



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

INDIA MUMBAI PROVINCE (INM)



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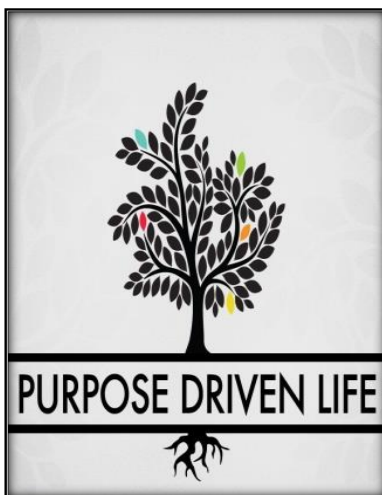
THIS YEAR I WILL...

We humans, over a period of time, through the observation of stars and based on seasons, have ingeniously devised a plan to express time in different units such as seconds, minutes, hours, days, months and years. While we give due credit to the efforts and wisdom of the so called 'time masters' of ancient times for their contribution to humanity, we as Christians must clearly see the master plan of God in giving us the precious gift of time which has the potential to transform us into 'masterminds' and 'masterpieces' on this earth by utilizing the gift of time in a creative way.



Scripture tells us, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." (Ecclesiastes 3:1) and therefore, we have the responsibility to embrace the precious gift of time and live our lives with strong resolve so that the purposes of God are actualized during our life time and we become what God wants us to be. Eleanor Torrey Powell, an American dancer and actress, once said, "What we are is God's gift to us. What we become is our gift to God."

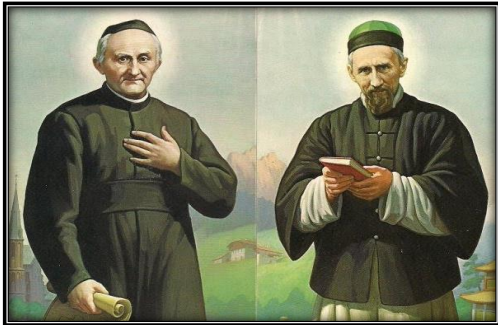
And therefore, we will do well to have a great dream, an exciting plan and a clear vision for our life and for the New Year. Former President APJ Abdul Kalam wanting to impress upon the young people of the need of having a clear vision once said, "Dream, dream, dream! Conduct these dreams into thoughts, and then transform them into action." Further, "Dream is not that which you see while sleeping it is something that does not let you sleep."



As we accept from the hand of the Lord the gift of time in the form of another New Year, we will do well to commence it with a dream, a vision. Solomon shared such a thought in Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." We can drift off into a sphere of distraction when we lack a vision and a sense of mission. Today, there are so many things happening in the world and many activities available for us that can easily distract us from our purpose. So, as persons anointed by the Holy One, we need to remind ourselves constantly that we are called, chosen, anointed and set apart to be the witnesses of the Lord by living enlightened lives especially in these volatile and trying times filled with multiple challenges to our life and mission. These days in our country, we are not only challenged by the ongoing pandemic but also the socio-political situations which stifle life and promote a culture of death for the sole purpose of vote bank politics and craze for holding on to power. But we, as religious persons, are called on not to succumb to

the evil designs of a few but exhibit great resilience through our moral authority which is far more superior to the passing passion for power, domination and exclusion drawn from temporary and worldly sources.

Let us therefore, at the beginning of this year resolve to strengthen our person by striving to live in the presence of God who has become Emmanuel - to be with us, journey with us in all that we are and all that we intend to achieve. Let us also consciously decide to grow in the awareness of His love for us and for the world which is the source of our authority and the motivation behind our committed service. As we begin the New Year honouring Mary - Mother of God on the first day of the year, let us take a cue from her to listen to our God speaking in very many ways at this time in history and cherish all things that the Lord presents during this year and willingly surrender ourselves to his guidance and direction.



As Divine Word Missionaries, we are also fortunate to celebrate the life and mission of our founder, St. Arnold Janssen and the first missionary to China, St. Joseph Freinademetz in the first month of the New Year. It seems God in His divine providence has planned well to keep before us these two great witnesses who utilized the gift of time and the gift of life to be faithful ambassadors of God's love to the world. Both of them, through their preaching and life testimony, persuade us to live in the ever

abiding presence of God and trust in his continuous providence so that our best selves are nurtured, faith is enhanced, passion for mission is ignited, and in the process, we are given the grace to live worthy of our calling. In this context, let us take to heart the advice of our founder given to Bishop Anzer, "Above all else, patiently do your duty as a good soldier wherever Divine Providence puts you. He knows why you are there. So don't fall into the temptation of impatience. Formerly, I myself used to think when I was in Bocholt, 'Why should I be teaching here? Why not somewhere else, where I could be doing much more for God? ...And later on when I was building the mission house it became clear to me that I had been in just the right place to prepare for my future...' We are in the right place, at the right time, for the right mission. All knowing and all loving God cannot make a mistake in his plan for those who love him. Trust Him and decide on the course of action. And this year I will...

- INM Leadership Team

BIRTH CENTENARY OF FR. PETER VERHAELLEN



SVD Mission Seminary, Raia, came alive on 16 December 2021 during the conclusion of the birth centenary celebrations of its founder late Fr. Peter Verhaelen. During the year various activities related to the life and mission of Fr. Peter were organized and many people participated in the events and celebrated his life and contributions to the Church, Society and the people.

The solemn Eucharistic celebration organized for the concluding celebrations was presided over by His Grace Filipe Neri Ferrao, Archbishop of Goa along with Fr. Richard Mathias, Provincial-INM, Fr Joaquim Fernandes, Rector, SVD Seminary, Raia and other priests. Many friends and well-wishers of Fr. Peter were also present for the Mass and drew inspiration from a model and saintly Divine Word Missionary, Fr. Peter who came from Germany, lived, served and died in Goa. In his homily, Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrao stressed on Fr. Peter Verhaelen's work as a priest as well as his efforts to reach out to the people. He said that Fr. Peter was a worker in the vineyard of the Lord who worked upholding the

dignity of labour and with excellent skills. After the Mass, there was a ballet named 'Vavraddi' - A labourer, written by Agnelo de Borim and directed by Gokuldas Borkar, The play began with a scene in Germany during the World War II when Fr. Peter was taken to be a male nurse. The story epitomized the personality and virtues of Fr. Peter. In fond memory of Fr. Peter a booklet depicting his life journey was released with the title, "A Faithful Worker in His Vineyard". The life of Fr. Peter has been so magnanimous and exemplary that hundreds of people remember him till date for his unforgettable humble nature, indomitable spirit of hard work, passion for nature, animals and of course, the holiness of a true missionary.

UCDC ORGANIZES HUMAN RIGHTS DAY



UCDC organized Human Rights Day on 10th December 2021 from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm at St. Theresa's High School, Bandra West. The theme for the day was: "Reducing Inequalities, Advancing Human Rights." The theme relates to "Equality" Article 1 of UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) which says 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.' The participants were mainly women of Self-Help

Groups; around 150 women, 20 men, and 30 children participated and benefited. The Chief Guests were Ms. Manisha Patil, Inspector, and Ms. Ashwini, Sub-Inspector both from Bandra Police Station. The Guests of honour were Mr. Ernest Fernandes, Ms. Nirmala Mehendale, the founder and Chairperson of World Kindness India, Fr. Paul Vattathara, SVD, the director of UCDC, Fr. Jerome D'Souza, the director of Maitri Sangatan and Fr. Ivan D'Silva from St. Theresa High School.



The event began with welcoming the Chief Guests and other dignitaries. Fr. Jerome D'Souza, SVD, and Fr. Cosmos Ekka, SVD introduced the theme and the guests. The Chief Guests were invited for the lighting of the lamp. This was followed by a prayer song by women. Ms.

Ashwini and Ms. Manisha talked about the fundamental rights of every citizen. They also explained the role of police personnel in different situations. They shared the dedicated phone numbers for respective complaints with regards to women, children, and elderly persons. Ms. Ashwini emphasized on Domestic Violence and the concept of good touch and bad touch. Ms. Nirmala elaborated her talk by a small game on the duties of every human being. Her talk was more interactive and participatory. The event was made colorful by the Adivasi Cultural Dance by three groups of three Zones namely Bandh, Bandra Station and the Mount Mary - Lalmati. Snacks were served to all the participants which were sponsored by Mr. Ernest Fernandes, a member of UCDC.

SARVA VIKAS DEEP MANGAON



Glad to share the good news from Mangaon Mission how our face value has increased and our presence is making a difference in the lives of people. On the occasion of the platinum jubilee of India's Independence and the birth centenary of tribal leader, Birsa Munda, Sarva Vikas Deep was awarded with 'Janjati Gaurav Saptah Puraskar' as one of the best organizations in empowering the tribals in Raigad, Maharashtra. The award was given away by Raigad

Collector Dr. Mahendra IAS, in the presence of Chief Executive Officer of Raigad Zilla Parishad, Additional Collectors, Project Officer: Integrated Tribal Development Department, District Forest Officer, Superintendent of Police and many more NGOs. We look forward to actualize Kingdom of God and continue to do good for the well-being of others through our missionary endeavours.

CELEBRATION OF SACRAMENTS

UCDC, BANDRA



UCDC/Maitri Sangatan in collaboration with Mumbai Migrants Desk organized Baptism, Confirmation and Mass-Wedding for our migrant Catholics in Mumbai. The Baptism ceremony took place on 19th of November, 2021 with Fr. Jerome D'Souza SVD as the main celebrant. There were 15 candidates in the age group of 2 to 45 years. Fr. Jerome and the catechist, Mr. Vijay Minj worked hard to prepare them by teaching basic catechism prior to this important event in their life. The liturgy for the Baptism was made more meaningful with entrance dance, washing of hands of the celebrants, *Arati*, Bible Procession and Offertory Dance. The entire liturgy was planned and prepared by our Catholic sisters and brothers residing at the Bandra Station. At the end of the Mass all gathered at the School Quadrangle where the women group felicitated the newly baptized with a 'congratulation song'. They were very happy to receive the Sacrament.



The Confirmation and the Wedding Ceremony were organised on 20th November, 2021. Ten Candidates were confirmed by Most Rev. Bishop Allwyn D'Silva. And Nine Couples received the Sacrament of Marriage. The concelebrants were Fr. Paul Vattathara SVD, Director of UCDC, Fr. Jerome D'Souza SVD, Director of Maitri Sangatan, Fr. Cosmos Ekka SVD, Fr. Donald D'Souza SVD, Fr. John Lugun SVD, and Fr. Glasten Gonsalves from Mumbai Migrants Desk. Fr. John Lugun broke the Word of God. There were more than 500 faithful who participated in the ceremony.

The arrangement of the entire liturgy was taken care by the Faithful of 'Bandh Zone' and 'Mount Mary Zone'. It was made more meaningful and richer with a good blend of Piety and Tribal Culture. Liturgy included an 'entrance dance', 'washing of hands of the Bishop and concelebrants', 'Bible Procession' and 'Offertory Dance'. Good number of people were actively involved in the whole memorable event. The 'Wedding Meal' was provided by Ms. Juli and Kevin. UCDC acknowledges their generosity. The vote of thanks was given by Ms. Rajni, a migrant herself. Newly wedded couples and newly confirmed faithful were felicitated with a 'congratulation song' and bouquets of flowers. The program ended with sumptuous Wedding Meal.

CHARMING CAROLERS

At the initiative of one of the SVD Lay Mission Partner (Mumbai 2) India Sub-zone SVD Lay Mission Partners had a carols' nite on the 5th of December 2021 on zoom platform and simultaneously on



YouTube. The carols were sung in different languages and dialects by the Lay Partners' Groups from ING, INE, INC, INM and INH. The singing was coordinated with the help of Ms. Stephanie Sutari from St. Theresa's Church, Bandra and Fr. Ronald Pereira SVD. The highlight of the event was the Special Christmas message by Most. Rev. John Barwa SVD, the Archbishop of Cuttack Bhubaneswar Archdiocese. Our Mumbai 2 group too took part in the same and they again

participated in the carols nite at St. Theresa's Church on the 12th of December with a medley of carols. The same group had the opportunity to sing the carols at the Mount Mary's and St. Stephen's steps on 18th of December, which was attended by hundreds of Christians as well as non-Christians.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS SSS, ANDHERI



We do not get to Christmas day overnight. It's a season of celebrations. But then, the entire globe is experiencing hard times, as never before in the history, due to multiple waves and variants of the pandemic. Despite this state of affairs, we wanted to impart the message that Christmas is a love story par excellence, proclaiming to the entire humanity peace, joy and hope. We arranged varieties of programmes and fellowship-gatherings for

the beneficiaries of our different social projects. For the little kids of pre-school/play-school, we had three days of activities consisting of cultural and sports activities, Nativity drama enactment by the tiny tots and climaxing on a day of Christmas party with lots of sweets, snacks and different kinds of gifts packed in Xmas stockings for all.



A day was set aside to conduct similar activities for the children of our support class at Gautamnagar slum, near international airport. These kids were more than fortunate to receive expensive gift items like school bags and stationery. Beneficiaries of HIV/AIDS project received nutrition hampers with extra items of chocolates, confectioneries and candies, while the community college students and the Substance Abuse project beneficiaries received only the

chocolate hampers. As the Christmas season is trickling away we monitor the developments of the pandemic situation with no small measure of concern, more so with a sense of trepidation.

FORMATORS' COURSE ISHVANI KENDRA, PUNE



Sixteen sisters and four priests belonging to 13 religious congregations and a diocese participated in the Formators Course organized by Ishvani Kendra from November 21–18 December 2021. It was a time of grace and empowerment for them as they learned and reflected together with the resource persons on formation topics like: problems and pathways, intercultural awareness, integral transformation, personality

assessment, spiritual direction and discernment, discipling the formees for mission, the challenges of digital era and new evangelization, etc. They also worked together in groups to come out with a vision of formation in the light of the inputs. It was also a time where all of them felt at home and refreshed in the calm atmosphere of Ishvani Kendra.

CHRISTMAS WITH CHILDREN SSS, PUNE



Jesus was born at Bethlehem as homeless at a forsaken corner of the city. Sarva Seva Sangh, Pune celebrated Christmas on 19th December 2021 with the homeless children who are given temporary shelter for education. The day began with a number of fun games conducted by Frt. Abin Mathew followed by relishing the food served at the food stalls arranged by the staff. Children enjoyed the games and food to the full and at the end

lovely Christmas gifts were distributed which took them by surprise. We also distributed cakes and sweets to over 500 children living in the streets at various locations in Pune city. On 27th December the members of SVD Lay Partners' Group - Disciples of the Divine Word, Pune celebrated Christmas with the boys staying at SSS and playing fun games, singing carols and dancing.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION ST. ANN CHURCH, NALA



St. Ann Church, Nala, the smallest parish in the Diocese of Mangalore and the ICYM Youth wing of Nala under the leadership of Terence D'Costa organised one day Christmas youth retreat on 5th December 2021, for the denary youth preached by Divine Call Centre team led by Fr. Walter Mendonca Jr., which was attended by 105 youth of 10 parishes of Belthangady Denary. PPC and Parishioners shared the expense of the day and supported our youth.

This year has been dedicated as the year of the family in the Diocese of Mangalore and here at Nala we decided to visit all the families in preparation for Christmas. We had the carol singing for 3 days from 18th to 20th evenings, more than 50 children and adults participated. Singing carols and sharing the sweets served by the families were very inspiring and cherishing experiences.



As it was the first Christmas in the new church parishioners had decorated the church and prepared the crib reminding of the birth of Jesus in the manger. On the Christmas night choir sang the carols with reading the scriptures and pondering over the birth of babe at Bethlehem. In spite of the uncertainties of lock down people participated in the Holy Eucharist led by BCC Co-ordinator Vincent Rego and team proclaiming the spirit of Christmas. During the Eucharist we prayed for the well-being and protection of the families and for those who supported to actualize the dream of

building the new church. After the mass the children and ICYM Youth danced to the tune of Christmas.

Santa visited Nala with Christmas cake which was auctioned, Apolin Correa and family shared 5kg cake, with people present along with the Christmas sweets brought by the parishioners. Fr. Thomas Sequeira, Parish Priest thanked and congratulated the people for their mission spirit and generosity in sharing the Mission Sunday collection and bagging the 5th place in the Diocese on the basis of per head count (Rs. 228.79 per head with 145 members from 33 families). Children were given gifts for various competitions that were held during the year in catechism, star, greetings, crib making, games and sports sponsored by ICYM. Program concluded with festal supper cooked and sponsored by Sebastian Viegas, Adarsh Correa and family to all who were present. Thus the Christmas spirit was relived and shared praying to the Lord to ward off all the calamities in the year 2022.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION GYAN ASHRAM, ANDHERI



Gyan Ashram celebrated Christmas on 22nd December at 7 pm. It was attended in small numbers (offline and online) being aware of Covid pandemic and keeping the protocols. Fr. Ronald D'Silva the Director of Gyan Ashram welcomed all at the start of the program. Dances, Carol singing and music instrumental performances added joy to the celebration and elevated the Christmas spirit of all. A new Christmas song composed and arranged by Fr. Chinnappan

Antonysamy was released at the program. The program witnessed spot prices and a housie game which were of great fun. Mr. Osmond Pereira one of the music teachers at the academy was the compere who in his candid style engaged the audience effortlessly. The theme 'Guide us into Perfect Light' stood at the backdrop dimly yet in a powerful way exhorting the message of hope for a brighter future at this time of the pandemic. Mrs. Michele Athaide gave the Christmas message which reminded everyone to count on the blessings of the Almighty and move on with hope. Fr. Anil T Paul proposed the vote of thanks at the conclusion.

SSpS 15TH GENERAL CHAPTER



The Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) are all set to hold their 15th General Chapter from 12 - 31 January 2022 at Ariccia, Rome with the theme, "Immersed in the Life of the Trinity, Transforming the World with Compassion". As per a message released by Sr. Maria Theresia, Congregational Leader, most of the Capitulars have reached Rome and a few Capitulars will not be able to participate for reasons of Covid-19 regulations, visa difficulties or health. Sr. Maria Theresia has invited all the members of Arnoldus Family to journey together with them and pray that they may discern and find the answers the Spirit offers to the world through them in this specific time of history.

SABBATICAL LEAVE: FR. MOHAN DOSS

Jnana Deepa administration in accordance with their statutes and by-laws had approved the request of Fr. Mohan Doss for a sabbatical year from November 2021 to October 2022 and accordingly, we too had

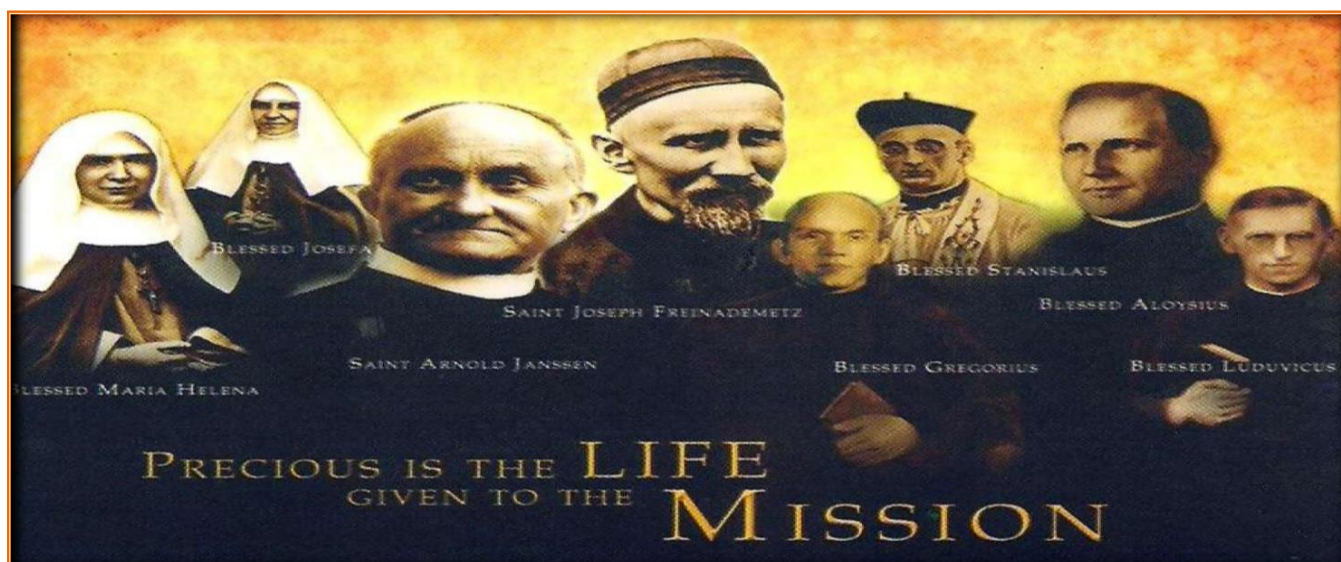
granted him the permission to go to Germany for the same with a view to work on publishing his articles as a book and update himself in the field of systematic theology. He is all set to travel to Germany on 18th January 2022. During his sabbatical he will be residing in a parish of the Archdiocese of Freiburg and carrying out his research work and upgrading. We wish him an enriching and beneficial sabbatical year.

MY PROGRAMMES

January 12	Ordination Dn. Melroy Mascarenhas, Sacred Heart Church, Andheri
January 15-16	Final Vows and Diaconate, Divine Word Seminary, Pune
January 22	Ordination Dn. Lucas Parkhe, St. Mary's Church, Aurangabad
Jan. 31-Feb. 7	Provincial Visitation Kerala LCF

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

04 - 06 March 2022
Divine Word Seminary, Pune



HAPPY FEAST OF ST. ARNOLD JANSSEN AND ST. JOSEPH FREINADEMETZ

In the Divine Word

Richard Mathias SVD
Provincial Superior – INM

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

- INM Vision Statement