



PROVINCIAL CIRCULAR

INDIA MUMBAI PROVINCE (INM)



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LIVING THE MISSION IN A FRAGILE WORLD

When we look at our world today, we find that we are living in a fragile world; traditions are collapsing or breaking down and we are faced with epidemics, economic meltdown, increasing poverty and climate change etc. Recent studies have shown that 1% of the human race, some 70 million people own as much wealth as the remaining 99% together. Humans are becoming slaves of machines created to serve them. Markets are not at our service either; they are impersonal and inhuman and we are enslaved by them. We scramble to acquire things that we neither need nor want rather what the advertisers' implant in our heads. We are living in a world where processed foods give us more empty calories than ever before and with fewer nutrients. Life time shortens. We increasingly apps, phones. Our relationships are and interruptions, reducing our work, and to prioritize. Instead of are invited to switch every 5 messages. All of this makes it experience into disconnected wreaks havoc on our spiritual

When we turn to India, the arrival of the Corona Virus our chaos and breakability. The the entire world has made us we human beings are. This apart, the increasing communalization of politics and attempts to build a mono-cultural and mono-religious India leading to Hate Speech calling for genocide and assassination are really frightening.



expectancy lengthens, but available live our lives via screens, streams, digital. We receive notifications ability to focus, to pursue deep concentrating 5 hours at a time, we minutes to our WhatsApp easier to fracture our lived compartments, a process that formation. Our world has changed!

fragility is frightening. With the lives tumbled into an abyss of invisible virus that has devastated realize how vulnerable and fragile

This hate speech and calling for violence has occurred in the broader context of the escalation of attacks on minority groups, attacks on churches, mosques and the disruption of prayers. There were several attacks on Christians during Christmas celebrations. "Shouting 'Santa Claus murdabad', they burned the effigies in Andhra Pradesh. They attacked Christians at a Varanasi hospital. They destroyed a statue of Jesus at Ambala. A study shows that there were 142 attacks against Christians in 2015, it increased manifold to 478 in 2021. The highest number of attacks was reported from Uttar Pradesh. This made the CBCI Secretary General Archbishop Felix Machado to ask "Where are we as citizens? Are we living in the 21st century? Is there law and order in this beloved country of mine?"

With all that is happening in our country and the world, there is fear and confusion creeping in with regards to our faith and religious missionary vocation. The ubiquity of consumerism has fully infiltrated our lives. It is also important to understand that we are living in a world which sees doubt as a form of

health. It often derives meaning or excitement through experiments with sensations. There is increasing individualism gripping the lives of people. The pervasive mind-set that individual people are the sole arbiters of their identity, morality and destiny disrupts community life. We live in a culture that is commitment averse. In this context, unless we have deep roots and convinced about our Christian faith and of our religious life and mission in today's context, in this multicultural and multi-religious world of ours we will drift away from our main focus in life. We all need to reflect on the essentials of missionary life, cultivate and fortify our conviction through faithful personal, communal prayer, constant renewal and rejuvenation that we move from involvement in rituals, our celebrations of the Eucharist are more consciously and concentrated upon to a spirituality deeply imbedded in or mind and spirit.

Christian discipleship today requires discernment and genuine commitment to face the challenges of the present world. Reading the Word of God constantly and reflecting on the meaning and content of its relevance for today's world will help us to face the challenges of everyday life. Keeping the vision and mission of our individual lives and of the community and of revisiting them frequently may help us for a focused life. In the context of excessive individualism, the power of the gospel has the unifying force to unite the diverse groups of people, breaking down the walls of hostility that naturally divide us. To face the world of today, we need to rediscover the beauty of simplicity, focusing on the core values of the Gospel in our lives and ministry. We pray that God grants us the wisdom to navigate these challenges with humility, faith and fortitude. May we foster this spirit through total openness to the Spirit calling us to be alive to the signs of the time!

- **INM Provincial Leadership Team**

TO WITNESS HIS LOVE AND SERVE HIS MISSION



It was a memorable day not only for us but for our family members, near and dear ones, all our well-wishers, members of our Society on earth and in heaven too. It was a day which can come only once in life time for us, a day which cannot be articulated in words, only can be felt and cherished. It was a day with a few people to witness physically and many virtually. Family members and loved ones wanted to witness this day in person, but thanks to technology which made it possible to witness

the event at least online. It was a day which was represented by Rev. Fr. Provincial, Richard Mathias SVD on behalf of Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word. It was in front of the Altar of God that we committed ourselves totally for the service of God and his people. It was a Kenosis experience witnessed by Koinonia. It was a day on which we became the members of a worldwide family consisting of six thousand and more members. It was a day on which we got a lot wishes and blessings from home as well as globe. It was a joyous and unforgettable day. This special day was our 'Final Vows Day', where we said yes to a lifelong commitment to God, the Society and the Church at large.

With this exhilarating disposition, we stepped into the next day filled with heavenly serenity for our deaconate ordination. On 16th January 2022, Most Rev. Dr. AAS Durairaj SVD, the Archbishop of Bhopal, ordained nine SVD fraters and two MSFS brothers as deacons in Divine Word Seminary. The SVDs, SSps Sisters and the MSFS Fathers and brothers attended the meaningful celebration. The Archbishop highlighted the importance of deacons in the Catholic Church and also emphasized the meaning of diaconate ministry. He called on all the deacons to render their service generously to the people of God and prepare well for the Priestly Ordination. After the liturgical celebration a colorful yet simple felicitation program was organized in the refectory for the newly ordained deacons and newly installed Archbishop of Bhopal. It was a very meaningful and grace filled event in the calendar of Divine Word Seminary, Pune. Now, we are in his disposition 'To Witness His Love and Serve His Mission'.

REDISCOVER THE PRIESTHOOD: AN ICON OF CHRIST



Due to the pandemic related difficulties the designated retreat preachers' team of India Subzone Biblical Coordinators could not travel to Divine Call Centre, Mulki to preach the retreat. At the last moment, we were able to avail the services of Fr. Francis D'Souza ICPE who was on home holidays in Bangalore. It was the best wine that was in store for us. Fr. Francis took up the theme, "Rediscover the Priesthood as an Icon of Christ". Fr. Francis has travelled all over the world and has rich missionary and religious experiences. His deep convictions in his priestly vocation and love for the Word of God kept us attentive to his talks filled with personal life stories and church teachings. His talks encouraged us to love our priesthood. A priest is an icon of love, mercy, holiness and joy. Participant listened to him with great attention. All appreciated the talks and the adoration. At the end of the retreat the participants visited the minor Basilica of St. Lawrence situated at Attur, Karkala; convent of Holy Spirit Sisters, Pernal; SVD House, Kirem and Arnold Nivas, home for the aged.

CHOTANAGPUR YOUTH AND MIGRANT MINISTRY ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S ASHRAM, RAIJA



The long-awaited migrant ministry in Goa by SVDs began some 3 months ago after due consultation with the local diocesan priests involved in this ministry. Apart from the Masses that are held at different parishes such as Verna, Consua, Cotto Fatorpa, Navelim, Betalbatimetc, youth groups have also been formed in different villages. The different youth groups are linked under the common name: '*Chotanagpur Youth Group - Goa*'. Meetings are held at different places where issues facing the youth are discussed. Efforts are on to work with the local government to procure documents such as election ID and passports as some of the migrants have been living in Goa for the last 25 years or more. Some youth are being helped to get jobs on the ship and abroad. The attempt to get scholarship for some of these children from their respected state governments was not successful due to lack of the required documents. The family visits brought to light some couples whose marriages need to be either solemnised or rectified, and the birth of children properly registered. The lack of birth certificates and other relevant documents are hampering the admission of children to schools and hostels. Arrangements are being made to place children in hostels where they can get better education and other facilities free of cost.

The words of the Archbishop of Goa, Felipe Neri Ferrao act as a guiding principle in this ministry to the migrants, "We should not be satisfied with just the Hindi Mass that we celebrate. We should go beyond that and help these migrants to come up in life and also try to change the mentality of the people of Goa so that they accept them as their own." The immediate aim of the migrant ministry is therefore to help our migrant brothers and sisters to come up in life and to help them to integrate with the local community. Right now the ministry is limited to South Goa, but hearing about the work here, there have been already enquiries from the migrant youth in North Goa for some guidance and help. I take this opportunity to thank Fr. Provincial and his council for giving me this opportunity to start this ministry among these people. I also

sincerely thank my staff members Fr. Joaquim and Bro. Vincent for all their support. I express my special word of thanks to Fr. Joaquim for his encouragement and concern for the betterment of the ministry. May God continue to bless the work He has started through us.

CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION JANSEVA SOCIETY, TALA



Children's Day is the most auspicious day in the life of every child. In India, Children's Day is celebrated on 14 November every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He was very fond of kids and he strongly believed that they were the future leaders of the nation. Similarly, we the members of Janseva Society, Tala strongly believe that children are future leaders of the villages and taluka but we need to train, guide, teach and help them to develop their talents, for which, we the members of the Janseva Society along with the villagers organized Children's Day program and celebrated it on 8 January 2022. We could bring together 50 children from different villages. It was great to be with the tribal children and celebrate the Children's Day. We gave gifts and conducted many games for them and also gave a message on the importance of education.

REACHING OUT TO THE KASHMIRI MIGRANTS



A group of 161 families comprising of 900 plus people from Kashmir have moved to Mumbai and set up a temporary camp near the Bandra Terminal for the past one month due to various problems especially the extreme climate conditions. Under the guidance and direction of His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias and the support of Bishop Allwyn D'Silva, the Mumbai Migrants' Commission in collaboration with the diocesan Centre for Social Action and many parishes has reached out to the migrants and have supplied them with good amount of provisions. The entire operation was effectively carried out by the Unit Head, Fr. Cosmos Ekka, Urban Community Development Centre (UCDC), Bandra by initially conducting a camp survey and then supervising the entire operation. UCDC serves as the base for the said operation.

COMMUNITY ANIMATION PORGRAMME

As you are aware, we had requested Fr. Gregory Pinto to conduct animation programme for our communities to motivate the confreres to live cordial community life attending to their person, aligning their purposes to the Vision and Mission of the institute and carrying out the mission in coordination and synergy. Along with the proposed community animation, we had also suggested to him to conduct evaluation of all the confreres and the communities as per the directive of our recent Provincial Chapter. In spite of the challenging situation of the pandemic, he has successfully completed these exercises from August to December 2021. We thank him on behalf of every confrere and the administration for giving his valuable time and utilizing his giftedness to conduct these programmes in a spirit of trust and open dialogue in order to facilitate a realistic and constructive outcome. We would like to thank Fr. Ittoop for conducting the animation and evaluation sessions for the Atma Darshan community. We thank all the communities for welcoming them cordially and cooperating with them to carry out these programmes.

CELEBRATION OF SVD MISSION SUNDAY SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT - 13TH MARCH 2022

Based on our decision to celebrate the SVD Mission Sunday in all our communities and institutions, Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurath, INM Mission Secretary, has requested all the Parish Priests/Superiors/Heads of Institutions to celebrate the second Sunday of Lent, 13th March 2022 as the SVD MISSION SUNDAY. He has proposed various ways of celebrating the day as well as prepared and sent the envelopes to be utilized for collecting funds for the World Mission. Kindly support his initiatives and efforts by celebrating the day in a meaningful way in our parishes/houses and institutions.

SVD MISSIONARY AND SPIRITUAL CONFRATERNITY CERTIFICATE

Following up on our decision, Fr. Jolly Mudakkampurath, INM Mission Secretary, has prepared 'SVD Missionary and Spiritual Confraternity Certificates' to be issued to the donors for generating funds for the World Mission. These certificates can be issued all through the year to any donor who wishes to support our Society's missionary work in different parts of the world. All the confreres, communities and institutions are requested to help him by making known this initiative to the prospective donors and well-wishers and issuing these certificates. Kindly contact him and obtain the certificates and the associated information regarding the issuance of these certificates.

FR. ASHOKA ON EXTENDED LEAVE



Fr. Superior General through his letter dated 30 November 2021 has granted Fr. Ashoka D'Souza belonging to Italian Province the extended leave of one year from 10 October 2021 to 9 October 2022 to take care of his ailing father and mother. As per Society's norms, in consultation with Fr. Maxim Pinto, Rector, SVD House, Kirem we have assigned him to the community.

SVD FORMATORS AND VOCATION PROMOTORS' COURSE CENTRO AD GENTES, NEMI



Fr. Daniel Barretto and Fr. Nickson Louis Gabru have been permitted to attend the SVD Formators and Vocation Promoters' Course to be held from 15 February to 13 April 2022 at Nemi. They have already left for Nemi, Rome on 4 February and after ten days of quarantine they will begin the course and return on 1 May 2022. We wish them an enriching and rewarding time.

SSpS NEW CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM



The 15th General Chapter of the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) held from 12-31 January 2022 at Ariccia, Rome has elected the new Congregational Leadership Team. The team is composed of Sr. Miriam Altenhofen, Congregational Leader, and five other members: Srs. Kreti Sanhueza Vidal, Mikaelin Bupu, Tressa Sebastian Nayathu, Mariana Camezzana and Jana Pavla. The number of members of the Leadership Team is changed from seven to six members. This was a proposal made by the current Congregational Leadership Team and approved by the 15th General Chapter because of the decreasing number of

members in the congregation, the advancement of technology and ease of travel. We congratulate the new Congregational Leader and the Team members and pray that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire and guide them to discern God's will and lead the congregation according to God's purposes in these trying times.

CONGRATULATIONS

FR. MELROY AND FR. LUCAS



We congratulate Fr. Melroy Mascarenhas, ordained on 12th January 2022 at Sacred Heart Church, Andheri East, Mumbai by Most. Rev. John Rodrigues, Auxiliary Bishop of Bombay and Fr. Lucas Parkhe, ordained on 22nd January 2022 at St. Mary's Church, Wahegaon, by Most. Rev. Ambrose Rebello, Bishop of Aurangabad and pray for God's abundant blessings on them for a fruitful priestly ministry in the province.

WELCOME TO DN. CRANSTON



Fr. Paulus Budi Kleden, Superior General, in his letter dated 21st January 2022 has assigned Frt. Cranston Manuel Joseph Vaz to INM Province. We extend a warm welcome to Dn. Cranston to INM and wish him enriching life and mission in our province.

MY PROGRAMMES

11-12 February 2022	Provincial Visitation of SVD Provincial House by Fr. S. M. Michael
13-17 February 2022	Provincial Visitation of St. John's Mission Seminary, Changanacherry and SVD Vachana Jyothi, Pilathara
25-27 February 2022	India Subzone Governing Body Meeting, SVD Vidya Bhavan, Bhopal

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

04 - 06 March 2022
Divine Word Seminary, Pune

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