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FATHER GENERAL

Visit to the Netherlands Province

From 7th to 10th May, 2015 Father General visited the Netherlands Province, accompanied by the Assistant for Western Europe, Fr Antoine Kerhuel. While in the Netherlands, Father General visited Nijmegen, the home town of St Peter Canisius. Father General also visited Berchmanum, the infirmary of the Dutch Jesuits. In this large residence, there are 40 Jesuits and 15 other religious. A new infirmary is being constructed a few hundred meters away, and it will open in 2016. Father General blessed the foundation stone. Noticeable on the foundation stone are the words "Vt oMnes VnVM sInt," meaning "May all be one," a text from the Gospel according to John. Put together, the Roman letters M+M+V+V+V+I add up to 2016, the year the infirmary will open its doors. On Saturday, May 9, Father General met with Jesuits, board members of Jesuits works, and the Province Consult. The main topic of reflection was, "how do we present the Gospel in a secularized society?" The Society of Jesus has two main apostolic engagements in Amsterdam: inner city ministry in the church De Krijtberg, which has remained uninterrupted since 1654, and Ignatiushuis, the Centre for Ignatian Spirituality.

FROM THE PROVINCES

AUSTRALIA: Jesuit Mission Raises Funds and Friends at Maytime Fair

The Maytime Fair is one of the biggest days of the year for Jesuits and friends in Melbourne, Australia. It always draws a crowd of people looking for great bargains, beautiful crafts, tasty foods and a variety of entertainment. Xavier College played host to this year's fair, with thousands turning out in fine May weather to enjoy the day. Dozens of volunteers contributed to the event - in the lead-up and on the day itself. Parents, alumni and students from Xavier College were joined by students from surrounding schools, as well as partner schools and other Melbourne Jesuit ministries, to run the various stalls and activities. 'The Maytime Fair was yet again a fantastic occasion for Jesuit Mission and its long-term communities of friends and supporters to celebrate coming together, and in coming together to generate lots of needed funds, and *bonhomie*, that go towards supporting our communities in Cambodia, India, Myanmar and East Timor', said Jesuit Mission Director Fr Jeremy Clarke SJ.

CALIFORNIA: Border Immigration Group Wins Award

The Kino Border Initiative, a Jesuit ministry on the Arizona-Sonora border, recently received the "Legacy of the Martyrs" Award from the Ignatian Solidarity Network. The local organization was recognized for its "ongoing commitment to affirming the dignity of those who migrate, through accompaniment, advocacy and education," a news release said. "Their commitment to not just meet the immediate needs of those who migrate, but also to engage in advocacy that can bring about systemic change, is so important as our country grapples with the need for comprehensive immigration reform," said Christopher Kerr, executive director of the Ignatian Solidarity Network. "This recognition motivates us to continue to serve as a humanizing presence on the U.S.-Mexico border and to foster bi-national solidarity on the issue of migration, through humanitarian aid, education and research/advocacy," said the Rev. Sean Carroll, executive director of the Kino Border Initiative.

CHINA: Millions Tune in to Life of Jesuit Painter

More than 360 million viewers in China tuned in for the premiere of a three-part documentary about the imperial painter, Giuseppe Castiglione SJ, by Xin Yage. Castiglione (1688-1766) was a Jesuit painter from Milan who became one of the greatest and most admired in the history of Chinese art. On the weekend of 10 April the documentary aired on Channel 10 of

the giant Chinese National Television network and attracted a huge number of viewers. The documentary is a co-production of the Kuangchi Program Service in Taipei and Jiangsu TV. 'In view of the main character and theme, we knew it would be a success, but we did not expect that the number of viewers would be of these proportions', said the film's Jesuit producers, Frs Jerry Martinson SJ and Emilio Zanetti SJ. The film will air on other provincial networks during May and will be repeated on the national channel, before premiering in Europe later in the year, beginning with Italy on 30 September.

JESAM: Meeting of Major Superiors

The Major Superiors of Africa and Madagascar met together at Institut de Théologie de la Compagnie de Jésus in Abidjan Ivory Coast together with Fr. General and his Regional Assistant Fr. Fratern Masawe. As they do twice a year, they discussed matters of common concern such as the Formation of African Jesuits, Common Works of Africa and Madagascar such as the African Jesuit AIDS Network, The Jesuit Historical Institute in Africa, Leadership among Jesuits and Lay people and the tertiary and secondary education apostolates among many other items. The meeting expressed the international nature of the Society of Jesus with the attendance of the President of the Conference of Provincials of Europe; Fr. John Dardis, the Provincial of France; Fr. Grenet, and the Provincial of Chicago-Detroit; Fr. Brian Paulson, who contributed views and concerns of the Major Superiors in other parts of the world adding to the richness of the meeting. The Major Superiors were happy to attend the ordination of the latest crop of deacons from ITCJ amid much rejoicing by friends, relatives and Jesuits.

SPECIAL REPORT - NEPAL EARTHQUAKES

It has been 16 days since the devastating earthquake hit Tipling VDC, together with many parts of Nepal. The situation is getting under control. People have accepted their fate and have now started to collect and to rebuild their lives and houses. The first-hand data shows that there are 9 wards in this VDC, totaling 547 houses; there are more than 3,229 people affected by this earthquake. Out of 3,229 people 1,179 of them are outside the village, working or studying. There were 9 deaths and 11 injured; and many animals were killed during this earthquake.

All the people are under the make shift tents, because every house is damaged and unfit for staying inside. Not only have the houses been destroyed, but also the access trails leading to the VDC from Dhading Basi and Shebru Besi have been swept away by the landslides in various places. The only possibility of reaching the village now is through helicopter, or take the dangerous trek with landslides, which will take around two to three days to reach the VDC and carrying any useful material is almost impossible.

Nine days after the earthquake, Fr. Samuel Simick, after many attempts and helps from many well-wishers, could reach the Mission. Till that time Fr. Norbert D'Souza with the help of a few friends collected the data and was able to save many useful things of the community as well as of people. Fr. Norbert went through all the 9 wards to help the victims and collect the data. He went to different villages with our mobile health team to help the injured. Only yesterday, (10/05/2015) a makeshift tent for Tipling Jesuits was setup. There is no chance of staying in the old rented Jesuits Residence. And the Priests were busy helping the people in different ways.

The weather is still cold and wet. We have rain almost every evening. The tents could hold for few months at the most-we hope. The rainy season is approaching. It remains till October in this area, therefore, we need some kind of temporary shelter that could withhold heavy rain and hailstones occasionally. Rebuilding of the houses will not be possible one the rainy season starts. Things do not move as smoothly in this area as in other places. We don't have engineers, builders, labourers, and supply of building materials.

Food supplies are getting low! The shops that used to keep things are empty; the trails that used to carry things by mule are no more. People are trying to get anything that they could. The relief that people are getting is not quite enough. One trip of helicopter-a big one-can carry around 2000 kgs of goods. The smaller helicopter can carry only about 400 kgs of goods. The government pays for the big helicopter but the smaller ones are for the rescue and sometimes privately hired ones, which could cost from 80,000 to 1,50,000 Nepali Rupees (USD 785 - USD 1,470). Some organizations have supplied with food items but they could bring it only till where the vehicles could come. People from the villages have gone to carry the food items. People could carry only a small amount and all the families could not go to bring the food items because they are busy with their own works-repairing the broken houses, looking after the animals, farming etc.

We need all that assistance that we can get, immediately.

Yours Sincerely In Christ Jesus
Samuel Simick SJ

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There was another quake of 7.3 magnitude this afternoon (12 May, 2015) at around 12. 55 pm. According to the reports so far thirty-five people have been killed and over 1000 were injured due to the fresh quake. At least four people , died in Chautara in Sindhupalchok district north of the capital Kathmandu, after several buildings collapsed. The U.S. Geological Survey said that the quake was centered 68 km (about 42 miles) west of the town of Namche Bazar, close to Mount Everest. It was felt as far away as New Delhi and Dhaka. People in Kathmandu, panic stricken after the April 25 quake, rushed outdoors. Parents could be seen clutching children tightly and hundreds of people were frantically trying to call relatives on their mobile phones. Shopkeepers closed their shops and the streets were jammed with people rushing to check on their families.

The fresh quake has triggered uncertainty and fear in the minds of the people again. Life was just starting to pick up after last month's quake which killed over 8000 people and injured close to 18,000 people. Educational institutions were supposed to open at the end of this week. People had begun to move back to their houses. But with this fresh tremor, people in the capital were seen erecting makeshift shelters again.

All our people and institutions are safe so far. We await for more news.

Jomon Jose Kannattukunnel, S.J

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