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FROM THE PROVINCES

GUYANA: Georgetown Church reopens

Catholics in Guyana are eagerly looking forward to the reopening of the historic Church of the Sacred Heart in Georgetown. And while the Jesuits in the country see the rebuilding of the church as a sign of what can happen when people come together and work for a common goal, they are also excited by further developments for the Catholic community in Guyana. Formerly staffed by the Jesuits, the wooden, 155-year old Sacred Heart Church was devastated by a blaze that started when electrical flashing lights in the Nativity crib at the altar sparked a fire on Christmas Day 2004. In addition to the church, the priest's house and parish hall were completely destroyed, along with the Sacred Heart public school, which stored irreplaceable records dating back to the 1930s. After almost 11 years, the church is due to resume services on 6 December 2015.

JCAP: Gearing up for Magis Asia Pacific

The first Magis event for the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific begins on December 26, 2015. Young people from seven Provinces and Regions in the Conference will converge in Yogyakarta for the nine-day workshop. Organised by the newly formed JCAP Youth Ministry team, Magis JCAP will help encourage Ignatian Magis formation in Asia Pacific. It is patterned on the Magis formation programme that the Jesuits in Indonesia have been running for youths since 2008. The participants are key persons who have been identified as having the potential to begin and develop Magis formation in their countries. The Magis experiments they will undergo will prepare them for World Youth Day and Magis 2016 in Poland in July. The Magis JCAP programme is divided into two parts: Ignatian Gathering and Experiments. During the Ignatian Gathering sessions, participants will learn about Magis formation and how to manage a programme. This includes lessons in Ignatian Spirituality and how to recruit, manage, and accompany youth in Magis formation. This is followed by three days of Ignatian Experiments, along two themes: Socio-cultural Immersion and Pilgrimage.

JCU: "We Can Welcome Refugees While Ensuring Our Own Security"

The Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States is urging members of Congress to oppose efforts to suspend the U.S. refugee resettlement program or restrict funding for Syrians and other groups of refugees. The Conference joined over 80 other humanitarian agencies, including Jesuit Refugee Service/USA, in signing a letter to Congressional representatives that noted that the U.S. is "a welcoming country with a diverse society and that the resettlement program must continue to reflect this." The letter came after a number of U.S. governors announced that they want to stop their states from resettling Syrian refugees and some members of Congress introduced legislation that would stop refugee resettlement altogether.

KENYA: Pope Francis visits "The Dancing Church of Africa"

On his latest apostolic travel outside of the Vatican, Pope Francis visited three African countries, Kenya, Uganda, and the Central African Republic. In typical African style, the Pope was welcomed at every stage of the visit with song and dance. It was an opportunity for the Pope, and many in his entourage, to sample for the first time, the richness of African cultures. While in Kenya, the Holy Father visited the Jesuit-run Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, in Kangemi, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the capital, Nairobi. Father Paschal Mwijage, SJ, is parish priest at Kangemi.

KENYA: Part of the address of His Holiness Pope Francis at Kangemi

Friday, 27 November 2015

Thank you for welcoming me to your neighbourhood. I thank Archbishop [Martin] Kivuva and Father Paschal for their kind words. I feel very much at home sharing these moments with brothers and sisters who, and I am not ashamed to say this, have

a special place in my life and my decisions. I am here because I want you to know that your joys and hopes, your troubles and your sorrows, are not indifferent to me. I realize the difficulties which you experience daily! How can I not denounce the injustices which you suffer?

First of all, though, I would like to speak about something which the language of exclusion often disregards or seems to ignore. It is the *wisdom found in poor neighbourhoods*. A wisdom which is born of the "stubborn resistance" of that which is authentic (cf. *Laudato Si'*, 112), from Gospel values which an opulent society, anaesthetized by unbridled consumption, would seem to have forgotten. You "are able to weave bonds of belonging and togetherness which convert overcrowding into an experience of community in which the walls of the ego are torn down and the barriers of selfishness overcome" (ibid. 149).

PHILIPPINES: Celebrating 25 years as an international house of formation

This year marks the 25th year of the establishment of Arrupe International Residence (AIR) as a formation house in Manila for Jesuit scholastics across Asia Pacific. It grew from a felt need for a common Juniorate in this part of Asia and began as a house for philosophers, theologians and a couple of juniors. This continued to be the composition of the AIR community until 2012, when the Juniorate programme was moved to Indonesia. Located within the Ateneo de Manila University, the history of AIR is marked by the blood of its two "martyrs" - Richard (Richie) Fernando SJ, a scholastic from the Philippine Province, who died from a grenade blast while trying to restrain a troubled student in Cambodia; and Fr Anchanikal T. Thomas SJ from India, who was killed for his commitment to just land reform. At present, AIR has a community of 49 Jesuits from 18 Jesuit Provinces, Regions and Missions within the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific (JCAP) and beyond.

SJES: Faith communities respond to global goals

The Society of Jesus, through its *Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat (SJES)*, joined two global meetings last September that explored ways by which faith-based communities and religious institutions can respond to the *UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, getting known more now as the *Global Goals*. Patxi Álvarez de los Mozos, SJ, SJES Director, joined the *UN Bristol Meeting on Faiths and the SDGs* where faith leaders from around the world and UN officials gathered in Bristol, United Kingdom from 7 to 10 September 2015 to discuss support for the SDGs. The *Bristol Commitments* emerged from this gathering and was launched as a publication entitled *Faith in the Future* that covered a range of practical action plans of 24 faith groups and faith-based organizations, sharing an outline of their 10-year faith plans and commitments, including that of the Society of Jesus. [Read more...](#)

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