



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

INDIA MUMBAI PROVINCE (INM)



SVD PROVINCIAL HOUSE, 510/ 32ND ROAD, BANDRA WEST, MUMBAI - 400 050

Mobile: 9673638477/8451031910

Email: inmsvd@gmail.com, Web: www.svdinm.com

INM/PC/166/2021

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY

July - August 2021

REMEMBERING AND REAFFIRMING OUR IDEAL

The month of September is very special for us, the members of the Society of the Divine Word. It was in this month that the Society was founded on 8th September 1875. The beginnings, by an unassuming yet

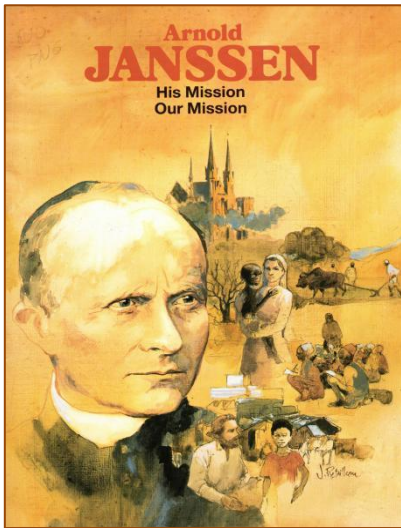


holy person who always wanted to discern the will of God shown to him in very difficult times, were very humble and awe inspiring. His only treasures were his faith and utter confidence in the Providence of God. When we now look back after 145 years of its existence, we recognize that St. Arnold was a prophet of his time and a saint of our times, who obeyed the will of God in founding the Congregation of the Society of the Divine Word and also two Sisters' Congregations dedicated to the vivifying Spirit of God. The congregations have grown and branched into all the continents living the spirit of the Founder and carrying out the mission of establishing the Kingdom of God. Within a

few years, the Society of the Divine Word will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of its Foundation. This therefore is an appropriate time that calls for retrospection, the need to seriously begin to assess how far the members of the Society of the Divine Word have lived up to the Vision of the Founder. It is also a time to self-examine the spirituality with which we carry forward the work entrusted to us.

Times certainly have changed since 1875, when the congregation was founded. The Society has moved from the challenges of the Victorian era and those of modernity of the founding generation to the globalized, post-modern and post-truth era of our contemporary times. The global and post-modern values are affecting our lifestyle and our mission. Consciously or unconsciously, we become victims of the allurements of this world. The awareness of the challenges of the changing world and of its values are essential to recapture the mission ideals of the Founder and recommit ourselves in our contemporary times.

Today, science and technology are increasingly powerful. Secularization is accepted as the natural and inevitable process in the development of human society. Post-modern liberal ideas have led to excessive individualism and narrow self-actualization. It is manifested in mindless and compulsive consumerism in individual lives and in the breakdown of community living. The prevailing attitude of relativism to Christian mission leads our members to ambiguity, confusion and a lack of commitment to an ideal. As a result, mission is gradually taking the back seat. The political situation in the country also adds further challenges, difficulties and confusion in our mission ideals.



As we prepare ourselves to celebrate the 146th anniversary of the Foundation Day of the Society of the Divine Word on 8th September, let us recall the spirituality and the commitment of our Founder and his generation to face the challenges of our days. If we are to be relevant today, we must rediscover our roots. This has a twofold challenge: a challenge to orthodoxy and also a challenge to be open to contemporary realities of life. It implies that we need to be a Counter Cultural witnessing community to promote the values of the Gospel. Let us remember that only a dead fish moves along the running stream, a living fish goes against the current.

St. Arnold had a special place for Mother Mary in his life. Her faith and simplicity and desire to accomplish the will of God at all times attracted him. That is why, all the three Congregations were founded on the feast days of our Blessed Mother. On 8th September, the Foundation of the Society of the Divine Word, we celebrate the Birthday of Mother Mary. We place ourselves under the protection and patronage of Mother Mary and pray that we may live like her in our faith commitment accomplishing God's will in our lives and mission.



We wish you a Happy Feast of the Nativity of Mother Mary and the Foundation of our Society.

- INM Leadership Team

A JOINT VENTURE SARVA VIKAS DEEP AND CANOSSA SISTERS



The landmark events are very significant in the life of an individual, institution, organization. Sarva Vikas Deep (SVD), a social wing of the Society of the Divine Word, had completed its decennial jubilee in the year 2016 and as part of this landmark event it extended its mission territory to another block, Mhasla in Raigad district. Having operated from Mangaon since 2016, a distance of 28 kms., a contract between the INM Province, represented by Provincial, Fr. Richard Mathias and the Director of Sarva Vikas Deep, Fr. Richard Quadros, and the Canossian Sisters - India Central Province, represented by Provincial, Sr. Audrey D'Souza, was inked on

31st March 2021 and a rented house for three Sisters was blessed by the INM Admonitor, Fr. Maria Michael SVD on 18th July 2021. The partnership contract has spelt out possibilities of innovative mission ventures in empowering the tribals in Mhasla Taluka.

OVERSEAS MISSION ORIENTATION AMIDST THE PANDEMIC ISHVANI KENDRA, PUNE



The Overseas Mission Orientation (OMO) course is Ishvani Kendra's unique contribution to the Church in India to prepare its missionaries getting ready to serve in mission countries abroad. It was scheduled for June 2021. However, with the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic hitting India with devastating and tragic consequences, it had to be postponed as it became a real challenge to organize anything residential. By the end of June, there were some indications

of the pandemic slowing down in the country and the institute took a bold decision to re-open its doors to welcome the OMO course participants from July 31 – 21 August 2021. We encouraged the participants to take at least one dose of the Covid vaccine before their arrival and arranged a three-day room quarantine before the input sessions began with Covid protocols like wearing mask, maintaining safe distance etc.

We had a full house of 30 participants who came from different parts of India. It included nine SVD new priests, one Montfort brother and 20 sisters belonging to seven different religious congregations. These 30 missionaries will be going to 24 different countries in all the six continents as soon as the borders are opened. The enthusiastic missionaries were oriented with inputs on cultural and psychological transition; inter-cultural communication; faith traditions; protection of minors and sexual harassment; challenges of mission life; new religious movements; Church teachings especially on the direction of the Church with Pope Francis; and Biblical missionary discipleship. Technology also came to the fore as missionary sisters and priests of Indian origin from six different countries joined the participants live on ZOOM to share their experiences and the challenges they faced. Each participant also made a research presentation on their mission destination.

It was indeed the grace of God and Lord's protection that was at work in these challenging times as all the participants were hale and hearty and full of energy and enthusiasm. Inspired by this success, Ishvani Kendra is currently organizing a course for 31 sisters celebrating the silver jubilee of their religious profession from August 26–25 September. Now we confidently plan to go ahead with the other planned courses with care and precaution, trusting in God's providential grace.

BLESSING OF THE RENOVATED BUILDING PRARTHANA NIKETAN, KADUTHURUTHY

‘This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes’ (Ps.118.23).



A long cherished desire of the staff of Prarthana Niketan, Kaduthuruthy was to have self-contained rooms for those who come for retreats and spiritual programmes. Though the renovation work of the hostel building began at the end of last year, due to Covid, it could be completed only by June 2021. One part of

the hostel block was renovated with 10 rooms each on the ground and first floors. Fr. Ginto, the Procurator of the house, worked tirelessly for the successful completion of the work.

The blessing of the re-modelled block took place on the 15th July 2021. Due to Covid restrictions general public was not invited. Our conferrers from Changanacherry, Aduvassery and Pilathara joined blessing and the celebration. The Solemn Mass was held at 11 am. Fr. Tomy Perumparayil SVD, the Vice Provincial, was the main celebrant and Fr. Titus, the Director of the centre, and Fr. Babu concelebrated. During the introduction, Fr. Titus welcomed everyone and sincerely thanked the INM Provincial administration and all the benefactors for their encouragement and financial support. The blessing of the renovated block followed the Holy Mass. A delicious lunch was served to the invitees at the end of the function. The Contractor, the Engineer and the Electrician were also invited and they were given gifts as a token of gratitude for their efficient work.

DIGITAL INDIA – A TIME TO GROW AND DEVELOP



Amidst the pandemic situation where schools have not fully opened, St. Theresa's High School had a short meaningful celebration on August 15 to honour our country. The flag hoisting ceremony on the occasion of the platinum jubilee of Independence began at the school premises with about 80 persons present. It was also telecast live on YouTube for the sake of the students and their parents, to facilitate their participation from their homes.

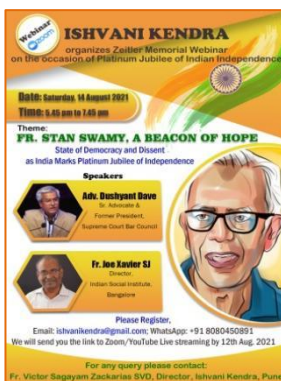
The national flag was hoisted by a retiring teacher, who gave a fitting message for the occasion. Prayers were offered for the country. The first three SSC toppers of



the school were felicitated. Some students performed a lovely patriotic dance. The Principal, Fr. Nicolau D'Costa SVD, spoke on balance between Rights and Duties, and between Talking and Doing. He asked those present to pray for the country as he

sang a hymn in honour of the motherland. After the Independence Day programme, there was the celebration of the Holy Eucharist and people who wished to be part of it were invited. The Theresians went home with a sense of satisfaction, patriotism and spiritual fulfilment as many of them were able to physically take part in the ceremony and the Eucharist.

ZEITLER MEMORIAL WEBINAR ISHVANI KENDRA, PUNE



On the eve of the Platinum Jubilee of Indian Independence, on 14 August 2021, Ishvani Kendra organized a Zeitler Memorial Webinar focusing on the theme constitutional ideals and values of Indian democracy, particularly in the light of the arrest, custody and eventual death of Fr. Stan Swamy SJ, a tribal rights activist. The theme of the webinar was *“Fr. Stan Swamy, a beacon of hope: State of Democracy and Dissent as India Marks Platinum Jubilee of Independence.”*

Senior Advocate Dushyant Dave, a former President of Supreme Court Bar Council, dwelt on ‘the state of democracy and dissent in the country,’ while the Jesuit priest, Fr. Joe Xavier, the Director of Indian Social Institute in Bangalore, shared about the life and the prophetic mission of Fr. Stan Swamy. The participants applauded the speakers and the organizers for the choice of the topic.

WELCOME AND FAREWELL PROGRAMME SVD SHISHYALAYA, VASAI



SVD Shishyalaya seminary is blessed with 22 seminarians from Vasai, Uttan, Arnala, Aurangabad, Talaserri and Nagpur. There is a good mixture of different cultures, languages and customs. We began the academic year 2021-22 with an inaugural Mass by Fr. John Lugun, the present prefect, on 19th of July. Fr. Salate, the Rector, introduced Fr. John to the community and welcomed him and the new comers. In his homily Fr. John stressed that the

Society of the Divine Word is known for reaching out to the interior missions and spreading the Gospel to the nook and corner of the world. He also talked about the mission and charism of St. Arnold and our pioneer missionaries who worked hard to build up the Society. As a symbolic gesture he handed a Bible and a Rosary to everyone and encouraged them to read the Bible every day and live it out in their daily life as our pioneer missionaries did.

In the evening, there was a short cultural programme to welcome the new comers and bid farewell to the Palda going students. During the programme, Fr. Nickson, the vocation promoter, welcomed the new comers and thanked the Palda going students. In his speech, Fr. Salate said that even though the seminary started only in 2008, within 12 years, it has formed six priests. Fr. Francis Mastan from Koliwada motivated by Fr. Callisto and Fr. Ivan joined St. Peter's Apostolic School, Kirem in the year 2005. Fr. Nickson and Fr. Louis, the first seminarians of Shishyalaya, were ordained in the year 2018. And later Fr. Sandesh, Fr. Peter and Fr. Avinash were ordained in 2019 and 2020. At present there is a deacon, Lucas Parkhe from Augrangabad who will be ordained in this academic year. In conclusion, the Rector expressed appreciation and thanked all the formators who worked in the past and also who are serving at present.

DISCIPLES OF THE DIVINE WORD (DDW) – MUMBAI



On 8th September 2019, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Foundation Day of the SVD, we began the 'Feed the Hungry' project. To launch the project, we cooked lunch and distributed it to the poor people living by the road-sides, slums, etc. While active and enthusiastic, our circle was small and limited.

The COVID-19 outbreak of March 2020 took everyone by surprise. SVD confreres collaborated with the DDW members and we continued with the 'Feed the Hungry' project. We provided essential food kits to more than 8000 poor families in and around Mumbai. We experienced clear signs of humaneness and compassion. It helped us to widen our circle.



This year, the devastating second wave hit us. After a brief pause due to stricter lockdown guidelines, we are again on the move, feeding the hungry. We distribute around 800-900 packets of home cooked high-protein-lunch to the poor people at the traffic signals, Cooper Hospital (a government hospital), below the fly-overs, slums and of course by the road-sides. We also take along water bottles, bananas, biscuits, toiletries, etc. We are grateful to our donors and all those who support this project. We welcome

new opportunities that will bring joy to the lives of the poor, especially the children, the disabled and the sick.

Sarah (name changed to protect identity) said, "I am not sad and depressed now. I look forward to Saturdays...the planning, shopping and cooking for Feed the Hungry. My daughters and I are very grateful to you." Hugging me she cried. Sarah's husband died of heart attack a few months ago, leaving behind his young wife and three daughters. We are grateful to God for allowing us to help some families who are going through hard times in their lives. They cook for us hot meals to distribute to the hungry people on the streets and side-walks of Mumbai. Our circle continues to grow.

We are grateful to Fr. Gregory Pinto, our Spiritual Director, who is our driving force, Fr. Tony Menezes and the Atma-Darshan community for their collaboration and support, Jayesh George for operating his family vehicle for food distribution for more than a year, Fr. Jose Arayathel, Sarva Seva Sangh, for providing the vehicle for food distribution, and Fr. Xavier Alangaram, Styler-Mission, Sankt Augustin, Germany for helping us in procuring a new vehicle for Feed the Hungry Project. We are deeply grateful to our Provincial, Fr. Richard Mathias and his leadership team for the encouragement and assistance. God bless us all!

ST. MARTHA'S DAY AS DOMESTIC HELPERS DAY



Domestic help refers to housework such as sweeping, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cooking, caring of children and such other works which are carried out for an employer for remuneration. Domestic help provides an important source of livelihood for the illiterate women or those with very little education.

Someone speaking about the domestic helpers mentioned: "Respect your maids because they give you a lot, take very less, bear hardships and complain nil." A famous quote by Marcel Proust says, "Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy. They are charming gardeners who make our souls blossom."

On July 29, the Church celebrates the feast of St. Martha who is the patron saint of domestic helpers. The Sisters of Apostolic Carmel and SVD Fathers from Bailhongal, being grateful for our domestic helpers, celebrated this day meaningfully. This is an occasion for us to consider even domestic helpers have their



role to play through their humble services. Though they work within the four walls they too have their dignity and rights as children of God.

St. Martha's attitude of love in action was highlighted by the Greeting Song, Power Point Presentation, Prayer Service, Gift Giving and a high tea at our dining hall. We displayed their working photos in the presentation and they were glad to see their pictures. This made them feel that they are collaborators in our mission work. The celebration of this event appealed to us that, 'along with salary we also need to pay respect to our maids.' May our domestic helpers be joyful and graceful people in our communities!

INDEPENDENCE DAY PROGRAMME SVD SHISHYALAYA, VASAI

We the staff and students of Shishyalaya celebrated the feast of the Assumption of our Mother Mary and the 75th Independence Day very solemnly in the community. The main celebrant of the Mass was Fr. Alwyn Tuscano, the youth director of Vasai diocese, whose homily was centred on the theme 'the Role of

Mother in one's life' and explained to the students the meaning of Assumption. After the mass, he hoisted the flag and gave a very inspiring and motivating speech.



In the evening, we had a short colourful cultural programme for which Mrs. Arena John D'Souza, the Assistant Principal of St. Thomas Baptista College, was the Chief Guest. The seminarians presented dances, skits and songs which created

a festive atmosphere, infused with patriotism and brotherhood, with the sentiment of 'true unity in diversity', that our country is known for. Finally, our Chief Guest addressed our seminarians and emphasized the spirit of patriotism and unity in diversity. And she appreciated and congratulated all the seminarians and the staff for their hard work in bringing out the real patriotism as the underlying theme of the evening.

BESTOWAL OF MISSION CROSS DIVINE WORD SEMINARY, PUNE

“And He sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal” (Lk 9: 2).

On 22nd August 2021 at Divine Word Seminary, Pune eleven newly ordained priests were given the Mission Cross during the solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Richard Mathias, the Provincial Superior of India Mumbai Province. The ceremony was held in a simple and meaningful way



keeping in line with the tradition of our Society. Fr. Jesuraj Rayappan, the Rector of the Divine Word Seminary, welcomed and introduced everyone to the significance of the event. The Provincial in his thought provoking homily emphasized that there might come numerous unknown crosses on our religious missionary journey and we should never miss our focus. Our focus must be on Christ the Crucified. Our readiness to serve Him in our neighbours would give us the strength to move on.

He also emphasized the importance of giving our best in all our mission endeavours in spite of many challenges present in our life and mission contexts. After the homily Mission Cross was given to the new priests and they received it prayerfully. The conferring of the mission cross was a powerful symbolic gesture of being sent out to the Mission. This also marks the end of initial formation and beginning of the missionary service of the newly ordained priests. The event ended with the felicitation of the eleven priests and a fellowship meal. The path of the unknown is open before them and they are ready to step out. We wish each one of them God's choicest blessings and a happy religious-missionary-priestly journey ahead in the Society of the Divine Word.

SCHOOLS AND JUNIOR COLLEGE RESULTS

We congratulate our confreres and their collaborators who worked assiduously amidst the challenging situations of the pandemic and secured cent percent results in all our educational institutions. We know that our education ministry was adversely affected due to the pandemic and the consequent lock-downs and as a result our confreres, teachers, students and the parents had to face many challenges but they have carried out their responsibilities in creative ways in collaboration with all concerned. We appreciate the

efforts of our confreres and encourage them to sustain their commitment to promote education keeping in mind the good of our students and their parents.

Institution		Appeared	Pass	Percentage
St. Arnold's High School, Andheri		248	248	100%
St. Arnold's Junior College, Andheri	Commerce	83	83	100%
	Science	47	47	100%
St. Theresa's High School, Bandra		194	194	100%
St. Arnold's Central School, Mysore		80	80	100%
St. Arnold's Central School, Pune		156	156	100%
St. Arnold's Central School, Aduvassery		14	14	100%
Sarva Seva Sangh, Pune (Street Children) 10 th STD		7	7	100%

SCHOOLS AND JUNIOR COLLEGE STATISTICS

Institutions	Pre-primary	Primary I-VIII	Secondary IX-X	Higher Secondary XI-XII	Total	Christian Students
St. Arnold's Central School, Aduvassery	155	557	55	-	767	575
St. Arnold's High School & Junior College, Andheri	572	2197	547	346	3662	147
St. Theresa's High School, Bandra	365	682	1208	-	2255	63
St. Arnold's Central School, Mysore	156	1025	177	-	1358	110
St. Arnold's Central School, Pune	499	1345	323	162	2329	395

PROVINCE RETREATS

As communicated through the Annual Year Plan this year we have organized two retreats. First one will be held from 18-23 November 2021 at Atma Darshan and the second one from 25-30 January 2022 at Divine Call Centre, Mulki. As both the retreats will begin in the evening all are expected to reach the place by lunch on 18 November and 25 January and you can plan your departure on 24 November and 31 January respectively. The first retreat will be preached by Fr. Binees Thomas OP from Iagatpuri and the

second one will be preached by the Team of Subzone Biblical Coordinators. Every confrere is expected to make the annual retreat. Hence kindly plan and register with our office well in advance.

At the conclusion of the first retreat, on 23 November, we shall have the jubilee celebration. All the jubilarians are cordially invited to participate in the Eucharistic celebration and the fellowship meal.

RETREATS IN OTHER PROVINCES/REGION

Province/Region	Date	Venue	Preached by
INE	Oct 10 -15, 2021	Ishopanathi Ashram, Puri	Fr. Wilson SVD & Team
	Oct 17-22, 2021	Shanti Bhavan, Jharsuguda	Fr. Gregory Pinto SVD
INC	Oct 3 - 8, 2021	St. Arnold's Seva Sadan, Indore	Sub-zone Biblical Coordinators and Biblical Scholars
	Oct 31 - Nov 5, 2021		
INH	Oct 3 – 8, 2021	Divine Word Centre, Vadipatti	Sub-zone Biblical Coordinators and Biblical Scholars
ING	Oct 11- 17, 2021	SVD House, Guwahati	A Bishop from Tamilnadu

PROVINCIAL VISITATION

In the INM Provincial Council Meeting held on 6-7 March 2021 at Divine Word Seminary, Pune we had decided to carry out the triennial exercise of Provincial Visitation of the Province. We shall begin the visitation in the month of January 2022 and complete it by February 2022. The purpose of visitation, details of the plan, and the process will be made known soon.

LCFs	Visitor
Andheri	Fr. Richard Quadros
Bandra-Vasai-Managaon-Tala	Fr. S. M. Michael
Goa-Karnataka	Fr. Nicolau D'Costa
Kerala	Fr. Richard Mathias
Pune	Fr. Tomy Thomas

SUB-ZONE ON-GOING FORMATION PROGRAMME

A three day online on-going formation programme is planned for the young confreres of India Sub-zone in two batches.

First Batch: 06 - 08 Dec. 2021 (Ordination and Final Profession Batches 2017- 2021)

Second Batch: 09 -11 Dec. 2021 (Ordination and Final Profession Batches 2012 - 2016)

Theme: Animation for Personal Growth and Skills Development

Topics and Resource Persons:

Day 1: Developing Personal Spirituality, Personality Development and Working Towards Positive Spirit
by Fr. Charles D'Souza SJ

Day 2: Emotional Intelligence by Fr. M.C. Abraham CSC

Day 3: Management and Administrative Skills for Missionary Life by Fr. Raja Reddy SVD

In case of any difficulty to join your respective batch, you may join the other batch. The sessions will begin at 9.00 am and end at 1.00 pm. The zoom link for the workshop will be sent to you. Please confirm your participation by registering with Fr. David, Provincial Secretary.

RENEWAL PROGRAMME

A renewal programme for the Ordination/Final Vows batches of 1986 to 1992 will be held on 28 Feb. and 1 March 2022. The two days' workshop will be held at St. Arnold's Seva Sadan, Indore. Arrival is on 27 February and departure on 2 March 2022. Fr. Gregory Pinto will be the resource person for this workshop. Those who belong to the said Ordination or Final Vows batches are requested to confirm your participation by registering with Fr. David, Provincial Secretary.

MY PROGRAMMES

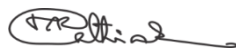
08 September	SVD Foundation Day / Blessing of INM Mission Office
11 September	Governing Board Online Meeting
16-17 September	Subzone online Formation Board Meeting
18-19 September	Subzone online IPF Meeting
20 September	Subzone online Vivat and Education Meeting
21-25 September	Visit to Jharsuguda, Subzone Governing Board Meeting
25-26 September	CRI online Meeting

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

05-06 October 2021

Vidya Niketan, Mysore

In the Divine Word



Richard Mathias SVD
INM Provincial Superior

'Rooted in the love of the Father and led by the Holy Spirit into the Mission of Christ'

- INM Vision Statement