshan  
 14 Soreng Joseph Kennedy  
 15 Kujur Marianus J.  
 Soreng Fuldeo  
 16 Minj Walter Xavier  
 Barla Thomas  
 17 Brys Aurel  
 21 Tigga Swarn  
 23 Ekka Clement  
 24 Topno Patras  
 27 Soreng Gabriel  
 28 Kandulna Justin

#### Let us remember them in our prayers:

1. Mr. Simon Soreng, 86, died on 12.10.2017, elder brother of Fr. Ajay R. Soreng, SJ
2. Miss Roseline Kerketta, 28, died on 20.10.2017, youngest sister of Sch. Rakesh Kerketta, SJ

Please send your articles with some photos by the Fifth of every month

## **Obituary**

### **1. FATHER PAUL VIJAY MINJ SJ**

[1966-2016]

The sudden death of Father Paul Vijay Minj SJ due to a massive heart attack on the evening of 2 June 2016, while playing badminton at St. Xavier's College, within five days' after the demise of Fr. Ranjit Pascal Toppo SJ on 28 May 2016 due to cancer, came as a big shock to the entire Province. It compelled us to make urgent adjustments of some of its personnel in apostolic works.

Father Paul Vijay, mostly known by his second name by Vijay, a well-disciplined and very motivated, hard working man, had gone about through the day just like the other days- getting ready for the start of the classes after the summer holidays. Though feeling a little tired and lack of energy, he had worked the whole day in his office and went to St. Xavier's College Community for some relaxation by playing badminton. Most unfortunately, though, Vijay, collapsed while playing and gasping for breath as though with exhaustion, had probably died on the way already, before he could be attended at Orchid Medical Centre, Ranchi, where he had been rushed for medical assistance.

Born on 19 July 1966 in an educated family in Majhatoli, Paul Vijay had his early schooling from 1973 to 1979 at the Middle School, Majhatoli. The Parish was, at that time, still under the Jesuits and Vijay got inspiration to become a Jesuit Priest in Majhatoli. He, therefore, joined the Apostolic School, Gumla in 1980 and wrote his Matriculation in 1984 from St. Ignatius' High School Gumla. While staying in the Apostolic School, he showed his great talent in playing musical instruments and his director, Fr. James Lakra, SJ, encouraged and helped him develop this talent. After completing Intermediate studies at St. Xavier's College Ranchi in 1986, he joined the Jesuit Novitiate at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarh and took his first vows in 1988. He continued for another year (1988-1989) at Sitagarh doing his Juniorate. He came back to Ranchi in 1989, where he joined St. Xavier's College for his University studies and got his B. A. degree in 1992. Later, in 2009, he got his M. A. Degree through the Ranchi Centre of Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNOU) and his B. Ed. from Ranchi in 2015.

Vijay's priestly formation took place in Pune, Boreya and Ranchi. He was sent to Jnana Deepa Vidyapith (JDV), Pune for Philosophy (1992-1994) and to Regional Theologate Centre Boreya, Ranchi (1997-1999) and Vidya Jyoti Delhi (1999-2000) for Theology and was ordained priest in 2000 at Majhatoli Parish.

Father Paul Vijay entered into active apostolic work with a brief exposure to pastoral ministry in 2001 as an assistant pastor in Catholic Church Bardih. Prior to this, he had an opportunity to integrate himself in this apostolic work of the Society during Regency after his philosophy first, for two years 1994-1995, in the Apostolic School, Samtoli and then for another two years from 1995-1997, at St. Xavier's School, Doranda. This had given him a good experience how a school and the campus is managed. Thus, when he was appointed as the Principal of the Junior Section of St. Xavier's School Doranda, he found it quite comfortable to handle the responsibility. He held this responsibility for three years (2002-2005).

In 2006 Fr. Vijay was transferred to St. John's School, Ranchi as the Headmaster of the Middle School, the post he held till 2008. In 2009, however, Fr. Provincial gave him an additional responsibility to start a new English Medium School at St. John's School Ranchi. With the experience he had at St. Xavier's School Doranda and at St. John's Ranchi, he took no time in realizing the dream and thus, to give a concrete shape to the "vision" of the Province that it had already been spelled out in 2007. He started it almost single handedly and gave a strong academic foundation to it so that the strength of the students swelled in no time. By his sheer hard work, discipline and motivation, he was able to set a good standard of the school. Moreover, his knack of mingling strictness with kindness, he could galvanize the staff and the students well and establish a rapport with the parents. Since the new English Medium School required concerted effort to look into the technical aspects for NOC, the Affiliation and the Recognition of the School, Fr. Paul was relieved from the Hindi Medium School in May 2016 and was appointed the Principal of St. John's English Medium School. God had, however, another plan for him so also for the new school.

Fr. Vijay had his own values and principles. He could be tough when the situation called for but kind and judicious in dealing with the people. He was intelligent to grasp things fast, critical in evaluating matters and firm in taking decisions. His politeness and simplicity attracted others. He lived his life as a Jesuit very faithfully.

Fr. Vijay's life journey wouldn't be complete without any mention about his interior life, he tried to live so earnestly. No matter what amount of workload he had or, how busy he would be, he was always faithful in fulfilling his spiritual duties and available to any sacramental or priestly function. His seriousness in preparing talks, the depth of his reflections, and above all, his willingness to preach retreats, show how much he had integrated his apostolic life and work as a mission of the Society lived out in service to the church.

*Fr. Sudhir Kumar Minj SJ*

## 2. FATHER LEO BARA SJ

[1932-2016]

Fr. Leo Bara, SJ, was born in Katkahi on 16 March 1922 and entered the Society of Jesus on 20 June 1942 at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha. He died on 10 December 2016 at Manresa house, Ranchi, at the age of 94, having lived 74 years as a Jesuit and 63 years as a priest. One of the oldest members in the Province, a heavily-built man, jovial with jest for life, one who always looked at the brighter side of life, who easily entered into conversation with anyone, prompt in responding to any conversation, a lover of books and a keen reader, with great admiration for people he ever met, affectionate and grateful, exacting disciplinarian, goal oriented and a deeply religious person. Fr. Leo was an epitome of an endearing teacher and a selfless pastor.

Father Leo started going to the primary school at his native place, Katkahi, one of the biggest parishes of Lievens' Barway Mission. He did his middle school for a year in 1937 at St. Ignatius' School, Gumla and went to St. John's High School, Ranchi for the high school where he studied from 1938 to 1942. After his Matriculation, Fr. Leo entered the Jesuit Novitiate at St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarha in 1942. After his first vows he continued his training in the Juniorate at Sitagarha for the next two years (1944-1946). On the following year, i.e., in 1946 he was sent to Shembaganur for Philosophy till 1948. He did his Theology from 1951 to 1954 at St. Mary's College, Kurseong, where he stayed for two years and was ordained priest there in 1954. In 1957 Fr. Leo once again returned to Shembaganur for his tertianship, following which he took his final vows in Shembaganur on 2 February 1957.

Fr. Leo's active ministry began with two years of Regency at St. Mary's High School Samtoli from 1948 to 1950. After his priestly ordination, he got his first appointment as an assistant teacher for two years (1954-1956) in St. Ignatius' High School, Gumla and for a year at St. John's School Ranchi (1956-1957). After his tertianship, he was appointed in 1959 till 1961 as an Assistant Parish Priest under Fr. Louis Torps and as headmaster of the Middle School, Banabira. Fr. Leo was full of jest and vigour, very energetic and brimming with desire to excel in his work. He saw to it that the school excelled not only in good teaching but also in games and discipline. The number of boys in the hostel increased. Regular games and evening study for the hostel boys as well as for the day-scholars and the daily supervision of the study by the teachers was the normal routine of his years as headmaster. The students excelled in hockey and volleyball as well as in studies. No wonder, many good students from the school later became achievers in their own way. Though he was a strict disciplinarian in the school, he also loved his students and teachers.

In his next appointment, Fr. Leo was sent to Shantipara, Gholeng for a year in 1962 as an assistant parish priest and for the next two years (1963-1965) to Kunkuri as an assistant teacher at Loyola Higher Secondary School and as the Minister of the house. He enjoyed teaching in the class and coaching the boys in the playground. His dynamism in apostolic ministry as an assistant pastor and as a school teacher continued at Majhatoli Parish (1966-1972), but probably with a little reduced vigour as a school teacher at Tumdegi (1972-1974) but his zeal in pastoral work remained indefatigable. While in Tumdegi, Fr. Leo had a miraculous escape from a certain death when on a very clear, but hot summer day, he was struck by a lightning while taking his lunch, after the morning classes had got over and when all the teachers and students had gone home. Fortunately, the catechist came in from somewhere and helped him. However, it permanently damaged his ears and was forced to use hearing aid for the rest of his life.

Another phase of Fr. Leo's apostolic ministry began when he was appointed as a Parish Priest of Bemarla in 1975 where he worked till 1982. He was Assistant Pastor and Minister in Tongo (1982). Having left teaching in the schools and active involvement with the boys, his role as a pastor gave him more opportunity to devote himself with pastoral needs in the villages. We find him next as a Parish Priest of a new Parish called Jokari which was bifurcated from Majhatoli (1983) and then as a pastor of Karra (1984-1988) and finally as a founder pastor of Kachabari-Bingaon (1988-1994). Here he proved himself how best he could care not only for his parishners but also for ecology. He single handedly planted trees all around the residence and raised a beautiful forest of Sal trees.

In his last active apostolic ministry, Fr. Leo was made Champlain at Holy Family Hospital, Mandar, where he actively served the people with a pastoral care by administering sacraments, visiting the sick and comforting them. He offered daily mass for the Sisters and nurses for nine years from 1994 to 2003. In 2003, Fr. Christopher Lakra, SJ, then Provincial of Ranchi, transferred him to Manresa House Ranchi where he lived in the Infirmary till his death (2016), praying for the Church and the Society.

Though living a retired life in the Province Infirmary, Fr. Leo was probably the most active, in the sense, that he continued his habit of reading books, journals, magazines, etc., of any kind with great interest. Whenever an occasion permitted him, he never missed discussing what he had found in them. He would never miss to type some good points or ideas he got through his reading. Thus, he fully occupied himself and enjoyed his stay at the Infirmary with utmost satisfaction. Though, twice he wished, he would die, but both the times he survived almost miraculously from critical conditions of his health and he returned from Holy Family Hospital where he had been admitted for treatment, to the Infirmary in Manresa House, Ranchi.

The last fortnight of Fr. Leo was a bit of a struggle for him when he ate little, moved little and communicated little, almost going into a silence. He remained sitting in silence in his usual place in the verandah or lay on his bed. It is in this state of that quietness and silence he eventually passed away from his earthly abode to his eternal rest on 10 December 2016. A huge number of his students, friends and acquaintances, besides his own family members and relatives from Ranchi joined his last journey for the burial at Tamtam, Kantatoli, made many admire how much he had influenced people in his life by his work assigned by the Society.

*Fr. Sudhir Kumar Misra SJ*

### **3. FATHER PATRAS EKKA SJ**

[1953-2017]

Fr. Patras Ekka, SJ, who had quietly accepted the critical condition of his physical health since he underwent a prolonged treatment for his infected knee in 2012 and suffered from failure of both the kidneys. Yet he survived on regular dialysis for nearly four years and died on 9 March 2017 at Orchid Medical Centre, Ranchi.

Fr. Patras was born in Jampani Parish, at Aunrabahar village, now under Salangaposh Parish, on 16 September 1953 in a good Christian family. After his primary education at Jampani, he went to the Apostolic School, Gumla with a desire to become a priest where he did his secondary education at St. Ignatius' High School, Gumla. He joined the Jesuit Novitiate at St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarha after completing his Intermediate studies at St. Xavier's College, Ranchi in 1973. He returned to St. Xavier's College for his B. A. in 1976 and went to De Nobili College, Pune, for bachelor's study in Philosophy. He continued his priestly formation at the Regional Theologate Centre, Boreya (1983-1984) and at Vidya Jyoti Delhi (1984-1986), and got ordained as a priest in 1986. He was sent to Beschi College Dindigul for Tertianship (1994-1995) and took his final vows at Gumla in 2002.

Fr. Patras started his apostolic ministry with a short exposure after his B.A., when he was sent first to Garo (Hazaribag) and then to Kishor Nagar at Bargawan (Ranchi) where he had an opportunity to take care of the boys from financially poor and disadvantaged background. During his two years' of regency at the AROUSE, Gumla, where he worked in rural literary campaign under the National Adult Education Programme, a training for self-employment of the rural youth and "Balwadi" (Kindergarten) programme in the villages, he endeared himself with his openness and polite behaviour. He was equally enthusiastic and effective in running the development programmes which left a good impact in the villages around Gumla.

As a priest, Fr. Patras worked for 28 years in the educational institutions as minister & treasurer at St. Mary's HS, Samtoli (1987-1988) at St. John's HS, Ranchi (1995-1999), at St. Stanislaus', Sitagarha (1988-1992), at St. Xavier's, Doranda (1992-1994) and at St. Ignatius' HS, Gumla (1999-2005). In 2005 he was appointed as an assistant Parish Priest of Catholic Church Bingaon where he acted also as a headmaster of the primary school till he developed a critical health problem in 2013 and had to be hospitalized, and eventually was lodged at the Province Infirmary for better care of his health.

A great sportsman as a sprinter and pole-vaulter and a great player of Hockey and football in his youth, Fr. Patras was always energetic and enthusiastic about any work or assignment. Having good intellectual capacity, he was able to grasp things easily. Equally was he able to deal with people by his pleasant dealing and apt talking. He knew how to maintain conversation. As a minister of the house, he was warm and welcoming, attentive and sensitive to the needs of the individual members and of the community. He knew his job as a treasurer and carried this responsibility meticulously.

Fr. Patras was cheerful and pleasant, frank and open in dealing with others. His company would never be monotonous or boring. He would not make differences with people but was kind and generous towards any needy person. He had his limitations and was humble enough to accept them. It was this that he would, at times, feel some inhibition, but never to the extent of closing himself up.

When Father Patras was compelled to hospitalize for treatment for internal tissue infection, having the risk of amputation of his left leg, he accepted without despair or sadness. He took frequent hospitalizations due to his health-complications with great courage and peace of mind. He never complained about anything but accepted his physical troubles with enduring patience. Prayer was his strength in the waning days of his health, more so, since he had to be sustained on dialysis twice a week for nearly four years. It is in such circumstances that one could see his inner faith and trust in the goodness of God who kept his cheerfulness and peace alive.

Surprisingly, Fr. Patras had managed to survive longer even under such odd conditions. Serious complications in his health in the last 3-4 days saw how this great sportsman with a robust health in his prime time and full of energy and enthusiasm, finally came to accept also the misery of his health in equal trust and confidence in the goodness of his Lord and surrendered himself to Him, the giver of all good gifts.

*Fr. Sudhir Kumar Minj SJ*

## **4. FATHER VICTOR SURIN SJ** [1934-2017]

Born to Kripa and Benjamin on 12 October 1934, the earthly journey of Fr. Victor Surin, SJ, began in Patiamba village, Jaldega, under Gangutoli Parish. He started his primary education at Lachragarh Parish in 1942 where his father was a catechist and then he moved to St. Mary's HS, Samtoli for his high school studies in 1950. A year later, in 1951 he had to move to St. John's High School, Ranchi.

Victor entered the Jesuit Novitiate at St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarh (Hazaribag) in 1954 and returned to Ranchi in 1956 for his Pre University study at St. Xavier's College. He would go back to St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarha in 1958 for Juniorate and much later, he would write his B. A. from the Ranchi University as a private student.

In preparation of his ecclesial studies, Fr. Victor was sent for Philosophy to De Nobili College, Pune, in 1960-62 and to St. Mary's, Kurseong, for Theology in 1964-67 where he was also ordained a Deacon in 1966. He was ordained priest in 1967 in Ranchi and thereafter he was sent to Mount St. Joseph's, Bangalore, in 1970 for tertianship.

Fr. Victor Surin's apostolic work began with two years of regency at St. John's High School, Ranchi, between his studies of Philosophy and Theology in 1962-64. After his priestly ordination, his active apostolic work extends from 1968 till 2013 as an Assistant Pastor in Pathalgaon, Lureg and Ambikapur from 1968 to 1971 at Jashpur and Raigarh Dioceses and from 1971 to 1977 in Khunti and Karra and, for the first time, as a Pastor of Karra from 1977 to 1980 in Khunti diocese.

Fr. Victor had a break from the active pastoral work when he was appointed as the Minister of St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarha for two years from 1980 to 1981, where he took care of the House, of its goods and the vast property.

In 1981-1983 Fr. Victor was appointed as an Assistant Pastor of Majhatoli Parish, thereafter he moved to Tongo in Barway as its Pastor from 1983 till he opted to become a missionary in Tanzania (Africa) in 1985. Thus, he became a link to the First Mission of Ranchi Province outside to Africa, which had been started in 1971 spearheaded by Fr. Polycarp Toppo, SJ. For more than seven years he worked there as a Pastor till 1993. On returning to Ranchi in 1993, Fr. Victor was again sent to Tongo as an Assistant Pastor for a brief spell till he was appointed as a Pastor in the land of the Mundas: Khunti (1993-1999), Maranghada (1999-2010) and Sarwada (2010-2013). For nearly 20 years he shouldered the responsibility as a District Superior of the Jesuit Pastors of Khunti Deanery.

It was in 2010, sometime after Fr. Victor had been transferred as a Parish Priest to Sarwada, that he started experiencing some pain and swelling of legs. He tried with country medicines for some time but they did not give him any significant relief. Eventually, on the insistence of Fr. Socius, he agreed in 2011 to go for a specific clinical check up and treatment in Ranchi. His medical investigation revealed that he was suffering from prostate cancer. He started visiting his doctor regularly and it so happened that his pain disappeared and he felt much relief. So, he went back to Sarwada and kept himself busy with the pastoral work for nearly six months or so, till he began to experience again the swelling in his legs, pain and discomfort. He was fully relieved from pastoral activity at Sarwada in 2013 and, for the better care of his health, came to stay in the Province Infirmary. Till June 2016, last year, Victor was comfortably well. His health gradually began to deteriorate just before his 60<sup>th</sup> year of his jubilee as a Jesuit and had to be shifted first to Seva Nilaya, Ara Gate and then to Ranchi Urology Centre, Bariatu, from where, after his condition became fairly stable and showed fair recovery, he was shifted to Constant Lievens Hospital, Mandar for the sake of a better nursing care. He was treated with chemo which seemed to have helped him initially, but he could not bear the second dose of it. Consequently he seemed losing his mental orientation temporarily. It was, therefore, decided to stop this line of treatment. But, to a much relief of all, he gradually regained a fairly good health, partly also because of his will power and tenacity; so much so, he came back to his community in the Manresa House Infirmary for some time. After September 2016, on account of the swelling of the legs and some difficulty in walking, besides pain, he was once more admitted to Constant Lievens, Hospital Mandar.

Fr. Victor briefly returned to his community at Manresa House, for the last time for Easter in April 2017. Prior to this, he came for three days to celebrate his 50 years of priesthood in March 2017. There was a plan to bring him to Ranchi again during the Province Days, to which the Father had happily agreed. When the Province Days 2017 started, he was physically not well disposed since he had begun experience continual pain in his hips. He, therefore, preferred to stay in the hospital. Since the beginning of June 2017, as his pain gradually spread to the knees and he could not get up or walk by himself, on 12 June 2017, he was brought to Ranchi for a review and consultation with his Doctor. Considering Fr. Victor's age and condition, the Doctor declined any further investigation but advised some relief medicines and palliative care. These medicines, however, could not reduce the pain and thus, he spent some sleepless nights, making him more tired and weak. His blood-count also fell and he suddenly became very weak. Meanwhile, he had a transfusion of four units of blood at different times, including one in the last week, which helped him regain some strength. The transfusion of yet another unit was, in fact, fixed on 28 June 2017 but that was not to happen.

Father Victor Surin SJ, had completed the length of his earthly journey and had reached that promised homeland, which the Lord had promised him to give - that Promise, in the hope of which, he had gladly accepted all his physical pains and sufferings, as St. Paul tells us:

Suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character  
and character produces hope and hope does not disappoint us... [Rom 5:4-5]  
May God grant Fr. Victor Surin, SJ, eternal rest!

*Fr. Sudhir Kumar Minj SJ*

## **5. BROTHER YACUB XALXO, SJ** **[1937-2017]**

Brother Yacub Xalxo, SJ, also known as 'Masterji' in the Province for his managerial skill, elegance and persuasive conversation with any category of people- men and women, capable of handling tactfully any situation with his wisdom and presence of mind, was born on 14 August 1937 to Martin & Josephin Toppo at Jhagarpur under Tamamunda Parish in Chattisgarh. He went to the neighbouring parish of Tapkara for his schooling in 1953 from where he passed the Middle School in 1959. He spent another year at Tapkara as an assistant teacher and helping the Fathers in the parish. This close contact with the Jesuit Fathers there motivated him to become a Jesuit.

Br. Yacub expressed this desire to become a Jesuit religious and so, he was directed to go to Rengarih where Fr. Paul Terrens was, at that time, incharge of the Jesuit Brother candidates. On the occasion of his golden jubilee Yacub narrated how he had walked the whole day on foot from morning to the late evening accompanied by his mother to reach Rengarih and had a very warm welcome on reaching Rengarih. His short career of teaching in Tapkara and his personality inspired Fr. Terrens to make him a teacher of the candidates at Rengarih and tested his motives to become a Jesuit novice. This was why Brother Yacub was known among his companions as a "masterji".

Br. Yacub entered the Jesuit Novitiate at St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarha in 1960 and took his first vows in 1962 and continued his formation as an approved Brother for another two years (1962-1963) in Sitagarha including his training in Nursing at Mangalore in 1963. He went to Mount St. Joseph's Bangalore in 1972 where he did his tertianship and took his final vows in the following year at St. Xavier's College, Ranchi where he was appointed Infirmarian of the House and the College. Br. Yacub took his entire formation seriously to mould himself as a committed Jesuit, as could be seen in carrying out his assigned responsibilities and in his personal relationship with Christ in the life of prayer and spiritual exercises. No doubt, he had a well integrated life as a Jesuit.

The first appointment of Brother Yacub after finishing his Juniorate was as an Assistant Infirmarian at St. Stanislaus' College Sitagarha in 1965 for which he had been trained soon after his first vows. He remained here for a year till he was transferred to St. Xavier's College, Ranchi, where he worked most effectively as the Infirmarian till 1978 and came in contact with various groups of people: college students, officials, dignitaries and he developed a special way of dealing with them.

Another period of Br. Yacub's effective life and ministry was at St. Ignatius' High School, Gumla where he was Minister of the House and Infirmarian of the School for eight years from 1978 to 1986. Here he had several opportunities to interact with the parents of the students, the local officials and other people. He tactfully handled difficult situations and problems facing the school. He always had time to listen to people and establish good rapport with them. The people had great respect and regard for him because of his gentlemanly approach and kindness to them.

From 1986 to 1991 Br. Yacub lived at St. Albert's College and had an opportunity to serve the Seminarians and the Fathers of the faculty for five years in the capacity of an Infirmarian. A keen observer of persons, he enjoyed his stay and worked in the Seminary in understanding the Seminarians as a friend and as admonitor to them.

Through his work in the formation houses, Br. Yacub gained experience, wisdom and practical managerial skills. He was, thus, entrusted with a mission by POSA to work in the common houses of the Assisatncy. Thus, he was away from Ranchi for the next nineteen years: first as Minister and incharge of Kitchen in-charge at Vidya Sadan, Tiruchirapalli for the College Juniors from 1991 to 2001 and from 2001 to 2009 as an Infirmarian at De Nobili College, Pune. Br. Yacub left a memorable mark among the scholastics and the members of the community by his friendly and understanding approach towards all.

With the growing age, Br. Yacub realized that it was time to get back to the Province and thus having accomplished his assigned duty in the common houses, he returned to Ranchi in 2009 and appointed as Minister and in-charge of the Kitchen & garden at Tarunoday (Regional Theologate Centre), Kanke till 2012. He was, by now, having difficulty in hearing and his movement was also slowing down. Therefore, he requested Father Provincial to be relieved from the responsibilities and be placed in any small community. Thus, in 2012 he was transferred to St. Xavier's Bundu where he helped the community in sundry works. As he began to lose his hearing power and the signs of forgetfulness, he was assigned to the Infirmary at Manresa House, Ranchi where he spent his last days praying for the Church & Society till his death on 1 August 2017. For the last eight days, he went into a kind of coma. He no more spoke and rarely opened his eyes and passed away very quietly in the Lord.

May God Grant him eternal rest!

*Sudhir Kumar Minj SJ*

## 6. BROTHER FRANCIS XAVIER BILUNG, SJ [1932 - 2017]

“Our life is like grass; we grow and flourish like a wild flower;  
Then the wind blows on it and it is gone; no one sees it again.” (Ps 103:15-16)

It is the nature of law that one who is born in this world has to die one day. Br. Francis Xavier Bilung, SJ, died at Constant Lievens Hospital, Mandar, on 8 August 2017. Affectionately known as *Chhotu*, Francis was born on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1932 in a village called Paikpara-Deleatoli, under Rengarih Parish. He spent his childhood there and joined R.C. Middle school late for his primary education and passed in 1952. After the primary education, he stayed at home with his parents, Simon and Magdalena and his brother Tintus to help the family. He realized a call from within and so, he wanted to be a religious, but educationally he would, perhaps, not qualify. All the same, he decided to become a religious brother and thus, he entered the Society of Jesus on 1 August 1958 at St. Stanislaus' College, Sitagarha. After two years of novitiate and two years of Juniorate (1958-1962), he was appointed as an Assistant librarian at St Xavier's College, Ranchi (1964 – 1976). From here, he went for his Tertianship in 1970 at Mount St. Joseph Bangalore, and came back to St. Xavier's College to resume the work of a librarian. He took his Final Vows on February 2, 1971. From Ranchi he went to Vidya Jyoti, Delhi as an Asst. Librarian (1976 – 1979). He came back to Ranchi and became the Assistant Headmaster at St John's Middle School (1980 – 1987). From 1987 to 2003 he was appointed as an Assistant Librarian at St. Albert's College Ranchi. He spent the longest years here. In all the places wherever he was assigned as a librarian, he did his duty very meticulously.

After the handing over of St. Albert's Seminary to the bishops of Bihar & Jharkhand (BIJHAN) in December 2002, Brother Francis was transferred in 2003 to St. Stanislaus' High School, Loharadaga, and was in-charge of a small farm and a garden. Here, his health began to deteriorate so, in 2006, he was brought to the Infirmary at Manresa House. Since then he lived in the Manresa House Infirmary till his death on 29 August 2017, praying for the Church and the Society. Towards the end of his life, he was becoming weak and he also began to lose his memory. On the same night, early morning of 1 August 2017, when Br. Yocub Xalxo died, Br. Francis also lay in his bed with cough and cold. He did not eat or drink properly. He was immediately taken to Lievens Hospital, Mandar. Initially, he responded to the treatment. His fever and cold was gone and he began to talk but softly and could take liquids. However, the congestion in his chest which had been a very long history with Francis, continued. After a few days through the treatment, he gradually began to sink and it was almost clear that his earthly life was soon coming to an end. His family members were informed about it who visited him in the hospital. He surrendered his life to his Master on August 29, 2017. His funeral took place on the following day, 30 August 2017, at the Tamtam Cemetery, Ranchi. May God grant him Eternal Rest!

When I think of Br. Francis I remember the words of Jesus to Nathanael, “Here is a real Israelite, there is nothing false in him” (Jn. 1:47). Br. Francis was a very simple and guileless person. His brief life sketch as we have delineated is seen as, most of which was spent in the library, in helping others. While living at St. Albert's Seminary, he was a good driver, companion and helper to Fr. Jozef De Cuyper SJ, who took him on holidays to visit different parishes of the Archdiocese in connection with the diocesan tribunal work for marriage-cases.

Br. Francis lived his religious life very faithfully and honestly. His life was frugal and simple. He had no pride and did not assume much. A good observer of people, he would not miss to make an apt remark about any Seminarian who needed correction. While staying in the Infirmary at Manresa House, he faithfully took care of the sacristy of the Infirmary and was ever ready to substitute the Minister whenever he was absent.

Br. Francis was a man of prayer. He faithfully recited rosary, visited the Blessed Sacrament regularly and fulfilled his daily spiritual duties. He was a self-disciplined person and very modest in his behaviour. For every activity his time was fixed for him. He had learnt how to keep everything neat and clean. Wherever he was, he was loved by all. He loved the community life and in the Infirmary, he used to meet every one. He always preferred to join the House Refectory for his meals. Towards the end of his life, when he could not walk much, he still made efforts to go the House Refectory for meals.

He was a very good hockey player and enjoyed playing it but as he grew older, he switched over to playing Badminton. He was gifted with many qualities. His life was a source of inspiration for many. We thank God for such a beautiful life.

*Fr. Alex Tiskey SJ*