

Yearbook of the society of Jesus

2015



Open
your eyes ...

and see
things anew

Jesuits







Cover

The photo refers to the main theme of this Yearbook: the problem of ecology that has become ever more urgent in our day.

"The ecological crisis reveals the urgent moral need for a new solidarity, especially in relations between the developing nations and those that are highly industrialized"

(Message for the World Day of Peace 1990, 10).

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2015

Jesuits

Yearbook of the Society of Jesus

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introduction

Giuseppe Bellucci S.J.

Dear Friends and Brothers in Christ,

The problem of safeguarding Creation has by now become very real and extremely urgent. We have acknowledged, perhaps too late, what John Paul II said in his message for the World Day of Peace in 1990: “Many ethical values, fundamental to the development of a peaceful society, are particularly relevant to the ecological question. The fact that many challenges facing the world today are interdependent confirms the need for carefully coordinated solutions based on a morally coherent world view.”

The *2015 Yearbook* confronts the theme of ecology from a very particular point of view: the Society of Jesus’ growing awareness of this huge problem. The last General Congregation – the highest Jesuit legislative body – said much about it in 2008, affirming among things,

“Care of the environment affects the quality of our relationships with God, with other human beings, and with creation itself. It touches the core of our faith in and love for God. . . . The drive to access and exploit sources of energy and other natural resources is very rapidly widening the damage to earth, air, water, and our whole environment, to the point that the future of our planet is threatened. Poisoned water, polluted air, massive deforestation, deposits of atomic and toxic waste are causing death and untold suffering, particularly to the poor.”

Further on, the Congregation continues, “In heeding the call to restore right relationships with creation, we have been moved anew by the cry of those suffering the consequences of environmental destruction.”

The panorama presented in this *Yearbook* does not confront every problem connected with ecology, but it presents some examples of how we can act in concrete ways to limit damage to our environment. After the two initial articles which present the theme and attempt to point out some more properly spiritual aspects of ecology, we review some experiences already past or being undertaken now by Jesuits in various parts of the world which represent a commitment becoming ever more pressing and extensive.

From Africa we hear young Jesuits of *Hekima College* speaking of how they live the problem in community, while an agricultural ranch of Zambia shows how it may be possible to have abundant harvests while respecting nature.

From the Americas we are presented with an online textbook about enormous ecological challenges from a perspective that integrates science, spirituality and ethics in an Ignatian way. A particularly interesting approach to ecology which recalls St. Ignatius’ experience at Manresa comes from the region of the Amazon.

The contributions from Asia are also many and significant, from the experience of “Friends of Trees” in India to the defense of the river long considered as a mother providing the gift of water, but whose fecundity is under attack today -- the Mekong River in Cambodia. And again, from the defense of the island of Jeju, Korea for which a Jesuit spent months in prison to the experience of the Jesuits of Asia-Pacific where, due to cyclones and natural disasters, “life is anything but tranquil and what we are learning about guaranteeing human life and the sustainability of our environment is what will determine our future,” as Fr. Pedro Walpole, S.J. writes.

Nor is Europe missing from this panorama. Read about the action taken by a professional school in Portugal which is committed to promote the values of social justice without separating the struggle against poverty from environmental problems.

These examples among many others show how Jesuits see that our mission must “demonstrate an ever greater ecological solidarity in our spiritual, communitarian and apostolic lives.”

SOCIETY OF JESUS AND ECOLOGY

Care of the environment affects the quality of our relationships with God, with other human beings, and with creation itself. It touches the core of our faith in and love for God ... The drive to access and exploit sources of energy and other natural resources is very rapidly widening the damage to earth, air, water, and our whole environment, to the point that the future of our planet is threatened (GC 35, d. 3, no. 32-33).

“Open your eyes”...



and see “things anew”

LOGO AND LEGEND

“Open your eyes” and see “things anew.”

The logo (or drawing) represents an eye in which the iris is the globe of the world. The iris or world is green as the colour of ecology. It invites us all to watch and contemplate the world with an ecological, green, and hopeful eye. An eye that helps us in our mission of “reconciliation with creation” (GC 35).

The logo refers to the vision of St. Ignatius near the river Cardoner in Manresa (Autobiography, no. 30). It invites us to watch the present world, to “open our eyes...” and see “things anew,” according to the words of Ignatius. This way he encourages us to be open to the grace that

he received and to contemplate with a mystic eye the way God comes closer to us, to our lives, and works within all things. He encourages us to “open our eyes” and contemplate the world as creation, a place in which we can meet God from the consolation and with respect and deep acknowledgement of Him in all His creatures, “in all to love and to serve”. We can meet God in everything and we are called to take care of, to love and to serve Him in His creation. This way we can collaborate with Him to “heal a broken world”. This contemplative eye expresses also the option for the poor because they are the ones who suffer the most the environmental deterioration.



There is an increasing ecological sensitivity in human communities throughout the world. Our conscience pains us as we behold the mounting evidence of environmental devastation: contamination of air and soil, accumulation of toxic residues, cataclysmic natural disasters, extinction of species, and extreme climatic phenomena such as floods, hurricanes, and droughts. We realize now more than ever that our destiny is united to the life of the planet but that Earth itself is in danger of being destroyed by human actions.

Most worrisome of all is climatic change. Global warming is having deleterious effects on all ecosystems. The next few decades will be decisive in determining the kind of future coming generations will have to face. In the coming century the environment will be a constant preoccupation and will require hard decisions.

The challenge we face involves our whole civilization. The present consumer culture, based as it is on an unsustainable model of production, is a menace for all living beings on the planet, but

we have not concerned ourselves with designing a model that is truly sustainable, one that produces jobs and basic goods for everyone, especially for the very poor.

We find ourselves at a crossroads, and we face challenges in many areas. We need new green technology, new models of production, clean energy sources, and more rational consumer habits and lifestyles. We need to protect threatened human communities and promote development in the poorest countries. We need to foster a culture which respects and cares for nature. We need to create sanctuaries for the protection of biodiversity and endangered species. We need a system of global governance what allows us to find international solutions to these many challenges. All this means that there is need for coordinated political, economic, and cultural action at the global level. The challenges we face are complex.

Those who are most harmed by the present situation are the poor, especially those most exposed to environmental deterioration and natural disasters. A productive model based mainly on the extraction of natural resources is displacing many communities from their traditional homelands. Meanwhile, rural populations are suffering because of changing climatic patterns that damage their crops. In the end, future generations will end up paying dearly for the prosperity of the most privileged members of the present generation.

In the Society concern about ecology is of fairly

We turn to the “frontier” of the earth, increasingly degraded and plundered. Here, with passion for environmental justice, we meet once again the Spirit of God seeking to liberate a suffering creation which demands of us space to live and breathe.
(GC 35, decree 2, 24)



The Society of Jesus and Ecology

Patxi Álvarez, S.J.

recent vintage although it does have some antecedents. In 1983 General Congregation 33 commented on how the destruction of created nature by humans was linked to contempt for the “Love that Creates.” In 1999 the Social Apostolate Secretariat published the document, “We Live in a Broken World: Reflections on Ecology.” More recently, in 2008, GC 35 spoke of reconciliation with creation as an essential aspect of being reconciled with God and with other human beings. The Congregation pointed out that the widespread destruction of the environment is threatening the future of the earth. In 2011 another document appeared, “Healing a Broken World,” and it was accompanied by a letter of Fr. General in which he urged us to have a change of heart, be thankful to God for the gift of creation, and undergo a sincere conversion.

As Fr. Nicolás insists, we need to renew our hearts and undergo conversion. Experience tells us that the simple prophecy of future catastrophes does little to move people to action. We will be motivated to love creation and care for it only if we develop a heartfelt appreciation of it and feel grateful for its bounty. Such an attitude will also help us to grow as human beings.

When we speak in the Society and in the Church of being concerned about ecology, there are three different but inseparable aspects that need to be taken into consideration.

The first aspect is care of nature, which means knowing it, loving it, and protecting it. We must



take an interest in life in all its forms and truly appreciate the nature that surrounds us. In our Christian tradition all created realities refer us back to the Creator, and the more complex they are the greater is their capacity to reflect the divine. Created things have a value in themselves; they are not simply there to be abused or degraded or destroyed. Their intrinsic value should inspire in us an attitude of praise and of gratitude for created nature; such an attitude is profoundly Ignatian. In recent decades Christian theology has been developing the idea that human beings are called to be “caretakers” of creation. As in every family, the responsibility for caring falls more heavily on those who have greater capacity, and that is the role of human beings in the great family of creation.

The second aspect is defense of the most vulnerable persons, the poorest communities, and the future generations. In the terrain we call ecological the question of justice plays a major role. The

The photos for this report are by Luigi Baldelli. They show examples of environmental deterioration: the disaster of the Aral Sea, Uzbekistan (large photo) and industrial pollution in Russia (above).





Above, recycling electronic refuse in India; centre, industrial pollution in Orissa, India. On the following page, oil pollution in the Lago Agrio region, Ecuador and, below, the aftermath of cyclone Katrina, USA.

populations which are most innocent of destroying the environment are the ones most exposed to the consequences, the ones who will pay the highest price. This is the great paradox: the countries that have most benefited from industrial development and have most damaged the natural environment by producing greenhouse gases are also the ones best prepared to defend themselves from the consequences of the devastation.

The third aspect involved in our commitment to ecology has to do with developing a new lifestyle. The high-consumption lifestyle of the developed countries and of the wealthier sectors of the poorer countries is beyond the reach of the rest of the world because the planet simply does not have the resources needed. Such consumerism is unsustainable and unjust. We need a new type of culture. Fr. Ellacuría, who was assassinated in El Salvador in 1989, used to speak of the need for a “culture of poverty” as opposed to the “culture of wealth” that is ravaging nature and exploiting human beings. If we wish to maintain the substance of Ellacuría’s words while adapting them to our time, we can speak of the need for a “culture of shared sobriety,”



that is, a culture that respects creation and sides with the most vulnerable human beings. Such a lifestyle would allow more time and space for the immaterial gifts of human existence: friendship, contemplation, mutual listening, care for the weak, spiritual depth, and simple human enjoyment.

We are called to live in a more human way, which today means being lovingly respectful of life in all its forms. Sobriety, solidarity, and simplicity of life will be the signs of a truly Christian lifestyle, and they will lead to a more enjoyable and more fulfilling life.

What we are talking about, therefore, is taking care of creation, defending the most vulnerable people, and discovering a new way to be human. Clearly, the simple word “ecology” can hardly capture the richness of all these elements. Instead, the last General Congregation of the Society spoke of “reconciliation with creation,” which is a more adequate expression of the task before us. We need to continue to use the word “ecology,” however, since it establishes a bridge for dialogue with all those persons from diverse religious and humanistic traditions that join with us in defending creation.

Above all, we must strongly reaffirm that there is hope. There are huge numbers of persons committed to protecting the environment: they are farmers, consumers, scientists, economists, business people, politicians, and many others. There is a growing consciousness arising in every corner of the planet, and it is leading people to ever greater commitment. The younger generations have developed an especially keen sensitivity in this regard;

Environment

Ecology



many of them are making radical options for a more modest lifestyle that avoids consumerism.

Religions have a crucial role to play in protecting the environment both because they can provide the spiritual motivation that is needed in this area and because they offer better ideas about what the good life really is. As we said, a major part of preserving the environment has to do with adopting a new lifestyle, and that is what the religions are ideally suited to promote. In our time opting for life means defending all the living beings we encounter in our everyday existence.

The Society is trying to meet this challenge in different ways. There are communities that reduce their waste or recycle their materials; there are others that have one vegetarian day a week or have eliminated private cars; still others keep track of their “carbon footprint,” use solar energy, save water, etc. There are also many institutions—schools, universities, retreat houses, social centers—that encourage efficient energy use, devote resources to recycling, promote environmental consciousness, construct ecologically responsible buildings, and keep their campuses “green.”

Some institutions are especially dedicated to protecting poor communities that periodically experience the effects of natural disasters. Others are accompanying populations that have been displaced from their homelands by gigantic industrial projects carried out in the name of progress. Still others have been working for decades to show how alternative development models are more sustainable; they sustain human life even

as they respect nature. At the international level there are initiatives that are helping people to develop a more mature sensibility and greater commitment.

But we still have a long way to go. As we have said, the challenge before us involves our whole civilization. We need to bring about a whole new way of being human, as individuals and as societies. And given our present understanding of what is truly the good life, that means we are face to face with a revolutionary challenge. The Earth finds itself at a historic impasse that is threatening the very life that inhabits it. As persons called to be the image and likeness of God, the Friend of life, we cannot fail.

Translated by Joseph V. Owens, S.J.





In the *Formula Instituti* of 1550, St. Ignatius identifies the “reconciliation of the estranged” as a key mission for the Society of Jesus. GC35’s focus on reconciliation as the call to “right relationships with God, with fellow human beings and with creation” gives a new impulse to this mission. The 2014 International Panel on Climate Changes (IPCC), in *Summary for Policymakers on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* adds concreteness. “Reconciliation with creation” or “right relationships with nature” refer to a conflict that the *Summary* describes as follows: “Changes in climate have caused impacts on natural and human systems on all continents and across the oceans.” While allowing for regional differences, the *Summary* lists impacts of climate change on food availability, livelihood and poverty, human health, human security, key economic services, ecosystems, freshwater re-

sources, biodiversity, systemic risks, etc.

Here, we face conflicts or perceived incompatibilities between human development and nature’s capacity to provide the resources for such development. Reconciliation with creation aims at the positive transformation of such conflicts. Indeed, reconciliation is a “call to join anew” what has become estranged. In our contribution we highlight three key ideas of the *Summary* that suggest how reconciliation with creation is conflict transformation towards right relationships between human beings and their environment in times of climate change: adaptation and mitigation; reduction of vulnerability and the building of resilience; processes of decision-making and good governance. Climate change can become an opportunity to discern and transform the conflict between human beings and their environments in a collaborative win-win way to improve their life-giving relationships. Ignatian spirituality emphasizes that such reconciliation with creation goes hand in hand with reconciliation with oneself, with fellow human beings (especially those who suffer the most vulnerable conditions), and with God.

IPCC authors point to the importance of *mitigation* – “a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases” – and *adaptation* – “the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects” –, while pleading for transformative dynamics, that “could reflect strengthened, altered, or aligned paradigms, goals, or values

We face conflicts between human development and nature’s capacity to provide the resources for such development. Reconciliation with creation aims at the positive transformation of such conflicts.

Ecosystem

Reconciliation with Creation

Jacques Haers, S.J. - Elías López, S.J.

Spirit of adaptation, vulnerability and decision-making

towards promoting adaptation for sustainable development, including poverty reduction.”

Adaptation involves the reduction of *vulnerability* – “the propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected, [...] including sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt” – but may reach limits because of increasing climate change. Particularly for people living in poverty, resilience may be severely affected – “the capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.”

The report also focuses on “*decision-making* in a changing world, with continuing uncertainty about the severity and timing of climate-change impacts and with limits to the effectiveness of adaptation” and is aware that the “recognition of diverse interests, circumstances, socio-cultural contexts, and expectations can benefit decision-making processes.” Such decision-making process can enable “transformations in economic, social, technological, and political decisions and actions” that lead to climate-resilient pathways towards sustainable development.

The *Summary* identifies actions that seek to transform the conflicts surfacing in climate change, but it does not address religious and spiritual universal resources available in all societies that could mobilize energies towards adaptation, answering vulnerabilities and decision-making processes on a global scale.

Dictionaries explain “spirit” as “vital breath.” As the air we breathe is crucial to life, so, in religious as well as secular traditions, spirituality refers to full life for all. Being spiritual, then, means being capable to give life in relationships that harbor universal interconnectedness: with other human beings, with nature, with the transcendent. Spirituality refers to the experience of transcendence as that which lies beyond all

instrumentalization and enables a contemplative attitude. Mystical experiences reveal the profound recognition of the beyond in all that is at hand. Contemplative people are open to the sacred core of all things. The expression “reconciliation with creation” treasures precisely this core: human life as communion with oneself, with fellow human beings, with other creatures, with the universe, and with the Creator. This existential claim lies also at the heart of ignatian spirituality and we will use its resources to further deepen the *Summary*’s keys to address climate change.

The challenge to *listen to, to seek and to find God in all things*, deepens the spirit of adaptation. As we listen to and see God at work in nature, we adapt our relationships with it while contemplating it to attain love. Human beings occupy a special place in nature: in them creation

Women working in the Belo Monte Dam on River Xingu, Brazil. Below, a Brazilian boy by the same dam.





comes to consciousness. But these human beings tend to forget that they are also dependent upon creation and cannot separate themselves from their origins. They are called to *humility*, to remember that they are “humus” (earth): they cannot stand over against the “rest” of creation. They have to face the struggle between their desire to dominate and their awareness to be a humble part of creation. Here lies a call to *conversion*: finding our right place in creation through our right relationship with God. That conversion should imply that those harming nature ask for forgiveness as a core element within the process of reconciliation with creation.

Jesus, in his life and on the cross, makes us aware of those who suffer and invites us to solidarity. Do we pay attention to the poor who lack the resources to respond to climate change? Do we realize how vulnerable nature itself has become, as it loses the carrying capacity of its ecosystems and of its biodiversity? Can we become humble enough to connect to these forgotten actors, so as to build collaborative resilience? Can we truly engage in a *preferential option for the poor*, that allows the Society of Jesus to become a local and worldwide platform of solidarity to address climate change?

Processes of decision-making may gain from our traditions of *common apostolic discernment* (CAD) and our efforts to *dialogue with cultures and religions*, especially with indigenous realities. CAD requires the indifference that is aware

of the interests, aspirations, fears, cravings etc. that govern our attitudes, and transforms those from the perspective of God’s view on the world. CAD also calls for awareness of the forgotten actors at the table of environmental decision-making: the poor amongst us and vulnerable nature itself, the future generations that will bear the consequences of our decisions. Religions may advocate in their favor, allowing them to challenge our usual crisis responses: “real-politics” where military might and financial power decide.

The willingness to adapt, the reduction of vulnerability, and the craft of decision making, are tools of reconciliation in the conflict between nature and human beings. We believe that spiritual resources are also needed to transform this conflict: the word “creation” reveals us God at work in all things. We need to relate to the world as sacred to stop harming it. Open intercultural and interreligious dialogue and the preferential option for the poor allow forgotten actors to play a key role in common apostolic discernment. As universal bodies, the Society of Jesus and the Church should advocate and care for an all-inclusive worldwide discernment of the Spirit of adaptation, vulnerability reduction and decision-making towards reconciliation with creation. When such spiritual resources are put at task, today’s crisis becomes a costly grace and a real sign of the times. Then faith and justice will truly be served.

Above: an image of pollution and deforestation in Russia (Nizhny Novgorod). The photos for this article are also by Luigi Baldelli.

Discernment

Healing Earth

United States

Brendan Keating

The ecological challenges facing our world are unlike any humanity has faced. Educating students about these pressing 21st-century challenges necessitates a 21st-century resource: a free, online environmental science textbook for upper-level secondary school and beginning college students. Such a work is the goal of the International Jesuit Ecology Project. Called *Healing Earth*, this book will address major ecological challenges from an integrated scientific, spiritual, and ethical perspective using an Ignatian pedagogical approach that invites students to “see scientifically, reflect spiritually, judge ethically, and act concretely.” In the process, *Healing Earth* will also provide a platform for students around the world to share their perspectives on environmental issues in real time.

“The Society of Jesus has identified environmental sustainability and ecological challenges—which disproportionately affect the lives of the poor and marginalized—as a major area of concern. All Jesuit institutions, especially universities, have been called on to address these issues, something which we are uniquely qualified



to do,” says Michael J. Garanzini, S.J., Higher Education Secretariat in the Jesuit Curia and President and CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of Loyola University Chicago. “With its electronic format and free distribution, *Healing Earth* can take advantage of the worldwide Jesuit network of schools to not only teach our students, but to start a productive conversation among those students about environmental problems and solutions.”

With support from Father Garanzini and Patxi Álvarez de los Mozos, S.J., Director of Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat in the Jesuit



“Healing Earth” is concerned with environmental challenges through the study of specific cases and an ethical-spiritual reflection geared to local action.

An online environmental textbook on major ecological challenges from an integrated scientific, spiritual, and ethical perspective using an Ignatian pedagogical approach.



Healing Earth



"Healing Earth" enables students to share the recorded data concerning ecological problems, such as the quality of the water and the level of pollution.

Curia, the International Jesuit Ecology Project was initiated in the fall of 2011. Soon after, *Healing Earth* was identified as the project's major initiative. In October 2012, a team of 31 experts from 10 countries gathered at Loyola's retreat and ecology campus for a week of conceptualizing and outlining the textbook. "It was a pleasure to work with a group of such talented and dedicated international experts," says Michael Schuck, PhD, project co-director and associate professor of theology at Loyola University Chicago. "In just a week, chapter teams were formed, content outlines were developed, and a project timeline was identified."

Healing Earth will cover six environmental challenges with case studies, basic science, and spiritual and ethical reflection:

- declining biodiversity
- water quality
- food systems
- energy and fossil fuels
- earth resources and extraction
- global climate change

The goal of the textbook is to provide students with a holistic view of these problems and a hopeful, action-oriented response at the local level.

"*Healing Earth* is going to frame ecological issues in a unique way," says Nancy Tuchman, PhD, project co-director and the director of Loyola University Chicago's Institute of Environmental Sustainability. "Environmental problems are not solely the concern of environmentalists. They involve scientists, ethicists, theologians, and anyone who eats, breathes, or drinks water. *Healing Earth* is the first environmental text to

Jesuit Ecology Project

Ecology



take this approach.”

As of February, 2014, the *Healing Earth* introduction and chapters on water, global climate change, and biodiversity have been completed and are ready to be tested with high school students as the remaining chapters are brought to completion. Jenny Snyder, an environmental science and biology instructor at Loyola Academy, a Jesuit college preparatory high school in Wilmette, Illinois, sees great potential for *Healing Earth*. “This textbook will allow my students to share data on issues like water quality with students across the globe,” she says. “It will make these problems, which can seem theoretical at times, very concrete.” Since 2013, every student at Loyola Academy has been required to purchase an iPad, which makes a free, online textbook, like *Healing Earth*, practical.

Keith Esenther, S.J., an ESL instructor at Arrupe College in Harare, Zimbabwe, sees the project’s benefits from another perspective. “In Zimbabwe, the Internet is much easier to access than printed textbooks,” he says. “*Healing Earth* will help us understand how to use the world’s resources in a way that is fair and honest and recognizes their limitations, and its online format will allow us to deliver this information

to students in the developing world.”

With international students in mind, in 2014, the completed textbook has been tested at schools in such places as Indonesia, Poland, Brazil, the Philippines, and Zimbabwe. Student and teacher feedback will guide final editing and fine-tuning. *Healing Earth* is slated for completion in January 2015. For more information about the project, visit www.luc.edu/ijep

Below, a group of participants in the Save the Earth Seminar, Chicago, 2012.





The *bgreen-ecological film festival* is a video festival, aimed at all young Europeans between 14 and 21 years of age, who attend secondary studies or its equivalent. Its goal is to increase their awareness of environmental issues through short videos. The *bgreen* was born because the *OFICINA*, Nun' Alvres Institute Professional School in Portugal, needed to develop a unified transversal project, capable of mobilizing the entire school, to respond to one of the challenges of today's world, that of taking care of our Planet.

The *OFICINA* is one of five schools that make up the *Colégio das Caldinhas*' school complex. The school complex -one of the three Jesuit schools in the Province of Portugal, is located in Santo Tirso, in the district of Porto. The *OFICINA* specializes in new technologies in the field of communication, computer, and multimedia in general. Its educational mission is therefore to help raise awareness of environmental values through the use of audiovisual media.

But why deal with ecology and environmental sustainability? The source of inspiration for this were the 8 Millennium Development Goals established in 2000, set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and to be achieved by 2015, and more specifically goal seven: "Ensure

As a Jesuit school, the "Oficina" is especially committed to defending and promoting the values of social justice and to helping the poor, convinced that it is impossible to separate the fight against poverty from environmental problems.

environmental sustainability." As a Jesuit school, the *OFICINA* is especially committed to defending and promoting the values of social justice and to offering support to the underprivileged, in the belief that it is not possible to separate these two challenges; the fight against poverty and environmental problems. Therefore, the premise of the *bgreen*, as a dream that has to be translated in practical terms is Think Globally, Act Locally. This aims at instilling in youngsters an overview of the problems, especially of environmental issues, and at raising awareness of the impact of their actions on the Planet.

The inspiration drawn from these topics, together with the experience that the *OFICINA* has as winner of an international audiovisual competition, has allowed us to build the foundations to launch an innovative project, particularly relevant for the mission and for the school dynamics. In practice, the *OFICINA* decided to combine environmental education with audiovisual media, which are undoubtedly appealing to society and especially to young people.

The *bgreen-ecological film festival* has four aspects, them being the educational, the social, the environmental and the audiovisual side. These four pillars are intertwined in a dynamic way, both in formal learning in an educational context, where students can acquire a deeper technical knowledge of audiovisual communication, and as a resource that teachers can use when addressing environmental topics. In this sense we can say that the *bgreen festival*, in addition to being our school project, can also become a project for schools in general, as it is a pedagogical resource that fits in the principles of vocational education: competence to do, to learn and to be. In other words, these four pillars promote, even in a non formal educational context, the values of solidarity, service to others, ecology and commitment through activities in the local communities which have been voluntarily promoted by the school pupils.

Despite the fact that the project's challenges and expectations are quite demanding, the *bgreen-ecological film festival* is already in its fourth year. The first two festivals had a national



dimension thanks to the participation of schools from different country regions, and to courses on audiovisual and communication media for students with no prior technical knowledge in this field. The third and fourth festivals had a European dimension. Such expansion has given rise to new challenges, such as, for example, the problem of a second language and the spread beyond the Portuguese borders.

The social aspect has been, from the very beginning, one of the main goals of the *bgreen festival*. Several initiatives included in the social project have been carried out with the support of the municipalities of the nearby cities of Santo Tirso and Villa Nova de Famalicão. They targeted different housing estates in both municipalities, and attracted a large number of people of various ages, ranging from children to the elderly. There was a vast majority of unemployed people and their level of education was low.

The activities carried out included leaflet distribution, posters and the screening of documentaries on environmental topics for information purposes. There were also seminars on recycling of waste material and, for example, on how to make handmade soap from recycled oil, or on how to grow herbs in small spaces or in plastic bottles cut in half, or even on how to clean the beaches on Portugal's northern coast. The Social Project's initiatives are carried out throughout the school year during the holiday periods. Dozens of committed volunteers take part in these activities. During all these years we have worked with about 200 families and about 150 student volunteers have been involved in the project.

More than 300,000 students who attend secondary school or its equivalent took part in the first and second *bgreen-ecological film festivals*. They were from both public schools (state and non-state ones) and private schools from all over the country. More than five million students took part in the third and fourth festivals.

The scope of the festival also extends to the prize associated with it. For example, an Eco-Adventure trip to the Azores islands was important in order to get people to know a part of the Planet where symbiosis between different elements of nature is clearly evident. The young winners of *bgreen* get a chance to see the island of St. Michael, in the Autonomous Region of the Azores. This wonderful holiday destination is also called the "Green Island" and the trip includes a walk to the Fire Lagoon, where they can see some typical local species such as heather, beech, laurel and holly, as well as different species of animals, like

A Dream Painted Green

Ana Sofia Mendes



birds. The natural hot water pools are one of the many wonders of this place. The water is hot and ferrous due to the volcanic activity on the island. Cetacean watching in the Atlantic Ocean is another wonderful experience one can enjoy when visiting St. Michael: cachalotes (sperm whales) sighting is one of the most awaited moments. A visit to the tea plantations, unique in Europe, and to the Porto Formoso Tea Factory and museum, where students can learn the history of tea cultivation and see how it is processed using a natural traditional method are another must. The impact that the trip has in the young people that take part in it every year is quite clear as it is a great example of the importance of the preservation of Nature.

Thus the *bgreen-ecological film festival* tries to use an integrated methodology, which makes it possible to work on concepts and areas such as the environment, creativity, audiovisual media, and to promote values such as social justice, service to others, solidarity and commitment. Consistency is the key word for this project, which has grown in a sustainable way with the dream of inspiring youngsters for the mission of loving the Planet. For further information and to follow the work developed by the project, visit www.bgreenfestival.com

Translated by Silvina Orsi Siquot

Above, the second gala of the "bgreen" Social Project and young people planting trees. On the previous page, a group photo during the fourth celebration of the Social Project.

Oficina



The word “sustainable” linked to issues of the environment became part of my vocabulary in 2000, the year I met the Colombian Jesuit, José “Joe” Aguilar. My own province of Oregon had just signed a Twinning Agreement with Colombia to collaborate as equal partners in our apostolic works and also in working toward projects in “regional sustainable development.” As the point person for Oregon to advance the Twinning Agreement, I was committed to learning all I could about this new concept of environmental sustainability from our Colombian collaborators.

Early in my role as Twinning Coordinator, I visited the Instituto Mayor Campesino Agrícola (IMCA) in the town of Buga, Colombia. IMCA is a Jesuit project that helps many coffee farming families of the region. Two of IMCA’s main goals are to create food security so the farmers always have a livelihood and food when international coffee prices fluctuate. IMCA also helps farmers who are willing to migrate from chemical coffee farming to organic farming.

Traditionally, the father of the family can manage most of the work of chemical coffee farming with the help of a few male friends. The pesti-

cides and fertilizers provided by the coffee federations are matched to varieties, which (genetically altered) plants (that) are also provided by the federation. This arrangement is good for the federation but can create a cycle of dependence on the part of the farmers. This is because the plants require chemicals to produce and farmers are forced to introduce chemical fertilizers through the loan’s conditions, very often given in fertilizers by the federation, not in cash.

One of the first coffee families IMCA helped to migrate from chemical farming opened my eyes to the promise of environmental sustainability. The pesticides and fertilizers required for chemical farming could cause skin and respiratory problems for the family members. Due to the many challenges and the unavailability of work, the children of coffee families would generally seek their future in the bigger cities of Colombia when they came of age.

This one family’s story helped me to see that organic farming required the labor of the entire family. An interconnected system of plants and animals were utilized to create the fertilizers that in turn also provided other means of income and work for the whole family.

They cleaned their land of the chemicals that had leached both into their soil and their bodies. The family’s health improved along with their soils when they reestablished a healthy relationship with the earth they farmed. Working with nature gave them pride and the children had a greater respect for farming as a way of life and wanted to stay and make that life their own. The

**“Protection of environment is not an option.
Not to care for the environment is to ignore
the Creator’s plan for all of creation and result
in an alienation of the human person”
(John Paul II, message
for the World Day of Peace 1990).**

mother of the family also had her own work and sense of pride and accomplishment by her ability to bring in income from the sale of produce and animals. In short, a way of life that supported culture, food security, family stability and protection for the earth was made possible by the move from chemical to organic farming.

Most people might not be aware that the growth of chemical farming came after the Second World War. The war industry that created bombs with phosphates and weapons of mass destruction with nerve agents moved to “peacetime” uses and so we started industrial farming with fertilizers and pesticides.

Rachel Carson’s 1962 bestseller, *Silent Spring*, detailed the harmful effects of pesticides and launched the West’s modern-day environmental movement. Her theories were violently attacked by both corporations and government agencies at the time. The truth of her research has been vindicated by history, revealing her prescience. Today over 50 years later, serious environmental degradation on land and sea threatens all life systems. The current challenges are so significant that our Jesuit apostolic efforts need to be re-envisioned.

Today there is a convergence on the part of critical thinkers in both the secular and sacred sciences who hold that the just society depends on rediscovering our intimate link with the earth and respecting the miraculous web of life that holds us in her care. Saint John Paul II said in his message for the World Day of Peace in January of 1990:

Protection of the environment is not an option. Not to care for the environment is to ignore the Creator’s plan for all of creation and results in an alienation of the human person.

So how can we in our own way advance a respect for God’s creation with a more awareness of environmental sustainability? Having a good definition of *Environmental Sustainability* can

Environmental Sustainability

William M. Watson, S.J

Imca

help. In 1996 the Oregon Province assembled a working team of theologians, engineers, educators, social justice activists and specialists in Ignatian spirituality. Here is our short description hammered out after a year of hard work:

Sustainable Development is a commitment to respect and care for the community of life. It is economic growth that promotes the values of human rights, care for the natural world, and the striving for the common good of the whole earth community, especially the poor and most vulnerable. It involves sustaining the present generation without imposing long-term costs or penalties on future generations. It replaces the use of non-renewable resources with renewable ones and reduces the consumption of all resources. It entails reuse, recovery, and recycling wherever possible; and replenishment or restoration of the natural balances affected by our actions. It implies sound life-cycle planning and economics – economics that truly reflect the environmental and human costs of our technologies and decisions. Sustainable development will succeed only if it expands to include a vision of sustainable communities which hold all creation as sacred.

Beyond knowing what environmental sustainability means, how can we each work to advance

The “Instituto Mayor Campesino” Agricultural at Buga, Colombia, helps families of the region in farming and in the commercialization of coffee in the context of food security for farmers.



its goals in our lives? We can begin with a more holistic understanding of the link between what we eat and how it is produced. In the West, there is an abundant amount of research on how our industrial food production is undermining the health of the planet and our own health. The promise of chemicals in what we called the “green revolution” in the 1960’s is giving way to an ever greater ecological and environmental movement that focuses on organic and locally grown foods. If you have not already done so, watch documentaries like: Food Inc., Forks over Knives, and Fresh. We need a revolution in the way we think about our food production and that can begin at each of our homes.

When it comes to environmental sustainability, we also need to do our research on news stories about food and environment. I learned from my experience of watching the coffee federations how the drive for profits can undermine both ethics and truth in the market place. In my own state of Washington, a ballot initiative to require labeling for GMO foods in 2013 (genetically modified organisms) lost narrowly in the costliest ballot initiative in state history. Four out-of-state Big Chemical corporations and the Food Manufacturers Association donated \$22 million to flood the airwaves with negative and misleading advertising.

GMO’s often go hand in hand with monoculture (growing the same crop like soy, almonds or corn on a massive scale). There is a loss of seed diversity as a result of agribusiness use of monoculture with GMO technologies. But we also have the challenge of GMO crops designed to have pesticides and fertilizers as necessary partners to sustain them. Agribusiness’ monoculture technologies represent a loss of crop diversity that fosters pests requiring more and more chemicals. In many parts of the world, the introduction of what are known as *neonicoti-*

noid pesticides in the early 1990’s is now linked in many studies to the devastating loss of bee populations called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Honeybees are responsible for pollinating our world and their loss would be catastrophic for global food production.

There is growing evidence that GMO’s and the pesticides they require are disrupting carefully balanced environmental systems necessary for farming and food production. Jesuit institutes and universities can promote critical scholarship in these fields. The corporations who benefit from GMO seed development and chemical farming support currently many research studies.

But there are many choices we can make in our personal lives to live in greater harmony with God’s creation. We are fortunate in our part of the United States to have many organic food store and food cooperatives. Buying your vegetables, fruits and meats from local farmers and ranchers is an important step to reversing the problems associated with industrial-scale farming and meat production. You can also live sustainability in housing. A company close to the Jesuits on the West Coast of the USA, Gerding-Edlen (GE) is the largest USA developer of LEED certified office, condominium and apartment buildings. LEED stands for; Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. GE’s goal is to move toward “net-zero” buildings – buildings that actually produce power, collect water and process waste – that can be off all city grids (power, waste and water).

But the whole “Jesuit family” needs to work toward a new vision of how we live, eat and consume that works in union with the creation God gave for all to share and enjoy. So I end where I began; with the pioneering work of the Colombian Jesuits in a project in *regional sustainable development* called, *Suyusama*. *Suyusama* is a Quechua word that means *beautiful region*. The Colombian Jesuits and their lay partners are working with politicians, farmers, educators and business leaders in the region of Nariño in Colombia – the richest coffee growing state. If the Jesuits were to conceive of a modern-day *Reductions* – the visionary faith, cultural, and agricultural mission with the Guarani peoples showcased in the movie *The Mission* – it would be *Suyusama*. We need to take inspiration from the work of the Jesuits and lay partners in Colombia and documents like our Jesuit General Curia’s “Healing a Broken World.” Together we can all work towards a future that reflects the beauty of the creation that God has blessed all of us made in Divine image.

Below: a group of students and social workers of the Instituto.



Organic Farming at Kasisi

Paul Desmarais, S.J. – *Director Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre*

Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre (KATC) is a Jesuit institution, situated 30 km from Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. In 1974 it started offering a two-year practical training in mixed farming to families. From the start until the late 1980's the training was in conventional or industrialized farming. That is, the emphasis was on the use of inorganic fertilizers and chemicals. Families generally were doing well and, after their two year residential training at KATC, they returned to their villages having purchased a pair of working oxen, ox equipment to till and cultivate their crops, a bicycle and perhaps a water pump. KATC offered loans to the families to buy fertilizers, hybrid seed and chemicals. If the rains were good the families would harvest enough to repay the loans. But if the rains were poor then KATC had to absorb the loss.

Upon reflection the author realized that this pattern of poor loan repayment was happening not only at KATC but also throughout Zambia, in the whole Sub-Saharan region, in Asia, in South America and even in North America and Europe. Many farmers were not repaying their loans in Zambia because of poor yields. In the African setting the farmers were living on traditional land and so at least could remain in their huts. In North America and Europe, if farmers failed to settle their bills they were evicted from their farms.

So the author realized that farmers needed to be more independent of the whole corporate agri-business world. That was when he started looking into ecological or organic agriculture. He visited organic farms in Canada and realized that organic producers were producing well and probably had more money in their pockets than their counterparts who were tied

to the corporate world and its products. At about the same time, that is 1991/92, the author spent a year studying theology and did a lot of reading on creation spirituality. That was when he realized that the organic farming system had a lot in common with what is known as "creation spirituality."

Organic farming respects the soil, the air, the water, the farmer, the consumer, in short all of creation. A person realizes that we are at one with all of creation and that humans are

Organic farming respects the soil, the air, the water, the farmer, the consumer, in short all of creation. "This changed my view of reality from one where I as a human was superior to all of creation to a position where I realize that I am very dependent on the rest of creation for my very existence and wellbeing."



Katc



very dependent on the rest of creation. For example, without bees there would be limited pollination. Without pollination we would not have any food. Hence we need the tiniest of creatures to survive. This changed my view of reality from one where I as a human was superior to all of creation to a position where I realize that I am very dependent on the rest of creation for my very existence and wellbeing.

I suppose that I was going through a conversion experience and that its implications were enormous. It has had a tremendous impact on my way of viewing agriculture and farming systems. My previous thinking had all to do with achieving higher yields in crops regardless of the implications for the environment or for people. Now I find myself asking a tree for permission to cut it down explaining why I need to cut it.

KATC now offers 17 specific short 5-day courses rather than the 2-year residential training. This means that up to 1,500 participants are trained annually in residence plus other farmers who are trained in the villages. These courses are in the principles of organic farming, organic vegetable production, agro-forestry, beekeeping, farm management, biological pest management, small animals, etc. At least 30% of the participants are female farmers and 40% are younger farmers. Farmers are now more

food-secure and eat a more balanced diet. During the trainings the farmers are also taught the dangers of Genetically Modified Crops.

The person practicing organic or ecological farming is very aware of the biological processes occurring on the land. An ecological farmer wants to encourage more biological activity especially in the soil, which means having more bacteria, fungi, protozoa, etc. active. So, to enhance this biological activity, a producer will plant a variety of crops which in turn will promote a greater variety of soil organisms. These soil micro-organisms are the ones that will help to feed the crops with nutrients.

I have been interested in social justice issues since my novitiate. However this new awareness of environmental concerns has widened the scope of my concerns to cover what I would call eco-justice issues. For example, the concerns we have at KATC about using Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) include the dangers the GMO crops bring to the environment and to human health. The Bt crops might appear as though they would help solve the problem of pests in crops. However one environmental issue with Bt crops is that when the stalks of the Bt plant decays it deposits a high dose of the BT toxin in a small area thus killing most soil micro-organisms. As an ecological farmer I want to enhance soil life but a Bt crop will actually kill soil life.

This greater ecological awareness that we Jesuits are experiencing since General Congregation 35 helps us in our living up to being contemplatives in action. At the end of St. Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises we are called to find God in all things. This greater awareness of the environment as being a gift of God does

In the photos of this report, several images of activities under way at the Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre in Zambia. Thanks to this Centre small farmers who practise organic and ecological cultivation enjoy greater food security and higher earnings.

Kasisi Centre

help us in being in touch with God the Creator. We can more readily thank the Creator for the birds singing, for the variety of flowers, for the simple and yet intrinsically complicated web of life in which we are immersed.

I have just read a personal testimony of a person who grew up in Southern Africa. As a child he said there was never any hunger in his village. Being a boy he was asked to shepherd the animals during the daytime. The boys from the village would leave home early in the morning without any breakfast but they would be eating fresh local fruits all day long. They might drink some milk from a lactating cow during the day and they would drink cool, running water. They would return home in time for dinner but their bellies were already full so that they were not by any means ravenously hungry. He mentioned that he recently returned to his ancestral home and all was changed. The sacred trees that people respected and didn't cut down have now been cut down, the running streams were no longer running and the wild fruits they used to enjoy were no longer there.

In our definition of development in modern farming we look primarily at yields per hectare. Long-term food security is seldom considered. Having greater biodiversity allowed the young man mentioned in the previous paragraph to have food security and good nutrition. After clear cutting all the trees and shrubs a farmer could plant the 'king crop' – maize - over the whole area and apply fertilizers and herbicides. Year after year he would be trying to outdo the previous yield. There is no longer food security or a balanced diet. The ecology has been transformed for the worse. Before clearing, that same area would have been teeming with biological activity feeding the human and wildlife.

An eco-justice issue in Africa at the moment is Seed Trade Harmonization. Countries within COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) are being encouraged to allow easier movement of seed germplasm amongst its countries. This in effect means having multi-national corporations such as Bayer, Dupont

and Monsanto control the seed industry in the region. The social justice issues have to do with a few companies controlling the seed and thus, in effect, the food security of whole countries.

An ecological issue which is much more pervasive has to do with having much less agro-biodiversity. This translates into whole nations being very prone to widespread attacks by pathogens and insects since plants will have very similar genetic material. With less genetic diversity a pathogen can much more easily attack all the plants of a crop.

Small-scale farmers who are practicing ecological or organic farming are having greater food security, more nutritious meals and a greater disposable income. Yields of 10 tons per hectare have been achieved using an Open Pollinated Variety of maize rather than a hybrid variety and under organic principles. Presently, KATC is in the process of developing a commercially viable organic farm. The process of building up soil fertility is slow but eventually we expect that it will be more sustainable and more environmentally friendly than if we were to use fertilizers.

Our experience has thus convinced us that ecological farming is less costly financially, produces more food to feed the poor, and is better for the environment than the industrial model of farming.



Stewards of God's Creation

Kenya

Laurien Nyiribakwe, S.J.

In the light of the 35th General Congregation that calls us to reconcile with God, with one another and with creation (GC 35, Decree 3, no. 32), it is clearly noticeable that there is a growing awareness of ecology among young Jesuits studying Theology at *Hekima College* (Nairobi, Kenya). The environment committee of Hekima Jesuit Community believes that theology has a role to explain the relationship of creation with the Creator, God. This then leads us to take responsible care for the resources granted to us by God. Because we are created in the image and likeness of God, God has for obvious reasons granted us the wisdom and knowledge to be responsible stewards of the work of creation. Nature is undeniably beautiful as our Creator saw it during and after his work of creation.

As far as ecology is concerned, the College compound is marked by beautiful surroundings of lush green gardens with a diversity of flowers planted along footpaths. These gardens have been planted and are taken care of by Hekima Jesuits and our employees. Some trees in our garden were planted by the Nobel Prize Laureate, Professor Wangari Maathai, a prominent envi-

ronmental activist and founder of the *Green Belt Movement*. The trees are labeled with scientific names, i.e., *Juniperus procera* - eastern Africa pencil, *Brachychiton Acerifolium* - Australian flame tree, *Jacaranda Mimosifolia* - Brazilian Rosewood. Most trees are exotic. Hekima gardens look attractive to different groups of people such as those who come to have their wedding photographs taken there and some choir groups who come to record their albums. Our gardens may not seem like very much to residents but are beautiful and scenic to our visitors. This is very much in keeping with a Rwandan axiom which states that the one who possesses a pearl often fails to recognize its brilliance.

The community has taken some initiatives to "go green." Some members of community are keen on organic gardening. Local crops of flowers and vegetables are reaped in our community squares. Nevertheless, as a committee, we are challenged on several fronts about how to make such a move since *Hekima College* is situated in the city and the grounds are limited. We do our shopping mainly from supermarkets and it is almost impossible to avoid the use of polyethylene bags. When these come to the community we must work out how to dispose of them. Biodegradable and non-biodegradable litters are separately collected in various dustbins available in kitchens, rooms, offices and in the compound. However the problem stays on means for its evacuation since Hekima does not dispose of his incinerator. We rely on public sanitation systems but Nairobi waste management is more of a concept than a reality. We hope that Nairobi city will improve its public waste disposal facilities and Hekima environmental policy will be able to move forward. Apart from this challenge, we congratulate ourselves for turning the biodegradable wastes into compost.

As stewards of God's creation, Jesuits in *Hekima College* believe that they have a responsibility to address ecological challenges in order to sustain creation, in particular on our African continent. For the formation of Jesuits, Peter Knox, a Jesuit from South Africa and a member of Hekima staff, gives an elective course on Christian

There is a growing awareness of ecology among young Jesuits studying Theology at Hekima College. They believe that they have a responsibility to address ecological challenges in order to sustain creation, in particular on our African continent.





Ethics and the Environment. The course aims at elaborating Christian environmental principles within a context of African context. In the same vein, in 2010, the *Hekima Review* focused on Faith and Environment.

In order to convey these teachings to the grass-roots, Hekima environment committee has undertaken a program on faith and environmental education. As the majority of the population in Africa is youth, the Committee recognizes that African youth are the present and the future agents of change as regards ecological commitment. Environmental sustainability can only be effective when people are aware of the magnitude of problem and work together to solve it. The issues of climate change and environmental degradation directly or indirectly affect many people in the world and in Africa.

To address these issues, we started to raise ecological awareness among the youth so that they can effectively participate in the preservation of the earth. We run this program of faith and environmental education in collaboration with an emerging Catholic youth organization called *Catholic Youth for Environmental Sustainability in Africa* (CYNESA). We organize educational sessions on ecology with Catholic young leaders. The sessions aim at raising ecological awareness among these young Christian leaders who will in turn educate other Christians in different dioceses and parishes. The program is starting in the Archdiocese of Nairobi and we hope it will eventually grow to other dioceses of the region.

At the end of 2013, we came up with a project of a *Youth Forum on Faith and Environment*. The forum took place in June 2014. It has gathered young Catholic leaders from around 10 different African countries. Christian leaders in the Archdiocese of Nairobi are enthusiastic to join our environmental initiatives. The Archdiocese of Nairobi and the Alliance of Religions and Conservation is supportive of us. Fr. Charles Odira whose work is focused on environment in Western Kenya has recommended us to work with his networks through which we could bring our program to this region. The *Damietta Initiative* in Kenya is also interested in helping us carry out the *Youth Forum on Faith and Environment*. We would also want to collaborate with Franciscans whose spirituality is inspired by saint Francis of Assisi, the patron of ecologists! In addition to the forum, we are writing a Toolkit on Climate change which would be used in different Jesuit colleges. Some schools like *Saint Peter's* in Zimbabwe, *Saint Aloysius Gonzaga* in Nairobi, and *Ocer Campion College* in Uganda will be focused on at the initial phase.

In brief, we recognize that the world is indeed wonderful and we humans ought to take care of it as God commanded us at creation. This is reminiscent of the song of Louis Armstrong: *What a wonderful world*. We are called to be stewards of God's Creation. The challenge is great in Kenya as this kind of formal awareness is still in its infancy. But the *Hekima* community is willing to rise to the challenge.

Above: young Jesuits who study theology at Hekima College in Nairobi, Kenya, working to embellish the garden in front of the College with green plants and flower beds. On the previous page, the chapel of the theologate. The interior is frescoed in the African style by Fr. Engelbert Mveng, SJ.

Water from the same Source

Brazil

Fernando López, S.J. – Arizete Miranda CNS-CSA

“Do you see the light now?” the *Xapori* (shamans) of the Yanomami tribe were asking those being initiated after a night passed in purification and preparation. “Do you see the light?” they insisted, as they prayed and sang and danced, their bodies painted and their head adorned with the white plumes of the Royal Eagle... They were seeing tiny brilliant lights descending from heaven, floating like little white feathers which spoke to them. One paused in front of the initiated and asked: “Who are these who are being initiated along with the Yanomami?” The *Xapori* replied: “These are *nape* (white) friends who are fighting alongside the Yanomami in defence of the *Urihi* (the forest, the land, the territory).” The spirits then agreed: “If they are friends of the Yanomami and defend the *Urihi*, the initiation can continue.” At that, the white feathers rose up and disappeared in the sky,

becoming one with the brilliant light of the sun, and the *Xapori* continued to pray, sing and dance around the initiated, encouraging them and asking, “Do you see the light now?”

Our aim here is to share something of the searching, the experience, and the reflections on the links between Spirituality and Ecology that we have encountered through our missions as a Travelling Team (*Equipo Itinerante*). We began with questions like these: is it possible to find some solution to the ecological and spiritual crisis facing our planet and its inhabitants among the indigenous peoples of the Amazon region, with their spiritual heritage, their world-view and their thousand-year old traditions? Does the Western world have something to learn from the Amazon and its indigenous peoples?

The river Cardoner is a small stream that flows past Manresa (in Catalonia, Spain). For almost one year (1522), Ignatius Loyola lived in a cave next to the river, devoting his time to prayer and penance. In his *Autobiography* he describes how during that time God was teaching him, as if he were a child, and (using the third person of himself) he tells us, “Once the way in which God had created the world was represented in his understanding, with great spiritual joy; it seemed to him he was seeing a white thing, from which some rays were coming out, and that God was making light out of it.” While next to the river, he received an enlightenment that was to mark him for life: “Once he was going along... by the river... He sat down for a little while with his face towards the river, which was running deep below. And as he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened... and this with an enlightenment so strong that all things seemed



new to him... he received a great clarity in his understanding."

It was from that "water of Manresa" that Ignatius was to draw the prime matter for his Spiritual Exercises - from the initial "Principle and Foundation" to the final "Contemplation for attaining love". For Ignatius, human beings are primarily "creatures", and other things are *more* than just "things" - they also are fellow creatures. Four centuries earlier (XII c.), Francis of Assisi, who was an inspiration to Ignatius, had sung about this universal fraternity. Ignatius saw that all creatures are gifts provided by the fecund, creative love of God: He dwells in them; reveals Himself through them; offers Himself with them - "In him we live and move and have our being," as Paul proclaimed (Acts 17:28). After Manresa, the single passion of Ignatius was, "to love and serve God in all things and all things in Him": and so he would love and serve everything created that exists in the world.

The river Amazon is the longest and largest river in the world. The Jesuits first reached it in 1606. During the earliest period of their mission (XVII-XVIII centuries), they travelled continuously from one settlement to another, a sort of "light cavalry" working their way through the jungle and up the rivers. They were ready to "praise, reverence and serve the Creator" in all things created: and in particular in the indigenous communities. From the natives they learned to care for and protect the garden of the Amazon. Many, like the Jesuit Samuel Fritz, were prepared to risk even their lives for and with their indigenous brothers. They defended the region and its inhabitants from the plunder, slavery and greed of the Westerners gripped by the fever of the search for *El Dorado*.

In December 2011, our Travelling Team (Panchita, Raimunda, Arizete and Fernando) covered part of the route of Fr Fritz. The journey (2,500 kms) took more than a month. As we went along, there were visits to settlements and workshops with the locals: a hard trek, but as always happened dur-

ing our years of travelling, we experienced God's care and providence as we were welcomed by the kindly, gentle hands of the different peoples.

We often asked ourselves how those former missionaries kept alive that "intimacy on the road and missionary communion with God", as Pope Francis put it; a spirituality of travel in adverse conditions taught and lived by Master Ignatius, the Pilgrim, which kept them closely united with "God in all things and all things in Him". What was it that led them to cross frontiers, both geographic and symbolic, even at the cost of their lives?

Challenged by the crisis of our times and the menace of a globalised world, we can easily feel lost and imprisoned in our mission. Where are we to find again that balance and the healthy spiritual tension between the three dimensions - institution, insertion, and onward march - of our service to the Apostolic Body outlined by the inspired First Companions of Ignatius: "for the greater glory of God and the good of souls".

In today's world, the Amazon region is the largest tropical rain forest, and one of the richest areas on the planet for its geology, biology and native culture. Life is found here in extraordinary complexity. The geographical limits extend to 7.8 million square kms (fifteen times the size of Spain) covering parts of nine countries. Its natural wealth includes 34% of the planet's primal forest, which is fundamental for the intake of carbon and the water cycle; one third of the world's genetic varieties, including many unknown species; with 20%

Ecology



Below, a symbol of the spiritual union between man and nature; a barge conveying gold seekers on the River Napo, Peru. On the previous page, Makuxi girl offers a clod of earth to heaven.

**From the Cardoner to the Amazon:
"God in all things and all things in Him".**

Yanomami





Above, St. Ignatius' vision at Manresa, and the bridge over the River Cardoner in the same city.

of the planet's unfrozen fresh water (a discharge of about 220,000 cubic meters per second). It has the longest navigable river (100,000 kms), and some of the richest mineral wealth in the world. There has been human habitation here for more than eleven thousand years. The present population is around 33 million (70% living in cities) including migrants, river-side dwellers, and mixed-race peoples; the indigenous groups count only some three million spread out in 385 known communities. In the year 1500, there were at least five million indigenous people in the area, but extermination came through illness and the violence of the invading Europeans. Nevertheless, the locals resisted and the Amazon basin is the one area of the planet with the greatest number of people who have never had contact with the West. New groups of "isolated Indians" are constantly appearing as the threat of extermination spreads ever wider with the advance of the depredation brought by "civilisation". In the words of the sage Bernardo Sateré-Mawé, "The indigenous peoples are a living library. Whenever one of them is exterminated and disappears, a face of God dies and the whole of humanity and the cosmos is impoverished."

Given the present ecological-spiritual crisis that has gripped the globe, and under the influence of a model of economic development that imposes uncontrolled plunder, the Amazon region ceases to be just somebody else's back-yard and emerges as the Central Square of the planet. It has enormous geopolitical and strategic relevance, and the great powers covet its natural resources and its biodiversity. The indigenous peoples, vulnerable and poverty-stricken, find themselves caught in the cross-fire of rival covetous ambitions, and become victims to outside pressures and deadly violence.

THE TRAVELLING TEAM

Formed in 1998 under the inspired and prophetic leadership of Fr. Claudio Perani, SJ, the first Superior of the Jesuit Region of the Amazon (DIA, Brazil, 1995), the Team is a combined institutional project intended to be of service to the Amazon basin and its peoples. It is especially concerned with areas of violence and mortal danger to the locals. The Team is sent to cross frontiers, both geographic and symbolic. Fernando López was born in the Spanish Canaries (1960) and became a Jesuit in the Province of Paraguay in 1985; he was missioned to join the Team and served in it from 1998 to 2012. Arizete Miranda was born in the Brazilian Amazon region in 1959 and belongs to the Sateré-Mawé (Tupí-Guaraní) indigenous people; she joined the Congregation of Our Lady (former Canonesses of St Augustine) and was a member of the Team from 1998 to 2013.

So the questions that the indigenous leaders raise are: "Why do you white people think only about money, and are ready to do anything to gain money? The soil, the water, the air, the trees and the animals, are they all just money? Can't you see in them the mother, the sister, the brother, who cares for us and helps us? You must be sick! Is money something that you can eat or drink or breathe? Then, why do you poison the air you are to breathe and defecate in the water that you are to drink?"

The message in which Kopenawa Yanomami denounces this situation is straight-forward: "We are tired of hearing that we indigenous people are an obstacle to progress. On the contrary, we hold the seeds of the solution to the great problems that the Western world has created for humanity and the planet."

In the indigenous peoples we can see age-old experiments, attempts to connect by means of the spiritual and to establish a reciprocal relationship in the care for nature. In their culture, it is normal for the women to breast feed the young of different animals. And if you ask one of them why she does this, the reply will be, "Just as the mother boar had to be sacrificed to feed us, I have to nourish her little ones so that tomorrow my children and hers may continue to help one another." The Bishops of Latin American have given their approval: "The Church thanks all those who engage in the defence of life and of the environment... It has a special regard for the indigenous people, who know how to respect nature and who love mother earth as source of nourishment, as our common home, and as an altar of human fellowship" (DA 472).

We must go on learning all the time. As Gonzaguinha sings, "Oh to live and not be ashamed to be happy! Oh to sing and sing and sing - the happiness to be always learning anew!" The task before us is to re-learn in our own "jungle" the wisdom of reciprocity, the spirituality based on caring, the justice that includes the socio-environment, the paradigm of good "good living" which is also "good sharing" - as is well known among the indigenous peoples. In order to live and be happy we have to set down our roots; in other words, we have to humbly remove our shoes, "for the place on which you are standing is holy ground" (Ex. 3: 5).

After many decades of struggle, suffering and death in defence of their territory, the *Xapori* Kopenawa asked, "What can we do together?" The two "jungles" have to join forces: the Amazon jungle and the asphalt-concrete jungle of the rich countries (so much more dangerous!). Neither jungle can go it alone! The battle has to be resolved in this mercantile, consumerist jungle, if the jungle

of the Amazon and its peoples is not to be ravaged. It is clear that multinational business firms and world capital are invading, buying and selling the Amazon and its inhabitants, because they want to preserve the capitalist system, being interested only in savage and devastating development. And yet scientists have warned that the destruction of the Amazon will bring catastrophic consequences to the equilibrium of natural systems and forms of life on our planet.

Is there a way forward? In May 2008, one Makuxi woman faced up to the hooded gunmen brought in by a industrial farming enterprise that was invading the Terra Raposa Serra do Sol: "We will fight to the last Indian!", she shouted bravely. Ten of the indigenous people were wounded then and more than twenty had been assassinated earlier. Many individuals from outside, trying to defend that part of the forest, also gave up their lives alongside the indigenous people. But in our own jungle of asphalt and concrete, are we ready to fight as they did "to the last Indian"?

In September 2008 Fr Adolfo Nicolás visited the Amazonian Region of Brazil and wrote as follows: "One of the great battles to preserve the ecological balance of the world is being fought in the Amazon basin. This is the habitat for a great variety of indigenous peoples; together they make up an immense cultural and human wealth. But it is terribly threatened. The battle to preserve the Amazon is one that humanity cannot lose and the Society of Jesus is, and should be, involved. Quite rightly, CPAL has given priority to the Amazon Region... it needs support in both human and material resources if it is to carry out its mission. Several Provinces, from inside and outside Latin America, have contributed and continue to contribute generously, and I would like to invite others to do the same. In doing so, they should be aware that they are contributing to the mission of the whole Society in fostering a just relation with the created world. May our Creator and Lord, who lives in all creatures, bring us to love and serve His Divine Majesty in all things."

"What is the good of salt if it does not go into the cooking-pot?" D. Romero used to say. In today's world, the "cooking-pot" is to be found in ecology. The spiritual leaders of our planet, confronted by the ecological crisis, have to find the right "salt," a way to help humanity to re-connect with itself, with its deepest spiritual roots, with the Mother-Earth that feeds and supports it, with the universe and with the *Mysterium* which dwells within and gives it life. There is an urgent need for the spiritual leaders, the literary and scientific experts, the politicians, all to meet around this ecological "cooking-pot."



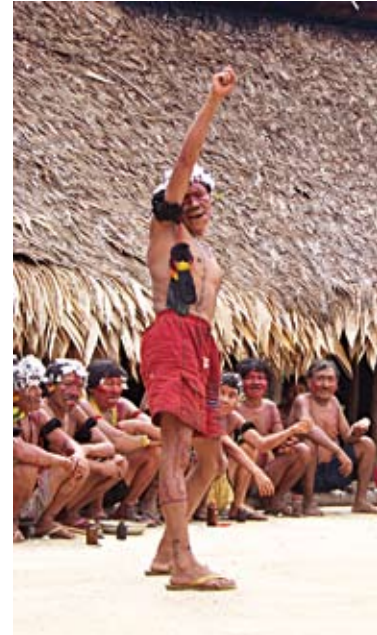
A common way has to be found that will allow humanity and all the beings of the planet to travel together along the path of life today and tomorrow.

Pope Francis took the name of the saint from Assisi, but more importantly he accepted a prophetic obligation towards his brothers, the poor, and his sister, nature itself. In the homily he gave at the very start of his pontificate (19/03/2013), he clearly declared: "I would like to implore all those in positions of responsibility, whether economic, political, or social, all men and women of goodwill: let us be guardians of creation..." And since then, in his speeches and writings, he has continued to impress their ecological responsibility on all who make up the human race.

Despite all that separates them - distance, culture, history - the tiny Cardoner and the immense Amazon are "water from the same source". Similarly, despite their enormous variety of culture and tradition, the mighty spiritual currents of humanity draw from the same Source. The true mystics, the shamans and the spiritual leaders, can communicate in what is essential. They have all been enlightened by the same Light and washed in the same Water coming from the one Source.

"Do you see the light now?" was the question constantly put by the *Xapori* of the Yanomami to those being initiated, and at the end of the dark tunnel a brilliant light did shine and enlighten everything. It made everything new, all the creatures of the world: "God in all things and all things in Him" - from the Cardoner to the Amazon: water from the same Source!

Translated by Joseph Munitiz, S.J.



Above, a meeting of the Xapori Yanomami, an indigenous people of Brazil; above, the friendly welcome that the Yanomami gave to Fr. Fernando Lopez, the author of this article.

Amazonia

Protecting an Island

Brother Dohyun Park (Johann), S.J. — *From Jeju Prison*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am already in my 6th month in Jeju Prison after I was arrested by the Korean Coast Guard while monitoring the Gangjeong Sea environment with other peace activists. I am passing the time in my solitary cell by praying, reading books, and writing letters. I have the chance to bump into other prisoners during our daily hour of exercise time. It's a somewhat busy time for me, as I get accustomed to this new apostolic work in prison. I give thanks for prayers and support by the Jesuits and many people. I feel consoled that I'm not alone in prayer. Through this short article let me share with the naval base situation in Gangjeong Village and the Jesuit activities to protect this precious environment.

Korea was put under trusteeship rule by two strong nations, South (ROK) under the U.S. and North (DPRK) under the Soviet Union. It's the sad story of Korea that it continues to be the only divided nation left in the world. From time to time, hyper anti-Communist ideology takes control and power over the constitution and nation of the Republic of Korea (ROK). Meanwhile the mainstream media shows that economic growth seems to be the only goal of the nation.

It reminds me of a semi-public talk given in Europe in the 1970s by a famous Korean composer on the topic, "What you are proud of about your mother country." He chose three things at that time: the very blue sky in fall, the



fresh drinkable water across the land, and the soft and smooth skin of the women. But now? The sky in Seoul is always grey and murky and most people pay money for bottled water or water purifiers. Community culture is rapidly diminishing. The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) has increased but the gap between the rich and poor is increasing. And so Korea is near the top of national suicide rates, and the degree of happiness of the people is nearing the bottom compared to other countries. It's time to reflect on what real peace and happiness are, but the phantoms of economic growth, consumerism, and power through heavy armament in collusion with U.S. imperialism are taking power and controlling our social structure through political and financial power. Gangjeong Village is the tragic result of these things.

Jeju is the southernmost island of Korea, a volcanic island with a population of around 600,000. Gangjeong is on the southern tip of the island. The meaning of both Korean characters of *Gang* and *Jeong* mean water, meaning Gangjeong is famous for its fine clean water. Gangjeong is the drinking water source for the Southern half of Jeju Island. It has a long history and tradition with discovered ruins dating back to the Bronze Age. It was also a naturally well-preserved area due to its remoteness.

Jeju Island is designated Global Geo Park





Jeju Island in South Korea which has numerous biosphere reserves. It has been declared a World Natural Heritage site, especially since it possesses one of the biggest coral forests. The construction of a large naval base here risks destroying these environmental riches. On the previous page, a protest demonstration.

by UNESCO with numerous Biosphere Reserves and World Natural Heritage Sites. Housed within Gangjeong's coastal waters is the world's largest temperate soft coral forest, declared Korean Natural Monument No. 442, and Beom (or Tiger) Island, Korean Natural Monument No. 421. The area surrounding Beom Island is also designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and Korean Marine Park. It is here that a large naval base is to be constructed. The location of the site is one huge volcanic rock along the coast called *Gureombi*. Formed by fire and sea and marked like a turtle's shell, it is designated an *Absolution Preservation Area*, an area with limited development. *Gureombi* is the habitat of various endangered species such as the Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin, the Red-Foot Crab, the Boreal Digging Frog and the Jeju Freshwater Shrimp. It's a place where many can be inspired in spirit by the beauty of God's creation.

On September 2, 2011, the navy set up a high fence with razor wire around *Gureombi* after around 1,000 police forcefully kicked out the villagers and peace activists from the rock. With the increase in the navy's enforced construction, the conflict between the navy and the villagers has only increased and administrative litigation and criminal suits have become the shackles of the villagers and supporting activ-

ists. Around that time, a few Jesuits visited and stayed for several days to meet with the villagers and Jeju diocese priests. We saw Gangjeong's serious suffering.

The naval base construction project in Gangjeong village began in 2007, when a sudden *ad-hoc* village meeting was held without proper notification. There, 87 villagers, at least half of whom had been bribed by the navy with exaggerated compensation and rainbow promises of economic development, voted yes to the naval base plan via clapping. On hearing this surprising news, another special village general meeting was held. This time 725 out

In prison for the defense of an Island against the construction of a naval base, a Jesuit Brother speaks of his experience to protect the environment. This letter is dated January 10, 2014. Now the author is out of prison and goes on with his work.

Korea



A cross in front of the sea, and Jesuit priests, sisters and lay people protesting against the construction of the naval base.

of 1,000 voting villagers participated and 680 (94% of those that voted) voted against the naval base construction. Since that time, for seven years, the villagers and supporting peace activists have struggled against the navy and its dishonest troublemaking, promise breaking, and media control.

It seems that the navy doesn't need to check the validity or suitability of this national project and can simply use governmental power to force its way through every situation. Between August 2011 and August 2013, 202,620 police officers have been through Gangjeong. Since

2007, 663 arrests have been made, 539 indictments, and 38 cases of imprisonment (including 3 Jesuits) for protests against the naval base construction. This use of strong governmental force, controlling the public in the name of security, makes it difficult for people to participate in peace activities related to Gangjeong for fear of being falsely labeled as pro-North Korean sympathizers. Furthermore, a naval base in Gangjeong will cause increased tension between U.S. and China. Moreover, it has been shown that military bases are serious pollution sources of highly toxic substances. Thus, Gangjeong is one of the frontlines where the Jesuits can choose to be a friend of the poor. I'm reminded of the words of Jeju diocese Bishop Peter Kang, "Gangjeong, you are the smallest village in this land, but the peace kindled in you will be a light which spreads everywhere."

Fr. Pedro Walpole (a Jesuit director of *Asia Forest Network* and member of the Commission for Social Apostolate of the Philippines Jesuit Province) said: "There is a shared sense of right relations: service of neighbor, steadfastness in God and care for creation. Whatever we do in the name of justice is in the name of Christ. The purpose of justice is not the persecution and retribution of those who are viewed as wrong. Faith, justice, integrity and love, of which love is the greatest, are the primary determinants of how we address environmental concerns. If our love doesn't bear witness to this, there is no mark of Christ." And so I must reflect, does my action come from gratitude and love?

When I was in Gangjeong, I used to take a walk along the construction fence to the Gangjeong port. One day I bumped into a red-foot crab (an endangered species) crossing the asphalt a bit far from coast. A thought sprang from my mind: "Are you refugee from *Gureombi*?"

I tried to pick it up with my hand to move it towards seaside. At first it tried to fight me off but soon it didn't have enough energy to move and seemed to cry out, "Please just let me be." I pray for all to be blessed with Peace, Love, and Hope. Please remember Gangjeong in your prayers.

Working with Creation

Philippines

Pedro Walpole, S.J. — Coordinator JCAP for Reconciliation with Creation

In Asia Pacific when the typhoons come across the ocean, life is anything but passive. How we learn and what we learn in order to secure human life and sustainability of our environment is determining our future. Three years ago, the *Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific* (JCAP) committed to seeking reconciliation with creation. Beginning with an environmental way of proceeding that stems from gratitude, we have sought to learn, network and engage with greater care for the world God created.

When Father General released *Healing a Broken World* in 2011, JCAP took up the challenge and embraced the emphasis on healing which is integrative of science and spirituality, ethics and action. Many are seeking a process by which they can engage and deepen their understanding and commitment to the land and water that keep us living.

Pope Francis began 2014 calling for “courage of dialogue and reconciliation”. There are enough troubles in the world that we need to stop and recognize that we are all related and that we need to consider our neighbours as we make our choices and decisions in life. There is a need to share hope for the future, “simply because it is the future”.

Core to our ecological engagement as Jesuits in Asia Pacific is a spirituality that starts from a personal experience of gratitude that influences change in our attitude and lifestyle, and hopefully with others, a change that impacts society. We call this an environmental way of proceeding.

Jesuits are seeking first of all to clean up their own act, to learn to manage waste better and recycle in our houses and institutes, reduce consumption of water and electricity. We seek to evaluate ethically and think locally as we move to act effectively. This advocacy speaks through the many courses now emerging for students in general and



for scholastics. We engage with the youth—to build their knowledge and deepen their sense of commitment and responsibility for the environment not only in our schools and universities, but also in alternative programs, courses and area actions. Post *Rio+20* discussions centred on achieving a sustainable future that is inclusive of all, including most especially the bottom poor. We accompany the youth as they struggle with life’s questions on meaning and sense of being in the world.

We have developed *Flights for Forests* as a further attempt to link the carbon footprint of travel to the communities who have the capacity to regenerate forests. People from the region contribute to the global initiatives of *Ecojesuit* communication,



After Typhoon Pablo (“Bopha”), people discuss how to give a new home to the communities of Compostela Valley Province on the Island of Mindanao, the Philippines.

Core to our ecological engagement as Jesuits in Asia Pacific is a spirituality that starts from a personal experience of gratitude that influences change in our attitude and lifestyle, and hopefully with others, a change that impacts society. We call this an environmental way of proceeding.

Asia-Pacific



Above, the logo of the "Reconciling with Creation" group of the Jesuit Asia Pacific Conference (JCAP). Above, Ormoc City in the Philippines surrounded by mangroves, ceaselessly stirred by the wind.

the agenda of *Water for All* and the growing dialogue of science and values.

In our disaster-prone part of the world, disaster risk reduction is a necessary part of our commitment to seeking reconciliation with creation. Aceh, Fukushima and Phuket have become synonymous with *tsunami*. Mt. Merapi (Indonesia), Mt. Mayon (Philippines) and Christchurch (New Zealand) have been active volcanoes and earthquake zones in the last few years. Typhoon *Nargis* is synonymous with Myanmar's tragedy. The Philippines is the worst hit and, given its exposed population, a country of sustained disaster. Typhoons *Haiyan/Yolanda* (Leyte), *Bopha/Pablo* (Monkayo), *Washi/Sendong* (Cagayan de Oro/Iligan) are part of a continuing series of super typhoons and sustained rainfall that each year cause landslides, flooding and high winds, taking the lives of thousands of people especially of the poor living in vulnerable areas. Sea level change in some of the Marshall Islands and many estuarine areas in Asia is another cause of disaster.

These are not simply natural disasters but human disasters because they take human life on a large scale as a result of the poorly balanced interplay of people, climate, land-sea-scape and geology. In the past many viewed disasters as natural phenomena we had to accept, but we are learning that the greater number happen by design. Design because having large generally poor populations

residing in areas of known potential for flood, landslide, storm surge, tsunami, earthquake or volcanic action is a design for disaster. If we know the lie of the land, the earth's crust and our climatic variables, we know where people should not live or what greater adaptation is needed. Where human life is vulnerable, we need to relocate or significantly adapt our housing and livelihood before the disaster happens and see the finances of this as an investment in sustainable human development.

In nearly all of these locations, Jesuits and partners are present in small ways in the aftermath, working with others in awareness, recovery, basic services planning and policy, seeking to implement changes for the short and long term. Jesuit mission offices globally are in contact and engaging and supporting the work. There is a conscientious commitment slowly growing into a network, not just of Jesuits but also of all concerned, and becoming a constructive mission of hope and creativity.

Our efforts begin not from an expectation of what should be, but from simple gratitude each day for life, for all our senses and relations, not forgetting our relations with God. It is our relation with God that opens the way of gratitude and the strength to respond to the gift of creation and love of neighbour, and so to embrace disaster. In disaster we see the signs of the times and as people of faith, find the courage to respond with hope. The Scholastics and Brothers Circle met in Cambodia to understand scientifically and experience personally the wonders of Tonle Sap and the people who live on and around this lake and the Mekong River. It is easy to learn from local people gratitude for life. The challenge is to learn capacity to accompany the poor in adapting to a fragile world.

Jesuits and friends are again learning that the poor are most vulnerable, most affected, and least prepared to act. Jesuit organizations are increasingly involved in relief and recovery operations

Reconciliation

but as we understand the problems better, we see that recovery is a longer process of several years, requiring much greater security of homes and access to jobs. The poor accept to live in areas of high threat to life in order to have food on the table today rather than security of home during a disaster that may strike one day in the future. Their access to work is critical. From Tacloban to Culion in the Philippines, Jesuit organizations are partnering with others to assess the needs of local communities and government in addressing the medium and long-term concerns, so that a super typhoon such as *Haiyan* never has the same devastating impact.

Responding to disaster affects the way we live; we may look for a little more simplicity in daily life, in food, and what we do in an overly cluttered life. Many are learning to be more thankful for life, to thank God more and live our lives with a little more hope and love. In responding, we experience something of a reconciling with many of the questions of life. This is what reconciliation with creation is about; but we need a new perspective on Creation, an old word that for many is distant.

What is creation today? It is the universe, and for us most especially, this Earth. Yet half the world is urbanized and too many people no longer have an understanding of their sources of water and food across the landscape of many countries while others do not have sustained access to these basics. The agricultural world is highly mechanized and the power of plants to grow, the insects, vertebrates are but the stuff of textbooks and field trip experiences for many youth or found in the pages of the latest *National Geographic*. We study ecosystems and the natural relations of a particular climate and landscape; we hear about ecology, “the household of relations”, and the economy of things in balance. Yet we struggle to know our balance and where a diversity of 9 billion people can possibly live, even as consumerism draws us to the end products of need and desire while many lose out on necessity and meaning. What is our relation with creation?

Working for disaster risk reduction today means working with our climate, our rainfall, our vegetation, our animals, and our peoples in an integrated way. There are other threads in this healing of a broken world that are giving us hope in the *Conference of Asia Pacific*. In many areas where Jesuits

are present, Indigenous Peoples are teaching us how to live close to the land, how to have a deeper respect for all life and how to live more simply. These are becoming cultural and ecology centres of reflection. *Apu Palamguwan Cultural Education Center* in Mindanao, Philippines runs a program on human development and natural resource management where the youth of the area engage the graduate students in sustainable management. Jesuit business schools have begun to question how they are teaching poverty; deans and faculty are discussing how poverty is sustained through the complexities of a globalized economy, and the need to balance human development with monocultures, extractive industries, commodification of water, and genetically modified organisms.

We are grateful for all those individuals and institutions that accompany and engage with us as we continue to deepen our commitment, and share hope and healing in our broken world. We are all challenged to keep a spiritual conversation going that broadens our capacity to talk about basic concerns in a language that knows how to deal with failure and human limitations. We need to continue to engage with all those who are open to embrace the challenges of reconciling with creation. This is creation today and a lived ecology; all of us are called to heal.

For more information about the ecology strategy of the *Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific*, and *Our Environmental Way of Proceeding*, visit <http://sjapc.net/what-we-do/ecology>.



Children in the rubble caused by Typhoon Sendong (known across the world as “Washi”) at Cagayan de Oro on the Island of Mindanao, the Philippines), saving what can be saved and starting all over again.





When these lines are being written sitting in the middle of a student-made forest in the State capital of Patna, a city with three million residents, right outside the window there are 35 students collecting vegetables from the *Tarumitra*, “Friends of Trees”, organic farm. They came to the Jesuit-run *Tarumitra Ashram* from a rural centre 40 kilometres away. They hail from one of the lowest strata of the Indian society, known as *Musahars*, “Rat eaters.” They have come to participate in a workshop on biodiversity. A *Medical Mission Sister*, Sr. Smita Parmar, who brought them, has done her Master’s in Business Administration from a Jesuit Management Institute. She wanted us to talk to them on sustainable living.

Fr. Sevanand Melookunnel, a 76 year old Jesuit, has been pioneering in propagating affordable herbal medicines among poor people. He saw the occasion as a treasured educative moment to transmit his vast repertoire of herbal experience. And he does it in an interesting way. Fr. Melookunnel got the students to collect as many edible leafy vegetables as possible

from the forest and the adjacent organic farm managed by a Jesuit volunteer Ms M. Molomoo, who has had her stints in Japan and USA. The students would gather the vegetables and add them to an *Eco-kebichari*, “Rice Gruel”, under a sprawling Kadamba tree, planted 14 years ago by a Jesuit, popularly called *Solar Mathew*. Fr. Melookunnel directs the students to prepare a herbal *chutnee* (“sauce”), as a side dish. Together the students would prepare a delicious and nutritious lunch, very affordable for a poor family. By the end of the day the kids will go back with definite insight into bio-diversity, herbal preparations, and affordable and nutritious food.

Tarumitra has conducted over a thousand Eco-Camps for students, and given Eco-Education in some 2,000 schools and colleges across India. For seven years now, a group of University students from Honduras spend a semester of Eco-Internship at *Tarumitra*. On completing 25 years of pioneering action on ecological concerns, *Tarumitra* made choices. After working with school and university stu-



Friends of Trees

Robert Athickal, S.J. – Rappai Poothokaren, S.J.

dents, NGO's (Non Governmental Organizations), journalists and bureaucrats, Fr. Robert Athickal and team at *Tarumitra* took time out last year to evaluate their activities. Experts agreed with the students and the team members that they had contributed their mite to the environmental cause in a significant way. They helped the *Tarumitra* team to apply the Ignatian criteria for apostolates, that they must do things that were *urgent, neglected and universally beneficial*.

This helped the team to strike off a number of concerns they were concentrating earlier. For example plantation programs. Reason? Plantation has become a concern of everybody including political parties. When everybody goes for plantation, why waste time talking about it? Move on, they said. Waste disposal was another concern high on the agenda of people, politicians and bureaucrats. Move on, they said. Finally after exhaustive discussions the *Tarumitra* team arrived on a set of four choices to concentrate upon for the future. They were chosen because they were “urgent,

neglected and would benefit a larger number of people”. They were i) Conservation of biodiversity ii) Promotion of organic farming iii) Campaigns to save electricity iv) Promotion of an earth-building eco-spirituality for modern times.

Tarumitra reaches far beyond its confines in India. It enjoys a Special Consultative Status (ECOSOC) at the United Nations from 2005. One of the student members, 13 year old Yugratna, was selected to address the General Assembly of the United Nations on 22 Sept, 2009. Over a hundred students met up with the world community in a number of international conferences. This international exposure gave *Tarumitra* enough confidence to move out of

Below, students involved in a rubbish collection and recycling campaign. In the centre, students of St. Xavier's College, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, who took part in an ecological tour. On the previous page, organically cultivated fruit.

Medicines



Jesuits in different part of India are pioneering in propagating affordable herbal medicines among poor people and promoting biodiversity farms. Thanks to *Tarumitra*, eco-education is now held in many schools all over the country.



Women preparing herbal medicines and school children planting trees.

the provincial town to a bigger world with their campaigns. Within the South Asian Assistency several provinces were showing interest in ecological concerns. Naturally *Tarumitra* looked for partnering with them, and momentous progress is being made. The Jesuit Provinces of Gujarat and Kerala and Kohima Region need special mention.

Gujarat Province has taken Jesuit ecological commitment seriously. Inspired by *Tarumitra*, *St. Xavier's College* and *Gurjarvani* (Jesuit Communication Centre), Ahmedabad, along with four secular NGO's, started *Tarumitra Gujarat* in 2003. They wanted to inculcate Ecological knowledge, awareness and action among students through eco-education and action. Fr. Lancy D'Cruz of *St. Xavier's College* did his doctorate on Vasavi Adivasi (Aboriginal) medicinal plants, gathering all information from Adivasi medicine men, as there were no written documents/books on the subject. After interacting very closely with Adivasi medicine men/women, he set up an organization called *Aadi Aushadhi* (Original medicine) to revive and promote their medicinal knowledge.

In collaboration with two secular NGO's, over 100 Adivasis now gather and grow medicinal plants and prepare nearly thirty medicines and health products. Impressed by their good work, Gujarat Forest Department offered generous support to grow medicinal plants and prepare medicines. *Aadi Aushadhi* preserves the medicinal knowledge of Adivasis, spreads

the use of their medicines, gives employment to many families – all with active collaboration of NGO's and Government.

Fr. Arulanandam in Modasa started helping small farmers through Vermiculture ten years ago. Trained by him, now many produce and use Vermicompost for their cultivation, and for sale. He introduced soil testing in the area in order to grow the most suitable crops in their lands, organically. Fr. Jolly Nadukudiylil gave up law practice as a Jesuit lawyer, and set up an organically cultivated biodiversity farm in some thirty acres of saline wasteland at Katamba.

He made the land cultivable through ponds and a network of canals, and planted over 50,000 fruit trees and medicinal plants. He runs an Open School system for the children of migrant workers around the area.

Fr. Rappai Poothokaren left Communication Media work in 2010, and took up Ecology Mission. In March 2012, a South Asian Assistency Ecological meeting was held at *Tarumitra Ashram* attended by over 50 Jesuits from 15 Provinces. In November 2013, Fr. Robert Athickal and his team conducted an Eco retreat for 24 Jesuits from 8 Provinces. The Jesuit expert in herbal medicines, Fr. Melookunnel, conducted 4 workshops in Gujarat on herbal medicines that can be made at home, and heal some 60% ordinary sicknesses.

Eco-education is held in many schools with a secular NGO and university student volunteers. In collaboration with two secular NGO's we prepared a solar energy exhibition to go round schools to inspire students about the immense possibilities of solar energy. Solar energy for electricity, pumping water, heating water, lighting and cooking is vigorously promoted among Jesuits and others.

Fr. Mathew Muthuplackal of Patna Province, the pioneer in producing and spreading solar energy devices among Jesuits in India, is now in Gujarat setting up *Xavier Institute of Technology* at Linch, with special focus on solar energy. Simple and low cost stoves are distributed to hostels and homes reducing firewood

and smoke, saving trees and costs. The large *Jesuit Loyola Farm* is being converted into an organic farm for demonstration and training. Gujarat Province has set up a committee of six to spread eco-spirituality, awareness and action among all the Jesuits in Gujarat.

Kohima Region has an eco-friendly Novitiate. It nestles on top of a hill with 80 acres of land known for its biodiversity. The Novice Master, Fr. Richard Jarain, a botanist, and his novices are converting the area into a biodiversity hotspot.

The Region invested substantially in a rain-water harvesting system that ensures a steady supply of water in summer. Already hundreds of varieties of trees have been planted and cared for. The frequent forest fires common to the area did create difficulties. “We need to inculcate an earth-building spirituality right from the novitiate!”, says former Regional Superior, Charles D’Souza. The plans include a diversity-rich nursery of rare plants, a good arboretum, and spaces for students to come and participate in eco-camps.

Kerala Province is expanding their ecological commitment. They bought 22 acres of hilly land at Attappadi, and set up *Attappadi Adivasi Development Initiative* (AADI), with young Frs. James Morais and Lenin Antony. Four years ago, a team of four Jesuits, from different Provinces of India, made a thorough study of the land and recommended that a bio-diversity reserve be set up there. *Eco-Reserve Attappadi* (ERA) was set up to become a versatile hub of ecological activities. *Tarumitra Kerala* now conducts eco-education in over thirty schools.

The *Tarumitra Ecology Day* celebration every year attracts hundreds of students and teachers. In June 2013, four consultations were organized across Kerala with people who care for Mother Earth to discuss the serious ecological crisis in Kerala, considered a tropical paradise, once called in tourist posters, “God’s own country!”

In October, 2013, a Jesuit residence and residential eco-student camp facilities were inaugurated at ERA. The three-day inauguration



ceremonies with hundreds of participants included *Kambalam* (traditional Adivasi community sowing, with worship, music and dance), a lively ecology seminar for students with some Himalayan mountaineers, and a trekking trip to *Silent Valley National Park* (a unique tropical mountain range where the usual insect sounds are totally absent). A rich diversity of plants is coming up at ERA.

A significant venture ERA is trying out is to evolve creative ways to co-exist with wild animals (Elephants, wild boar, deer, etc) that visit ERA in search of food and water, now dwindling in their mountain habitat due to human encroachment.

At the top of the page, a *Tarumitra* campaign for saving electricity. Above, an example of the solar stoves used at the students’ hostel.

Tarumitra



Cambodia is usually known for its ancient stone temples, of which Angkor Wat is the most famous, or for the genocide that happened at the hands of the Khmer Rouge during the period of 1975-1979, which claimed around 2 million people. Cambodia also used to be the country with the most casualties in the world due to landmines and cluster bombs. But thankfully, the number of known victims due to post-war munitions has steadily decreased over the years, from 1,249 in 1998 to 186 in 2012.

A lesser known fact is that Cambodians are the largest consumers of freshwater fish in the world, estimated at 19 to 71 kg per person per year, depending on the study. However, regardless of the data source, the countries of the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB)—Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam—are consistently the highest consumers of fresh water fish as compared to all the other countries in the world.

The reason for this is the Mekong River. Orig-

The Mekong River has been regarded by generations as the mother who provides gifts from the water. However today sand mining, overexploitation of fish resources, land conversion of fish habitats, cutting of flood forests, pollution, and the effects of a changing climate threaten the river's productivity.



inating from southeastern Tibet, the Mekong River runs an estimated 4,200 km to the Mekong Delta, passing through China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, before finally reaching the South China Sea in Vietnam.

A key feature of the Mekong River is the great variation during its annual flood cycle. The river's water level during the wet season can be as much as 10 m higher than that during the dry season. In Cambodia, this causes the flooding of vast areas of wetlands, opening up fertile habitats for fish while at the same time delivering much needed sediments and nutrition for the growing of rice. This seasonal flooding is a natural phenomenon that has allowed the landscape and the people to survive and flourish. And because the Mekong River runs through a whole diversity of habitats, the entire basin is intimately connected as a united ecosystem in ways scientists are only beginning to understand.

This basin-wide system, driven by the Mekong River, produces 3.9 million tons of fish and other aquatic animals annually (2008) making the LMB inland fishery the largest in the world. Millions of



The Mekong River: A Threatened Mother

Gabriel Lamug-Nañawa, S.J.



Above, Fr. Gabriel Lamug-Nañawa, author of this article, with a friend. At the top, village inhabitants express their concern about the building of the dam on the River Sesari.

people from around this region partake of this great bounty. In fact, for Cambodians 80% of their animal protein intake comes from freshwater fisheries. Thus, in Thailand and Laos, the Mekong River is called *Mae Nam Khong*, literally meaning “mother water things.” The Mekong River has been regarded by generations as the mother who provides gifts from the water.

There are several factors, however, that presently threaten the river’s productivity and the 60 million people or so who depend on the LMB fisheries for their food and livelihood. Among these are sand mining, overexploitation of fish resources, land conversion of fish habitats, cutting of flood forests, pollution from agricultural runoff, and the effects of a changing climate. But the single most powerful threat which brings immediate and far-reaching effects is the building of hydropower dams on the Mekong River mainstream and on its major tributaries. In particular, the construction of a hydropower dam on the Mekong River mainstream in southern Laos, less than 2 km north of the border with Cambodia, is disturbing many Cambodians at the moment.

The work of our mixed teams of Jesuits and collaborators in Cambodia, local and foreign, male and female, having religious affiliations or none, has had a long history. Beginning in the refugee camps at the border with Thailand in the early 1990s up to the present, our work has

involved campaigning for an end to landmines and cluster munitions, advocating for peace and inclusion, caring for Catholic communities, and engaging in education, health, and rural development programs for the poor, with a special preference for people with a disability. We have also begun to get involved with environmental issues in Cambodia, recognizing that when we are not in right relations with God and those around us, human or not, it is the poor who are the first and the worst affected. Issues related to the Mekong River present a great challenge for us, where “many poor communities have been displaced, and indigenous peoples have been the most affected.” (GC 35, Dec 3) Thus, we have started to study the issues involved in the Mekong River, disseminate information to villagers, and help communities locally strengthen the river’s broad ecosystem.

One of our first endeavors was to set up a tree nursery to raise native Cambodian hardwood trees. Run by people with a disability, every wet season we join with church, school, and forest communities to plant our seedlings on their properties. Their care throughout the year, especially during the dry season of the first year or two, is essential to the survival of the trees. Now we are growing flood forest tree species for planting around the Tonle Sap Lake, which will help riparian ecosystems become more robust and allow fish from the Mekong River to have a





Above, a woman in a trance while she prays to spirits.

Below, the River Mekong flooding.



greater chance of survival. More and more, with continued collaboration with government officials, Buddhist monks, indigenous communities, and people with disabilities, we are learning that planting trees is planting peace among the people in Cambodia.

We also accompany and support local communities in activities of faith as they seek help and justice. For example, in the northeast of Cambodia, at the site of another hydropower dam on the confluence of two of the largest tributaries in the LMB, the Sesan and Srepok rivers, villagers organized a ritual in honor of *Neak Ta Krohom Ko* (spirit with a red neck). Together with their offerings of incense, a bowl of rice, and a pig's head, they came with their prayers and concerns for the river that *Neak Ta Krohom Ko* is believed to protect. During the ceremony, a middle-aged woman with red clothing was believed to have gone into a trance and has allowed the spirit to enter her and speak to the people around. Through her, the villagers spoke aloud their prayers for the good health of the river and the people around it. They felt that the government and the rich were pushing them aside and destroying the land that has been home for generations. Feeling that there was nowhere else to turn to, they sought the only one who has not abandoned them and who has kept the river bountiful through the years.

Another practice that villagers are doing to protect their forests is tree ordinations. Begin-

ning in northern Thailand and spreading out to other Buddhist countries in our region, the ordination of trees involves Buddhist monks and ordinary villagers who chant prayers while old and important trees are wrapped in traditional saffron-colored robes to signify their sacredness and value to the larger community. This deters loggers and proclaims to dam developers that communities care for these trees and hold them dear. We have participated in tree ordinations with the Sesan River villagers, and plan to collaborate with other pagodas to encourage tree ordinations in other parts of the country.

Finally, we are becoming aware that there is a lack of credible and science-based information about environmental issues in Cambodia. Although the Mekong River is a major resource that affects the lives of millions of people in the four countries of the LMB, there are only a limited number of peer-reviewed studies on topics such as fish life cycles and migration patterns, effects of mainstream and tributary hydropower dams, the importance of wetlands to food security, and the like. We are moving towards research studies on the Mekong River and trying to fill some knowledge gaps which would serve the poor by providing accessible information and to help stakeholders make more informed decisions. As GC 35 says, "This Congregation urges all Jesuits and all partners engaged in the same mission, particularly the universities and research centres, to promote studies and practices focusing on the causes of poverty and the question of the environment's improvement." (GC 35, Dec 3)

Our activities are nascent but we are growing in experience and love. There are several institutions that are doing great work for the people here, such as International Rivers, 3S Rivers Protection Network, and The Non-Government Organization Forum on Cambodia, from whom we are learning. Yet, we need more Jesuits and more friends from the region to be involved, "to move beyond doubts and indifference to take responsibility for our home, the earth." (GC 35, Dec 3) And in our case, this also means engaging with our minds and our hearts the environmental concerns that people face, especially for the millions who call the Mekong mother.

Mekong

NOT TO FORGET





The Apostle of Brazil

Cesar Augusto dos Santos, S.J.

José de Anchieta was born on 19 March 1534 in the city of San Cristóbal de la Laguna, on the island of Tenerife in the archipelago of the Canaries, part of Spain. He was the son of Juan López de Anchieta and Mencía Díaz de Clavijo y Llerena.

His religious and cultural formation began at home and was further deepened in the school of the Dominican fathers. His parents later sent him to study at the University of Coimbra in Portugal.

Anchieta developed his gifts as a student of rhetoric, poetry, Greek language and culture, dramaturgy, and other disciplines. These humanistic studies he later used effectively in his work in evangelization and catechesis.

He got to know the Jesuits in 1548, seven years before the Society assumed responsibility for the faculty of arts at Coimbra. His contact with the Jesuits quickly aroused interest on both sides.

Anchieta entered the order three years later, when he was seventeen years old, and he excelled

in spiritual life. While still a novice, the contemplations of the month of Spiritual Exercises awoke in him a desire for the missionary life.

On 8 May 1553, Anchieta and six companions sailed for Brazil on the fleet that was under the direction of the second governor general, Duarte da Costa. During the crossing of the Atlantic, young Anchieta showed his generosity by nursing the sick and helping with whatever else needed to be done.

After a journey of two months, they disembarked in Salvador, Bahia, and five months later he was sent to the southern region of São Vicente. He reached his destination on Christmas Eve of 1553. There he found five priests and ten non-ordained Jesuits (coadjutor brothers and scholastics), as well as two orphans from Lisbon. Never had such a large group of Jesuits come together before in the New World!

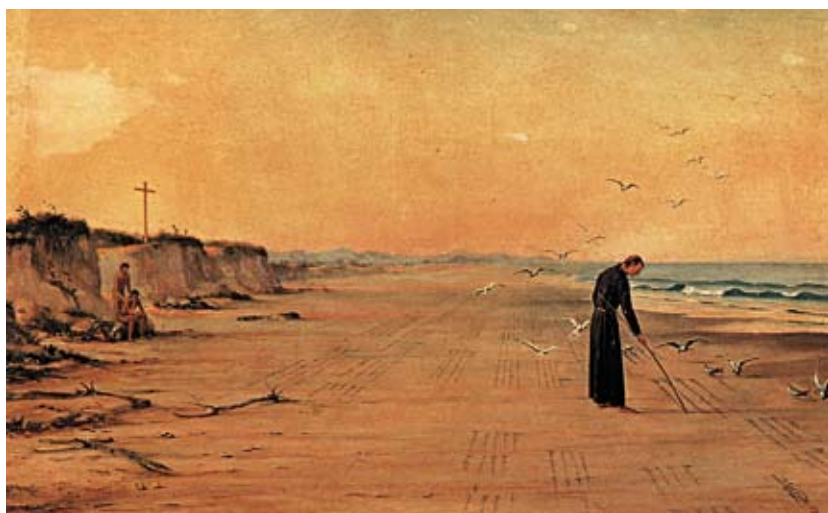
On 21 January 1554 a group of Jesuits chosen by the provincial, Fr. Nóbrega, undertook the major project of founding the College of São Paulo in Piratininga, in accord with instructions received from Fr. Simon Rodriguez, provincial of Portugal and one of the founders of the order.

Present at the Mass for the founding of the college on 25 January were the Indian chief, Tibiricá; the Portuguese hunter of Indians, João Ramalho; his wife, Bartira, who was also the chief's daughter; the Jesuits who belonged to the new community; and of course, a large number of Indians and colonists.

Nóbrega named Fr. Manuel de Paiva as superior of the new religious community. José de Anchieta, who stood out by reason of his youth and great learning, was named professor of Latin and humanities for the twelve Jesuits, including the superior. Thus, he began his apostolic activity not just as another missionary but as a missionary to missionaries; he was teaching men who were going to be priests without himself being a priest. He instructed them not only in the Latin needed for sacred orders but also in the indigenous language, which was the most important instrument for pastoral work in those times. He developed a grammar and other works in the Tupi language, and these opened the way toward new life for

Anchieta writes his Poem to the Virgin Mary in the wet sand on the sea shore.

On his tomb is written: "Here lies the venerable José de Anchieta, of the Society of Jesus, apostle of Brazil and miracle worker of the new world." Inácio Lula da Silva, president of Brazil, on 10 July 2010 inscribed him in the golden book of the nation's heroes.



the Indians. Anchieta was founder of the college and therefore also of the city of São Paulo. This distinction was not so much for having him taken part in the inaugural Mass but because for many years he was the soul of the college and a catechist of the region.

The College of São Paulo in Piratininga was the first Jesuit college in the Americas, and it was organized according to the *Ratio Studiorum*. After four years the population around the college had grown to such an extent that the settlement was elevated to the category of “villa.” Twenty-eight years later Anchieta informed Fr. Claudio Acquaviva, the fourth General of the Society, that the population was still growing and that the fathers were making pastoral visits to the immediate locality, to São Vicente, and to nearby haciendas.

Anchieta the apostle was always actively seeking people’s conversion, especially by means of his theater productions, in which he proposed the Christian way of life in an entertaining and interesting way. He presented major doctrinal points in detailed fashion in his Catechism, written in the native language, and in his *Dialogue of Faith*. The letters he wrote argued eloquently in defense of the indigenous way of life and about their conversion; they reveal to us a pastor who was passionately concerned for his flock.

His catechesis bore much fruit: “130 Indians of all ages and both sexes were admitted to the catechumenate, and 36 to baptism. They study Christian doctrine twice a day. On Sundays they go to Mass, but the catechumens complain when they are dismissed after the offertory; as a result, they are often allowed to stay.”

Despite the excellent catechesis, the bad example of the Portuguese caused great difficulties. Moreover, the natives tended to be inconsistent. A culture of vengeance was deeply rooted in their mentality, and cannibalistic banquets were held simply to celebrate a victory over enemies. The ritual execution of an enemy prisoner was prepared with great care and represented a feast par excellence. People were not killed to be eaten; rather, they were eaten as a way of celebrating.

The truce afforded by the Portuguese victories



over the Indians in 1561 and 1562 was frequently disturbed by attacks from the Tupis and the Tomoyos. The settlements of São Paulo, São Vicente, Santos, and Itanhaém suffered ambushes that resulted in the capture of cattle, slaves, and Europeans to be eaten. Women were also captured to be slaves. Many colonists and slaves died in defending the properties. With the arrival of the fleet of Estácio de Sá the situation improved somewhat, but it continued to be problematic.

After careful discernment Nóbrega saw clearly that it was the will of God that he travel to the territory of the Tamoyos in order to seek peace; he was ready to acknowledge the injustices committed by the colonizers. Since he did not master the native language, he asked José de Anchieta to accompany him. The two of them left São Vicente on the octave of Easter after renewing their religious vows at Mass. They traveled in canoe as far as Bertioga. There they stayed in the fort of São Tiago until setting off for Tamoyo territory. Even though Anchieta was not yet a priest, he took advantage of his time in Bertioga to catechize the Indians of the region and to offer pastoral care to the Portuguese. Nóbrega heard confessions.

After six days they left for Iperoig, where they arrived many days later. They did not leave their canoes but waited for the Indians to join them. Anchieta explained that they came on a mission of peace and that they would remain there as hostages while two Indians went to São Vicente. The Indians agreed and received the two Jesuits into their village, offering them Indian women to



Anchieta teaching the indigenous peoples: a bronze monument in the centre of São Paulo. On the left, a shrine dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption in the town of Anchieta where the saint died.

José de Anchieta



Above, a ceramic tile showing the scene of a miraculous healing attributed to Anchieta; at the top of the page, a modern portrayal of Anchieta by Paolo Linetti, for children.

On the following page: an old map of Brazil; a statue of Anchieta in Tenerife, and a painting by Alfredo Cherubino.

be their companions while they were there. They were amazed when they learned that the fathers led a life of celibate chastity.

Nóbrega and Anchieta were received as guests in the lodge of Cunhambeba, an Indian chief who got along well with the missionaries and took good care of them. While living there in Iperoig (the modern-day city of Ubatuba), the missionaries lost no time; they gave catechesis to the children, some of which rubbed off on the adults who observed them from a distance.

During their two months of captivity there were disputes and threats of death but also comforting moments such as the Masses and homilies for the Tamoyo Indians. Finally, a peace agreement seemed to be reached. Conscious of the fragility

of the accord, Nóbrega decided to leave on June 21 to talk directly with the interested parties in São Vicente. Anchieta insisted on remaining in Iperoig as a hostage of peace in order to provide security to the Indians.

His captors kept telling him: “José, get a good look at the sun because tomorrow we’ll make a feast of you!” At the same time, the Indian women were not unmoved by his virility. Only with the strength God gave him could he resist their insistent entreaties and seducements. His time in Iperoig was without a doubt his great moment of agony, struggle, anxiety, and option for God. All alone during those three months, without Mass or the sacraments, he fought against Evil, and God remained by his side, giving him strength.

During this time of testing Anchieta had recourse to the Virgin Mary, asking her for special graces to overcome the countless trials. He promised her that he would compose a poem in recognition of the graces he received, and he set about doing so immediately, even before attaining the grace he asked for, so great was faith that his request would be heard. This poem is still the longest one ever written to Mary; it contains six thousand verses and is filled with literal biblical citations, thus giving ample evidence of his mastery of sacred scripture.

On 14 September 1563 Anchieta was finally freed, and he arrived in Bertioga on the 22nd. He reports the occasion in a letter: “Everyone rejoiced greatly when I arrived since I was coming from a captivity that was fully expected to end in my death. Blessed be the almighty Lord *qui mortificat et vivificat*.”

This whole episode of Anchieta’s captivity in Iperoig provides us with luminous proof of his holiness. We can recognize in this moment of crisis the testimony of faith, charity, and hope that is required of the saints.

Fr. Luís da Grã presented the petition for his ordination, bearing witness to the worthiness of the candidate, and he was ordained a priest of Christ by a former companion of Coimbra who was now the second bishop of Brazil, Don Pedro Leitão. He is famous for his saying: “The Society in Brazil is a golden ring, and Fr. José is its precious stone.” The exact date of Anchieta’s ordination is not known; most of his biographers place it between the 6th and the 8th of June, 1566.

In 1576 Fr. General Mercurian named Anchieta to be Provincial of Brazil, thus making him superior of the more than 140 Jesuits then living in the Americas. Around that same time Fr. Anchieta founded the *Holy House of Mercy*

Brazil

in Rio de Janeiro.

In 1586 the bishop of Tucumán, Francisco de Vitoria, after securing the approval of Fr. General Acquaviva, asked Anchieta to send missionaries to Paraguay. He agreed and sent the first five Jesuits to the missions of Prata, which eventually developed into the Paraguay Reductions of later centuries.

As Provincial, Anchieta wrote and received countless letters. His vast correspondence was carried on with all sorts of people: the General of the Jesuits, communities, individual Jesuits, civil authorities, ordinary people, priests, religious, military officials, even governors and kings. Some of his letters to Fr. General Acquaviva tell of his relations with the Africans and give evidence of his concern for their evangelization. He showed great interest in the spiritual lives of those who played a fundamental role in the construction of Brazil. His letters describe the harsh treatment of the slaves brought from Guinea, and he reports that in the year 1582 alone more than two thousand were brought to Salvador. He commented on their state of health and on the catechetical work being done with those who survived the crossing of the Atlantic, including the creation of the Guild of the Rosary. He wrote also about the pastoral work being done on the farms and in the towns.

Anchieta showed particular concern for the sick, as he did aboard the ship that brought him from Europe. He helped them get up and later put them to bed; he remained awake and attentive as long as any sick person needed him. Often he got up at night to prepare medicine or food for someone who was sick. And it was precisely the diligent care he was giving to a bedridden Jesuit that hastened the Apostle's death. He reached his final Passover on Sunday, 9 June 1597.

Anchieta loved the Indians, the Africans, the Europeans. He loved each person and each race as a gift of the Creator. He was prophet and pastor who sanctified his flock, not just in São Paulo but also in Rio de Janeiro, Vitoria, Bahía, and all of Brazil.

His writings tell of his goings and comings and his intense activity, showing clearly why he is justly called the "Apostle of Brazil," a title given him by the apostolic administrator Don Bartolomeu Simões Pereira on the occasion of his funeral. It can truly be said that José de Anchieta helped to found the Church in Brazil, giving it unity, freeing it of heresies, and guaranteeing its fidelity to Christ.

Translated by Joseph V. Owens, S.J.



Saint Peter Faber

Stefania Falasca

A master of spirituality and life for Pope Francis, this Jesuit born in the Savoyard region of France was declared a Saint in December, 2013. A deeply spiritual man, he was one of the first companions of St. Ignatius and a precursor of inter-religious dialogue as an itinerant missionary throughout Europe.

Peter Faber, born in the Savoyard village of Vilaret, France, was the most brilliant intellect in the group of theological students at Paris who gave rise to the Society of Jesus. He was also, according to Jesuit historians, the most humble and most available to serve others. Son of sheep herders, even as a boy he wanted to embrace studies. A priest-uncle recognized his talents and enabled him to realize his goal. When he arrived at the Sorbonne, he found himself sharing quarters with Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier. He felt an immediate and deep rapport with Ignatius: Peter helped him in studies and Ignatius, on his part, helped Peter overcome the scruples which were an obstacle to his spiritual life, making him feel unworthy to become a priest. Ignatius would

Modern portrait of Peter Faber, holding his travelling staff and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius; it was painted by Bronislaw Podsiadly, a Jesuit brother.



have wanted him to be the superior of the first Jesuit Community in Rome, but Providence had other plans.

Faber was the first Jesuit to go to Germany, where he took part in the Diet of Worms as one of the retinue of Pedro de Ortiz who was the representative of Emperor Charles the Fifth. After that he went to the Low Countries, to Spain and to Parma, where there was a need of a person of deep culture and spiritual balance to find solutions to tensions – those between the churches, but others as well. Peter Canisius, later to be the apostle of the Counter-Reformation in Germany, entered the Society after having made the Spiritual Exercises under the guidance of Faber, who also played a deciding role in the vocation of St. Francis Borgia. Faber died in Rome at only forty years of age, on August 1, 1546, a few weeks before he was to have left for the Council of Trent.

On December 17, 2013, Pope Francis published a bull proclaiming as a Saint “Peter Faber, ‘reformed’ Jesuit,” and extended his cult to the universal Church.

The practice thus adopted for Blessed Faber is that of an “equivalent” canonization, a method utilized in regard to a figure of particular ecclesial relevance for whom there is evidence of an old, extended liturgical cult and an uninterrupted reputation for sanctity and for miracles. Beginning with Pope Benedict XIV (1675-1758), such a practice has been used regularly by the Church, though not frequently. In recent history John Paul II proclaimed three saints this way and Benedict XVI one. Another, Angela of Foligno, was proclaimed on October 9, 2013 by Pope Francis himself. But the canonization of the Savoyard Blessed Peter Faber had a very particular significance because he was a model of spirituality and priestly life for the current successor of St. Peter, and one of the references important for understanding his style of governance.

Living on the crest of an epoch which saw the Church’s unity menaced, Faber remained substantially outside doctrinal disputes while directing his apostolic work to the reform of the Church and becoming a precursor of Ecumenism.

One gets a sense of how much the example of

Faber is rooted in the pastoral horizon of Francis by reading his synthetic description of it in the interview printed in the Vatican's *Civiltà Cattolica*. There he highlighted some essential aspects of Faber's figure: "[His] dialogue with all, even the most remote and even with his opponents, his simple piety, a certain naïveté, perhaps, his being available straightaway, his careful interior discernment, the fact that he was a man capable of great and strong decisions but also capable of being so gentle and loving."

The aspect of Faber which emerges from his writings is that of a contemplative in action, attracted ceaselessly to Christ, understanding of people, passionate for the cause of 'separated brethren,' experienced in discerning spirits, whose wonderful example of gratuitous priestly life shone forth in the way he lived it with patience and meekness, giving himself without hoping for any human recompense. Faber's most typical intuitions refer frequently to "affective teaching" – the capacity for spiritual communication with people, the grace to know how to enter into the situation of each person. Faber meets God in all things and all contexts, even the most cold and hostile. His simple piety was close, humble, ardent, and contagious. The sweetness and fervor of his way of speaking drew and urged people toward an encounter with Christ. Wherever he passed, his apostolic work reawakened a sense of ecclesiastical communion and his presence made people feel God's love. This is the fascination that gives him contemporary relevance.

In his *Memoriale*, which is one of principle spiritual documents of the beginnings of the Society of Jesus, "his life is conceived as a pilgrimage" as the profile printed in the *Civiltà Cattolica* (No. 3922, Nov. 16, 2013) points out. His whole existence takes on this characteristic of a journey on foot, a journey in the various regions of Europe after the example of Christ: itinerant by obedience, always to do God's will, not his own. He was active in places where huge historical changes were taking place: he was present at the Diets of Worms and Ratisbon, he was a theologian lecturing on Sacred Scripture in Rome and in Maganza, he was called to participate in the



Council of Trent and at the same time he was an apostle of conversation, above all of dialogue with individual persons, of love shown to each one after the example of the Good Shepherd – a dialogue which established brotherly relations with laity, religious, rich, poor, sick: whomever he encountered on his walk. It was, as Faber himself affirmed in a letter, a walk which was above all spiritual: "I want my pilgrim walk to be a way of looking for another Faber, less his and more ours in Christ." In the Mass of thanksgiving for the canonization he celebrated on January 3, 2014 in the Church of the Gesù in Rome, Pope Francis recalled the essential mark of the spirituality of this first companion of St. Ignatius: "Faber had the true and deep desire 'to be expanded in

Faber, the only priest in the group, receives the vows of St. Ignatius and his first companions on the Hill of Montmartre, Paris, on 15 August 1534.

St. Peter Faber

On the right, the stained-glass window of a church depicting St Peter Faber, a pilgrim in Europe.

God”: he was completely centred in God, and because of this he could go, in a spirit of obedience, often on foot, throughout Europe and with charm dialogue with everyone and proclaim the Gospel. The thought comes to mind of the temptation, which perhaps we might have and which so many have of condemnation, of connecting the proclamation of the Gospel with inquisitorial blows. No, the Gospel is proclaimed with gentleness, with fraternity, with love. His familiarity with God led him to understand that interior experience and apostolic life always go together. He writes in his *Memoriale* that the heart’s first movement should be that of “desiring what is essential and primordial, that is, the first place be left to the perfect intention of finding our Lord God” (*Memoriale*, 63). Faber experiences the desire to “allow Christ to occupy the centre of his heart” (*Memoriale*, 68). It is only possible to go to the limits of the world if we are centred in God! And Faber travelled without pause to the geographic frontiers, so much so that it was said of him: “it seems he was born not to stay put anywhere” (MI, *Epistolae* I, 362). Faber was consumed by the intense desire to communicate the Lord. If we do not have his same desire, then we need to pause in prayer, and, with silent fervour, ask the Lord, through the intercession of our brother Peter, to return and attract us: that fascination with the Lord that led Peter to such apostolic “folly”.

The *Memoriale* began as a diary to note and forever record the spiritual gifts which God granted to him, summed up at the beginning of the diary itself: “My soul, bless the Lord and never forget the beneficence bestowed on you by Him who saves your life from perdition and crowns you with superabundant mercy.... Here are included



the numberless gifts which the Lord conferred on my soul, giving me the grace to focus everything on Him alone, without a worldly intention to acquire for it honors or temporal goods.” It is “the fine tip of the soul” which renders him a master of prayer and in which echoes “the ever present memory of grace,” the “prayer of remembering” of Bergoglio.

For Faber, prayer is “an unmerited gift of God, a grace for which “you can’t do anything but be thankful.” Michael de Certeau sums up the spiritual experience of the Saint with the idea of salvation by way of faith, and defines him as a “reformed priest” for whom interior experience, dogmatic expression and structural reform are tightly connected. But the reform of which Faber speaks is first of all the reform of himself, and it starts first of all from himself.

It’s for that reason that his witness is so real, for that reason that he is such an exemplary priest not only for Jesuits and apostles of a particular region of the world, but for everyone who wants to cooperate with the sanctifying action of God in the Church universal.

So Faber, as an authentic man of God who seeks above all familiarity and union with Him, a man always on pilgrimage, near to everyone, open to the world and constantly listening to the Spirit, incarnates the missionary RESPIRO of the Church to which Pope Francis looks, and to which *Evangelii Gaudium* looks as well.

Translated by John J. O’Callaghan, S.J.

Man of God

Claudio Acquaviva

Filippo Rizzi

“Among the qualities he was gifted with, the dominant one was his very deep attachment to the things of God – a certain sweetness and suavity in piety which never was inauthentic and which no weight of activity smothered, no vicissitude of life troubled.” That’s the image which his close collaborator Bernardo de Angelis will apply to the Superior General of the Society of Jesus Claudio Acquaviva (1543-1615).

As we commemorate four hundred years of his death on January 31, 2015, the mark he made on history remains alive and real. But so does the imprint his long term of office (a still unbroken record of 34 years: 1581 to 1615) left, according to the majority of historians, on the Society of Jesus right up to its Suppression in 1773. That imprint came from the general guidelines he drew up (most of all those that were normative) and the interior discipline resulting from them.

His first biographer, Francesco Sacchini, S.J. reported in a description that was almost hagiographic that, in his private life he was a man more attentive to essentials than to appearances, in love with the Fathers of the Church, an assiduous reader of Sacred Scripture, and consistently prayerful. That reflects the private Acquaviva: deeply anchored in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

But beyond the private man, many open questions about his long generalate still surround this austere, ascetical Jesuit: about the missionary stamp he was able to instill in the Order, about how he succeeded to save and safeguard its Ignatian identity in the face of pressures from the European courts, from Phillip II of Spain, the Papacy, the Inquisition and the unwarranted interference of other Orders (in particular the Dominicans) in the internal discipline of the Jesuits.

For all this, it is probably no accident that most contemporary historians, including the Jesuit Mario Fois, consider Claudio Acquaviva the true “second lawmaker” of the Society of Jesus, after its founder Ignatius Loyola.

Claudio was born of southern Italian nobility at Atri on September 14, 1543; in 1567 he decided to enter the Society of Jesus, where

he had a rapidly rising career. In 1576 he was elected provincial of Naples, while in 1579 he was called to head the Roman Province. It will be Pope Gregory XIII who, contrary to the idea of a Spaniard, favors his election to the position of General, which in 1581 the members of the fourth General Congregation will realize, following the death of the previous General, the Belgian Everard Mercurian. He was elected on the first ballot with a vote of 32 out of 57; the lack of unanimity was because he was Italian, and presaged the difficulties in governing which would characterize his long generalate. In fact, he found himself called to govern the Society in a moment of severe internal tension: the years of his term witnessed many pressures to autonomy, especially in very Catholic Spain. There every one of many different provinces longed to detach itself from the central government of the Society and be able one day, as the anonymous author of the *Vita di Pietro de Ribadeneira* claimed, to elect a “little General of its own.”

And precisely in the face of the accusations which rained down on him in the form of pamphlets, calumnies, and the famous memorials, accusing him of being an absolute monarch exercising “vertical” guidance over the Society, his response was to initiate an internal reform of the Order which would reinforce the spirituality and the unity of its members and was consistent in every professed house or college of the Society.

For this goal, the validation of the *Spiritual Ex-*

According to many contemporary historians, Claudio Acquaviva (1543-1615), the fifth Superior General of the Society of Jesus is considered the second lawmaker of the Order after its founder Ignatius of Loyola.



Title page of the Ratio Studiorum of 1606, the famous “plan of studies” for training Jesuits. The first edition dates back to 1599.

1543 - 1615

An old print with a portrait of Claudio Acquaviva, Superior General of the Society of Jesus from 1581 to 1615, the year of his death.



ercises of St. Ignatius was of primary importance. To promote this, Acquaviva himself wrote a new *Directory* (1591); he also proposed a redefinition of the figure of Ignatius, working very hard to ensure that the *Vita Ignatii Loiolae* of Ribadeneira would be replaced – almost supplanted – by the biography written by Gian Pietro Maffei (*De vita et moribus Ignatii Loiolae, qui Societatem Jesu Fondavit*). Acquaviva was most concerned to hold in check the “over-mystical interpretations” inside the Society of Jesus stemming from a disordered spiritual direction between penitent and priest and, almost as important, to take out, or at least safeguard, from court intrigues and a certain “worldliness,” Fathers called to cover institutional posts as was, for example Pierre Cotton: named the official confessor of the Bourbon King of France, Henry IV. Even today, in this regard, it is fascinating to take up and re-read the instruction which he wrote and published in 1602: *De confessariis principum*.

In the course of his generalate, as Michael de Certeau recounts so well, Acquaviva called to the attention of the Fathers of the Society, in his wise *Fabula Mistica*, a struggle between charism and institution, between the search for a pure

mystical option and a ministry active in the most important or most needy corners of the planet. In this regard it is important to underline what historian Alessandro Guerra emphasizes: “He didn’t ask anyone to adhere to a uniform model, but he asked everyone to live his own calling without fanaticism: only by means of a well-aimed interior discipline forged by obedience can one arrive at true perfection.”

Of great importance during his governance was the definitive edition of the *Ratio Studiorum* (1599): the pedagogical document which fixed the structure of the studies but also of the moral education to be followed above all in the colleges of the Society of Jesus. It also contained a manual and a guide which was to indicate to the Jesuit scholastic, the spiritual or temporal coadjutor, and obviously to the professed member, how he ought to conduct his own consecrated life.

There were eight Popes, from Gregory XIII to Paul V, who knew and had dealings with Acquaviva as General of the Society. Of these Paul V certainly held the most important position in the complex biography of this Italian Jesuit. Born Felice Peretti, he was a Franciscan Friar Minor Conventual and it was he – severe and very decisive – who in 1589 asked to review the Ignatian Constitutions, beginning with the name “Society of Jesus” but going on to the Account of Conscience, blind obedience, and the structure of the Order, which was in his judgment, much too “vertical.” Only the unexpected death of Pope Peretti on August 27, 1590 blocked any kind of reform project. The danger had been avoided and the Society of Jesus was able to retain its foundational name. The long generalate of Acquaviva saw a significant and very rapid growth in Jesuit membership, going from 5,165 to 13,112. The number of Provinces grew from 21 to 32, and colleges multiplied from 144 to 372.

But Acquaviva’s name is also associated with the development of the missions in the so-called “Indies” (China, Asia, Japan and India), often guided by men of the caliber of Alessandro Valignano, Roberto De Nobili and Matteo Ricci. Moreover, the Italian General took pains to send Jesuits to lands like England and the Low Countries, held then to be “mission territories.” And it is only right to emphasize one aspect as among the most characteristic of his governance: his attention to *internal missions*. He did everything in his power to send the best prepared priests of his Order to proclaim the Good News in out of the way places – uncivilized, with low literacy and semi-barbaric conditions – in Italy, Portugal, France or Spain. It

was an imitation of what, years before in the time of Ignatius, the legendary Jesuit Silvestro Landini had done with his preaching in Lunigiana and Corsica. For many Fathers who were “desirous of dying like martyrs” overseas in India or Japan, as they insisted in letters to the General (the famous *Indipetae*), this longed-for and unexpected destination proposed by Acquaviva represented a voyage and an apostolate in the “Internal Indies” which would signal one of the most successful missionary strategies of the Society.

An outstanding chapter in his generalate is certainly the considerable number of Jesuits proclaimed saints of the Catholic Church: men like Robert Bellarmine, Aloysius Gonzaga, Alfonso Rodriguez, Bernardino Realino, Blessed José Anchieta or the Japanese martyrs crucified at Nagasaki in 1597.

Acquaviva is still remembered today for his role as accomplished diplomat. Thanks also to the theological assistance of Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, he ably managed the *De Auxiliis* controversy about Grace and Free Will involving two different doctrinal interpretations: one by Jesuit Louis de Molina and the other by Dominican Domingo Báñez. This was a subtle and controversial theological question which would impel two large religious Orders each to defend its own particular doctrine, denouncing the other’s as “unorthodox.” The great merit of Acquaviva in that fracas was precisely his imposition of fidelity to Thomism to preserve spiritual and doctrinal unity within the Society.

Probably the major rival and adversary of Claudio Acquaviva and his governmental imprint on the Society was the theologian and first cardinal in the history of the Order: Francisco de Toledo. In fact, it was this very able Jesuit who in 1596 suggested to Clement VIII the name of Acquaviva as archbishop of Naples. This attempt on Toledo’s part, warmly supported by Phillip II, was intended to thus remove the life-term of the General and bring the governance of the Order under a more direct influence of the Spanish crown, thus facilitating the desire for autonomy of individual provinces (especially the Iberian provinces). The danger of Acquaviva’s becoming Archbishop of Naples was averted thanks to the firm and unanimous opposition of the entire Society, especially of two assistants to the General: the Italian Luigi Manselli and the Portuguese Giovanni Alvares. Thanks to all this, on February 12, 1596 Cardinal Alfonso Gesualdo was named to the Archbishopric of Naples.

Four hundred years after the death of this



charismatic Jesuit, whom we would perhaps characterize today as a “leader,” his fabled capacity to govern remains indisputable. This is confirmed by the judgment of an historian expert at analyzing the Jesuit world like Sabina Pavone: “One could say that the success of Acquaviva is traceable to the fact that after him, though the governing role of his successors did not diminish, the Generals were personages of lower profile. It’s as if the administrative mechanisms and centralization of the Order were by now such as to render less important the personality of the General himself as supreme regulator of the Order.”

Translated by John J. O’Callaghan, S.J.

Above, the Casa Professa or Gesù Residence in Rome in the times of Claudio Acquaviva; at the top, another portrait of Acquaviva and a depiction of the missions in India in his day.

Acquaviva

“Gesù of Montreal”

Pierre Bélanger, S.J.

In 1989 the film *Jesus of Montreal* by the Quebec director Denys Arcand enjoyed a remarkable success. It came as a great surprise that a well-known and popular film maker in so highly secularised a society would choose so essentially religious a subject to offer a critical evaluation of the society he lived in. His work was internationally acclaimed because it offered social analysis rooted in the Gospel. It told the story of a company of young actors – certainly no church-goers – who put forward an artistic, original, exegetical even, radically new reading of Jesus’ Passion.

In many parts of the world, where the inculturation and the adaptation of the Gospel message is at the heart of pastoral activity, Arcand’s film came as a breath of fresh air, a truly contemporary reading of the Christian message.

The Jesuits have always been very present in the heart of large modern cities. In fact, it was one of the great insights of Ignatius Loyola’s that, after some ten centuries of Christian ministry based on the values of rural life, his new Order would

be decidedly urban. Most often, to this very day, Jesuit churches are at the core of the city... and carry the name of the Order’s Mother church in Rome, the Gesù.

For the last 150 years the “Gesù of Montreal” has been in the heart of the city’s “downtown.” It was opened in 1865, essentially, at first, as the Chapel of *Le Collège Sainte-Marie*, to which it was attached. The College itself opened in 1848, the first major work of the Society after its return to Canada in 1842. Indeed, during the French colonial period, Jesuit ministry had been directed and coordinated from Quebec City – one recalls, for example, the epic story of Jean de Brébeuf and his companions. The work of the modern Jesuits has been directed mostly from Montreal. It was Montreal’s second bishop, Ignace Bourget, who was mainly responsible for the Society’s return to Canada, and that in order to establish a College in his cathedral city.

The story of the “Gesù of Montreal” is that of a Jesuit ministry which, over ten decades, has continually sought to renew itself to meet the needs of both a civil society and a Church context in constant and often rapid change.

The building reflects the times of its construction, those of the triumphal self-assured Catholicism of French Canada’s mid-nineteenth Century. It is a stone structure of impressive dimensions for a college chapel. It was designed to welcome 1,000 worshippers and with its baroque size of 60 by 44 meters and its height of 23, it easily witnessed to the influence and power of the Catholic Church at that time.

It is worthwhile to add few notes on the role played by the architectural and visual arts at the Gesù since its very beginning. The decoration of the walls and the frescoes in *trompe l’oeil* (a very fashionable technique of the baroque style) contribute in an important way to the unique character of the church. The decoration of the ceiling recounts the history of salvation and the walls evoke the stories of Jesuit saints, all of them drawing the eye to the massive statue of the Sacred Heart, to whom the church is dedicated, and to the huge fresco of the crucifixion, high above the main altar. Two full-size oil paintings,

The Gesù Church in Montreal, illuminated at night by a blue light.

The story of the “Gesù of Montreal” is that of a Jesuit ministry which has continually sought to renew itself to meet the needs of both a civil society and a Church context in constant and often rapid change.





one on either side of the sanctuary, represent the First Communion of the Jesuit “boy-saints”, Stanislas Kostka and Aloysius Gonzaga. In the south transept an altar dedicated to St. Ignatius and his first companions faces another altar in the north transept honouring St. Jean de Brébeuf and his fellow Canadian Martyrs. Other elements of the decoration – the inlay, the candlesticks, the side-altars – all remind us of the high quality achieved by the contemporary artisans of Montreal in their creation of religious space.

In 1983-84, the Jesuits of the French-Canadian Province bore the cost the entire cost of the restoration of the church, which has been officially recognized since 1975 as part of the rich cultural heritage of the Province of Quebec.

However, more than the history of its building or the quality of its artistic achievement, what matters most about the Gesù is the evolving character of its mission. This is what links it, and us, to the concerns expressed by the film *Jesus of Montreal*.

Faithful to the insights of their founders and to the work of their predecessors, the Jesuits who have ministered at the Gesù over the years have sought without fail to respond to the expectations and longings of those Christians who have sought meaning at the heart of a society in a constant state of flux.

To start off with, this large church was built to serve youth, especially the students of St. Mary's College. But already in 1877 the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Liesse, sent over by the French Jesuits, began turning the Gesù into a site of Marian Pilgrimage, an evolution that fit right into the devotions of the time. Later, in the 1960s, during the period now referred to as “the quiet revolution in Quebec” religious services

became increasingly infrequent and the College “chapel”, as such, fell into disuse. For a long time, however, the Gesù had become well-known throughout Montreal as a place where one could easily find a priest available for the sacrament of reconciliation or for spiritual direction. In fact, the formation of Jesuits does incline them to understand people in the context of their “real life” situations. Many people afflicted with serious difficulties accordingly find at the Gesù comfort, freedom, and peace.

During the decades that followed the Vatican Council and in its wake, the Gesù attracted many women and men interested in the renewal of the Church. Lecture series were held, courses were offered, liturgical practices and Bible readings were given new meanings, all in an effort to adapt the message of the Gospel to the demands of post-conciliar life. Mostly, the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius according to the 19th annotation, a method to live the ignatian retreat in daily life, were made available.

From the beginning and throughout its history, artists and their art have enjoyed a special welcome at the Gesù. Its architecture and interior decoration are an attraction in themselves. And the organ, with its five thousand pipes, sixty stops, four keyboards and a single paddleboard is considered to be one of the best in the city. Of course, it creates a wonderfully prayerful atmo-

In addition to its liturgical and spiritual activities, the Gesù Church is also a place for meetings in the context of music and art. The photo shows the meeting with Aline-Riz.

Quebec



On some occasions, such as on Holy Thursday (in the photo), "new rites" are introduced that reach out to a public different from that attending the usual liturgies.

sphere during the liturgy and attracts full houses of music-lovers during concerts.

The ground level, under the church, has its own history. Opened in 1865 as the "academic hall" of the college, it was also equipped for theatre and drama. In fact most of the professional theatre companies in Montreal originated at Collège Sainte-Marie and many of the actors of stage, film and television are alumni and alumnae. Since the restoration of the 1980s, the Gesù has also welcomed many other artists of the stage.

It was in this kind of a context that in the mid-nineties the Jesuit painter, Daniel LeBlond, began a new kind of ministry: "Le Gesù, - centre de créativité." Its aim was to support artists that seek to link their art to the life of the Spirit. Reserved spaces at street level and even in the Church provide opportunities for experimentation. Since the number of people attending Church services has gone down dramatically in the last few decades, it has been possible to provide a large space for artists at the back of the church, especially dancers and musicians. The north transept serves as an exhibition space.

From time to time, the *Centre* has been part of artistic celebrations of higher scope in the life of the city. Such is the role it plays in the annual "Nuit blanche" (Sleepless Night) when the church provides a large space for hundreds of visitors to experience a quiet liturgy marked by the

quality of artistic creation. Another such event is Montreal's International Jazz Festival during which, in 2013, a Jazz mass was commissioned and "premiered" at the Gesù. A group is now working on the composition of a Mass based on Teilhard de Chardin's "La Messe sur le Monde" So thus it is that the Gesù continues to adapt to the spiritual needs of our time.

It must also be mentioned that for the last two years Fr. Daniel LeBlond, as "Prefect of the church" has given a priority to the renewal of the liturgy. He has brought together a team of volunteers who firmly believe in the importance of a religious presence in the world, in religious practice and in community. Their aim is to have the Gesù offer a space for the downtown community where art, silence, and the sacred are truly celebrated.

Daily Eucharistic celebrations are now held in a smaller space at the back of the church. Closeness to each other and conviviality among those attending are slowly creating a sense of true community. Once a month, there is music as well as coffee or lunch. On some occasions, such as Holy Thursday, "new rituals" welcome those who are looking for something different from regular liturgies.

A mood of welcome is very much part of Fr. LeBlond's mission. During the Jazz festival for example, the volunteers spent full time greeting thousands of visitors who were obviously not used to going into churches. At the end of the afternoon, on several days a week, visitors are greeted personally in brief conversations or in the answering of questions. On some days a period of directed meditation is left open. The *Spiritual Exercises* in daily life are also given.

All of this is the embryo of a new kind of presence. It is generous and profound, open and available, centered on the Essential: Jesus who gives of himself and keeps creating community.

Indeed, the "Gesù of Montreal" is 150 years old. It is keeping young however, as it looks for new ways of serving its rapidly changing environment in a manner best suited to the spiritual sensitivities of today.

Translated by Jacques Monet, S.J.

400 Years of the Society of Jesus

Michael Truong, S.J.

At each crossroad in his life, Saint Ignatius prayed to the Lord: *Quid Agendum?* – *What to be done?* No longer seeking his own dreams, nor pursuing his life project, Ignatius was willing to put himself wholly in God's hands! That question: *Quid Agendum?* was later posed to the whole Society during critical moments of its existence, such as the Suppression of the Order in 1773 and at its Restoration in 1814. In the same way, the Society of Jesus in Vietnam has sought to respond to this question at each stage of its 400 year history.

Jesuits were not the first missionaries to arrive in Vietnam. The *Royal Annals of Le Dynasty* (1428-1789) recorded several short visits by Franciscans and Dominicans from 1533 to the coastal regions of Vietnam. In 1591, a Dominican, Fr Pedro Cevallos, even converted Princess Maria Flora, a sister of the ruling king in Thang Long Capital (Hanoi). However, the Jesuits laid the first foundation for the Catholic Church in both Southern Kingdom (*Cochinchina*) and Northern Kingdom (*Tonkin*) of the divided Vietnam in the 17th Century.

It seemed that Vietnam was not the main focus of the first three Jesuits who arrived in 1615 in Hoi An, a small seaport in Cochinchina. An Italian and two Portuguese expelled from Japan - Fr Francesco Buzomi, Fr Diogo Carvalho and Br Antonios Dias - were sent to the Japanese Catholic community, which had taken asylum in Hoi-An to escape the virulent persecution of Christians in Japan. As early as the end of 1615, they had decided to make the evangelization of the Vietnamese people their main mission, because of the amazing openness to Christianity of the local people. More companions were sent after them to Cochinchina, and 12 years later, other Jesuits landed on the coast of Thanh Hoa Province in Tonkin.

Quid Agendum to sow the seeds of Gospel in this new land? The answer lay in the inculturation model adopted by Matteo Ricci SJ (1552-1610) in China and by Roberto de Nobili SJ (1577-1656) in India. The most famous Jesuit of that period in Vietnam was Alexandre de Rhodes (1591-1660). His work led to the

national script (*ch qu c ng*) – the Romanized script of the Vietnamese language – which later replaced the millenary transcription in Chinese characters (*ch nô m*). In 1651, he published the first two books in *ch qu c ng* in Rome: the *Vietnamese-Portuguese-Latin Dictionary*, which described Vietnamese in Western linguistic terms, and the *Catechism Within Eight Days*, which presented the Catholic faith in the context of the traditional moral beliefs of the Vietnamese people (high respect for morality, the veneration of ancestors, the cult of Heaven, the belief in the eternal souls, etc.). Thanks to these efforts at inculturation, around 300,000 people had been baptized in both kingdoms three decades later.

Rhodes also played a key role in the estab-



A portrait of Alexandre de Rhodes, the great Jesuit missionary in Vietnam who also reformed the Vietnamese language, wrote many books and furthered the formation of the local clergy.

Jesuits were not the first missionaries to arrive in Vietnam. However, they laid the first foundation for the Catholic Church in both Southern Kingdom (Cochinchina) and Northern Kingdom (Tonkin) of the divided Vietnam in the 17th Century.

Vietnam



Above, postage stamps issued in 1961 on the occasion of the third centenary of Fr. Alexandre de Rhodes' death.

lishing a local clergy. Since missionaries were often suspected of being secret agents of Western empires and forbidden to move around the country, Rhodes founded the *Domus Dei* (God's House), an institution for male catechists bound by private vows of chastity and obedience, to serve the Church in the absence of missionaries. This system continued until the middle of the 20th Century. Expelled from Vietnam under penalty of death in 1646, Rhodes went to Rome to petition the Holy See to send bishops to Vietnam and to raise up an indigenous clergy. His perseverance bore fruit. On 19 September 1659, the Holy See created two dioceses *Dang Trong* and *Dang Ngoai* in the Southern and Northern kingdoms, and entrusted them to two bishops of the *Missions Étrangères de Paris* (MEP). That date is now regarded as the birthday of the Catholic Church in Vietnam. From then on, the MEP took over the leadership of the Church in Vietnam. In 1668, four catechists from *Domus Dei* were ordained priests at the Major Seminary of Ayuthia in Siam, two for each diocese.

The first period of Jesuit presence in Vietnam lasted for 158 years until the Suppression of the Society in 1773. During those years, 155 Jesu-

its from 20 countries and 33 indigenous Jesuits worked in both kingdoms; some died as martyrs. With the Suppression, the Jesuits in Vietnam were scattered in the *diaspora*. None lived to see the Restoration of the Society in 1814.

History seemed to repeat itself with the second arrival of Jesuits in South Vietnam. In 1954, Vietnam was again split: the North fell under communist control, while the South remained nationalist; 700 Jesuits expelled from Mainland China looked southward for new lands of mission. Some went to the Philippines, where numerous Christian Chinese had chosen to settle, others turned their eyes to Vietnam, specifically to Cho Lon (Big Market), a huge Chinatown near Saigon. However, the answer from the MEP Bishop in Saigon was clear: there was not enough work even for his companions who had been also expelled from China. *Quid Agendum?*

Then came the invitation from the government of South Vietnam in 1956, asking the Society to help with the State universities. At the same time, the bishops of South Vietnam asked for help in the formation of the local clergy. Without delay, some Jesuits headed for Saigon and set up on 31 May 1957 their first residence, the *Maison Saint Ignace*, to which was later added the *Alexandre de Rhodes Centre* comprising a chapel, a hostel, a library with 100,000 volumes, the review *Oriental*, the Circle of Inculturation and Interreligious Dialogue, and a television studio.

In 1961, the Jesuits established the Pontifical College Saint Pius X on the plateau of Dalat. It was the only Vietnamese Faculty of Theology, and by the time the communist government closed it in 1976, around 360 seminarians had passed through the college, of whom 170 were ordained priests, and 13 became bishops. The College also translated into Vietnamese the documents of the Second Vatican Council and published a Theological Review in Vietnamese.

By 1975, the Jesuits in Vietnam had grown into a Region with 67 members. But that year, the Society experienced another "suppression", when the communists took over the South. The 41 foreign Jesuits were forced to leave the country,



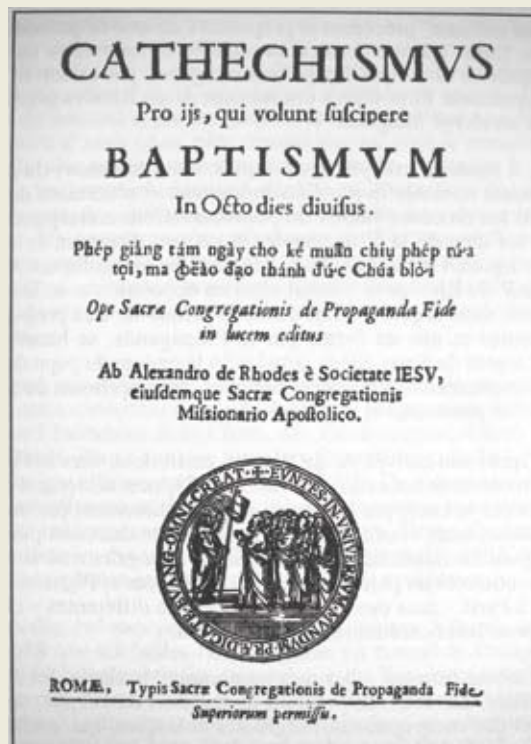
and the Region was left with only 26 Vietnamese Jesuits. Almost all the property owned by the Society was confiscated, nine elderly Jesuits were imprisoned for up to 13 years, several were forced into the army or onto the state farms, while the remaining companions lived *in diaspora* as simple citizens for more than two decades.

Quid Agendum? Like deep running streams, the Society kept surviving. Except for the few companions who served in three small parishes, the others kept a very low profile. When Vietnam opened up after the fall of the Soviet Bloc, the Region emerged from the underground. All the clandestine Jesuits surfaced, and the novitiate and scholasticate were re-established. At the 50th Anniversary of the Return of Jesuits to South Vietnam in 2007, Fr General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ raised the Region into a new Province of the Society with 127 members working in six cities in the country.

Four hundred years have passed since the first Jesuits landed in Vietnam, but the Society of Jesus is still in the formative stage in the country. In the last 10 years, the new Provincial Curia, the novitiate, the scholasticate and three community houses have been built, but other construction projects for apostolic works are still on the drawing board. Of the 195 Jesuits in the Province, 97 are scholastics in formation, 14 are young brothers, and there are 30 novices. This makes formation a priority, but there is a dearth of formators and professors.

Since Vietnamese law only allows pastoral activities in parishes, most of the Province's ministries – such as the social apostolate, the university chaplaincy, and the training of catechists – are attached to parishes. Giving the Spiritual Exercises has been also a great contribution of the Society to the local Church. Each year, Jesuits conduct around 150 retreats for priests, seminarians, religious, and lay people. To meet the increasing demand for retreats, a Training Program for Giving the Spiritual Exercises has been organized since 2006 for 15 non-Jesuit interns each year.

In responding to the call of the 35th General Congregation to go to new frontiers, the Vietnamese Province has sent missionaries and regents to Timor Leste, Laos and other Provinces in the Society. Recently, the migrant workers' ministry has been integrated into our parishes. The Province hopes to be able, in the next 10 years, to engage in some major apostolates that were so important in the past – inculturation in theological reflection, liturgy, missiology, dia-



logue with the main religions in the country, teaching and doing research in universities, and opening a Faculty of Theology.

The Province is celebrating the 400th anniversary with a Jubilee Year that began on 18 January 2014. In order to deepen the Jesuit sense of mission and acknowledge the contribution that our first Jesuits made to our national culture, two colloquia with six conferences on the *Contribution of the First Generation of Jesuits to the Proclamation of Faith and Inculturation in Vietnam (1614-1773)* will be held in the Pastoral Centre of the Saigon Archdiocese; six pilgrimages, with the theme *Rediscovery of Our Roots*, will bring some 250 Jesuits, collaborators and friends to visit places in six dioceses in the South and the North, where the first generation of our Jesuits lived and served.

Quid Agendum? This is more than a question. It points to a search to fulfil God's will at each turning point of one's personal life, and in the life of the Society. Four hundred years have passed, and the Society of Jesus in Vietnam is beginning anew!



Above, the "logo" of the centenary celebrations and the Catechism of Alexandre De Rhodes for the preparation for baptism. On the previous page, Fr. Joseph Pham Thanh Liem, Provincial of Vietnam, at the official celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Jesuits' arrival in this country.

Jubilee

The New Madurai Mission

M.A. Joe Antony, S.J.

The Jesuit Provincial of France was here in Tamil Nadu, India, at the beginning of February 2014 to participate at the celebrations of 175 years of the *New Madurai Mission*. Whenever he was called to speak, he won a loud applause from the audience simply by greeting the audience with a Tamil word, *Vanakkam!* (Greetings!). When he concluded his speech, he uttered another Tamil word, *Nanri!* (Thanks!), and the crowd cheered. He was here as the head of a delegation of four French Jesuits who came here to celebrate the French connection the Madurai (MDU) Province has had all these years.

The Jesuit presence in India began with the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in Goa in 1542. He and other Jesuits, like Antony Criminali, Henri Henriques, Gonzalo Fernandes and Robert de Nobili, worked in the Southern State of Tamil Nadu. In 1606 De Nobili began in the city of Madurai what came to be called the *Old Madurai Mission*. After him many great men like St. John de Brito and Constantine Joseph Beschi (known as Veeramaamunivar in Tamil) worked valiantly, preaching the Good News of Jesus, founding Christian communities and making

stellar contributions to the local culture and the local language of Tamil. The *Old Madurai Mission* continued for about two centuries, but came to an abrupt, sad end in 1759.

Pope Clement XIV suppressed the Society in 1773. But already in 1759 -- 14 years before the actual Suppression -- Marquis de Pombal used his influence and got the King of Portugal to expel all the Jesuits from India, where the Portuguese had colonized some territories. The Portuguese seized and deported 127 Jesuits from India. It was a classic case of tragic irony: when a Catholic kingdom pursued and deported Jesuit missionaries, some Hindu and Moslem rulers offered protection to some of them. After the Brief of Suppression was officially promulgated and applied to the Jesuits of the Carnatic, Mysore and Malabar Missions, the Jesuits handed over their properties and works to the Paris Foreign Missionaries, who received some Jesuits into their fold.

Therefore, for quite a few decades most Catholics were like sheep without a shepherd. About two decades after the Restoration of the Society, in 1836 Bishop Louis Hebert of Pondicherry



When we celebrate 175 years of the New Madurai Mission, there is no French Jesuit among the 509 who belong to the Madurai Province, but the fruits of the heroic lives and exceptional service of the French Jesuits continue to enrich and inspire the Province.



appealed to Pope Gregory XVI to send Jesuits to Madurai, their old mission field. The Pope directed the petition to the Jesuit General, Fr John Roothaan, who entrusted the *Madurai Mission* to the French Province of Lyons, which sent four French Jesuits in 1837 – Joseph Bertrand, Louis Garnier, Louis de Ranquet and Alexander Martin. They arrived in March 1838 and began to work in what has come to be called the *New Madurai Mission*. In spite of all the handicaps, the four French Jesuits worked with remarkable commitment, energy and foresight. In 1852 the Mission was entrusted to the Toulouse Province in the South of France. But the work begun by these four pioneers flourished, under a steady stream of missionaries, mainly from France but also from other European countries. Gradually, local vocations increased and Indian Jesuits took upon themselves the manifold apostolates begun by their European counterparts.

The tireless labours of Jesuit missionaries gave birth to diocese after diocese -- Trichy, Thoothukudi, Madurai, Kottar and later Palayamkottai, Sivagangai and Dindigul. The first Bishops in these dioceses were mostly Jesuits known for their exemplary commitment, vision and initiatives that continue to be fruitful even today. Another major contribution from the Jesuits was the training of the local clergy. They started and ran for many long years *St Paul's Seminary* in Trichy that trained and formed priests for almost all dioceses in the State. Later they assisted in the training of seminarians at

Arul Anandar College, Karumathur. Similarly, the Jesuits ran several parishes and these became models for other parishes.

Several local religious congregations were founded or nurtured by the Jesuits: *Servite Sisters*, *Sisters of St. Ann*, *Gonzaga Sisters*, *Sacred Heart Sisters*, *Sacred Heart Brothers*, and the *Congregation of the Immaculate Conception*.

In 1929 when the *New Madurai Mission* became a Vice Province, out of 280 Jesuits who worked here, 118 were French missionaries and 25 were from other European countries. When it became an independent Province in 1952, there were 424 Jesuits, out of whom 77 were Frenchmen and 20 were from other European countries. In 1988 when the Province celebrated 150 years of the *New Madurai Mission*, in the presence of the then General, Fr Kolvenbach, their number had greatly diminished. The last French stalwart, Fr. Pierre Ceyrac, died in Chen-



The Cathedral of Madurai; below, St. Mary's Higher Secondary School in Dindigul. On the previous page, two important educational institutes: Loyola College in Chennai and St. Xavier's College in Palayamkottai.



India



On this page, two events during the celebrations of the 175th anniversary of the New Madurai Mission: the thanksgiving Mass and Fr Sebastí Raj, Provincial, who is lighting the lamp at the beginning of the ceremony.



nai in May 1912, at the age of 98.

Therefore when we celebrate 175 years of the New Madurai Mission in 2013-14, there is no French Jesuit among the 509 who belong to the Madurai Province, but the fruits of the heroic lives and exceptional service of the French Jesuits continue to enrich and inspire the Province, which has grown from strength to strength.

Today the Province, which consists of the entire southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu, is one of the biggest in the entire Society. Jesuits run 5 Arts and Sciences Colleges, three Business Schools,

one Engineering College, 9 Higher Secondary Schools, 4 Vocational and Technical Institutes, 13 Parishes, 12 Social Centres, 3 Retreat Houses, 2 Book Stores and one Publishing House.

In the recent past, the Province has launched two new ministries: Jesuit Ministry for Alcohol and Drug Dependents (JMAADD) that runs de-addiction camps and programmes aimed at educating people on alcoholism, which is on the increase destroying lives and families. The second ministry, called Kalangarai (Light House), works for the rights and welfare of widows and abandoned women.

Chennai Mission, started in order to strengthen the Jesuit presence in the northern districts of the State, is focusing its attention on serving the marginalized Dalits, Tribals, migrants and other oppressed sections. In this area we have *Loyola College* in Vettavalam, *Loyola School* in Kuppayanalloor, *Loyola Academy* in Vadamel-pakkam, an Industrial School in Ooty, Social Centres in Vallam, Chengalpattu, Kilpennathur, a Retreat Centre in Mettupalayam and four parishes. Further, from June 2015, a new *Arts and Sciences College* is scheduled to be launched in Salem, a diocese where Jesuits have not been present till now. Invited by another such diocese, Dharmapuri, the Province plans to start an institute of higher education there from June 2016. Fr Sebastí L. Raj, SJ, the present Provincial, is keen to increase the number of dioceses where Jesuits work -- from the present 14 to all the 17 Dioceses of Tamil Nadu.

Grateful to God for such phenomenal growth in these 175 years, the Jesuits of the Madurai Province, recall with gratitude the service and sacrifices of their French counterparts and say what the French Provincial said during the February 2014 celebrations: *Nanri!* (Thanks!)

Madurai Mission

Delhi: 25 Years of Service

Augustin Perumalil, S.J.

Delhi Province celebrated its silver Jubilee on October 19, 2013. A grand cultural evening was organized by the educational institutions and social centres of the Province to commemorate the occasion. Many dignitaries and a large number of friends and well wishers congregated to grace the occasion. Interspersed with felicitations and cultural items, the celebration, a show of grace and poise, not only reflected the cultural diversity of the Province, but also emphasized that India is a melting pot of various religions, languages and cultures.

The fiesta was meant to mark 25 years of the Delhi Province which was created on January 1, 1988, with forty-three members. Many apostolic initiatives were undertaken, some failed, while others took roots and have grown into established apostolic institutions.

Some historical information about Jesuit missions in what is now the Delhi Province would not come amiss. In the book *Akbar and the Jesuits: An Account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar*, by Father Pierre Du Jarric, SJ, we have a detailed account of the Jesuit missions to the court of Emperor Akbar from 1579 through 1615. Jesuit missions to the court of Akbar started in response to an invitation by the emperor to participate in the religious debates he regularly conducted at his palace in Fatehpur Sikri. Invited by him, three Jesuits, Fr Rudolf Acquaviva, Fr Antony Monserrate and Bro Francis Henriques, reached Fatehpur Sikri on Feb 28, 1580. They were received with extraordinary warmth and affection by the emperor, whose hospitality continued throughout the three years the mission endured. The mission was abandoned because, contrary to what the Jesuits expected, Akbar appeared to be unwilling to commit himself to Christianity and was sceptical of all forms of faith.

Though the first mission to Agra failed, Jesuit engagement with the Mughal rulers continued. Once again invited by Akbar, two other missionaries arrived at Akbar's court. The second mission, led by Fr Jerome Xavier, the grandnephew of St Francis Xavier, lasted much longer, probably until the death of the Emperor Aurangzeb



in March 1707, though Fr Jerome Xavier, failing to convert Akbar to Christianity, had returned to Goa, "a broken man."

The Jesuits were back in the North-West of India at the invitation of Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh (1688-1743), ruler of the kingdom of Amber, later known as Jaipur. He invited the Jesuits to help in constructing an astronomical observatory and in 1729 some Jesuits from Kolkata arrived at Jaipur. The participation of Jesuits in Maharaja Jai Singh's astronomical endeavours continued intermittently for several decades after his death in 1743.

Around 1940, in response to an invitation by Mirza Ismail, the *diwan* (Prime Minister) of the Maharaja of Jaipur, the Patna Mission (started by the Jesuits of the Missouri Province) decided to open an English medium school for boys in Jaipur. This school became the seed of the Jesuit mission that would eventually grow into Delhi Province. In course of time, Patna Province, seeking to have a Jesuit institution in the national capital established St Xavier's School, Delhi

Fr. Verkey Prekkatt, Provincial, signs the contract with the Xavier Labour Relations Institute in Jamshedpur in order to open a new institute in Jhajhar.

On October 2013 the Delhi Province of the Society of Jesus celebrated its silver Jubilee.

In these years many apostolic initiatives were undertaken, some failed, while others took root and have grown into established apostolic institutions.

India



(1960). Constrained by the shortage of finance and personnel, Patna Province was unwilling to invest more in this area.

Nevertheless, many bishops, anxious about the shortage of missionaries in the vast and politically important geographical area, comprising fourteen dioceses spread over six States and two Union Territories, were appealing to both the Provincial of South Asia (POSA) and Fr. General for Jesuits to serve in their dioceses. In the early 1980s the North-West Project (NWP) took form under the aegis of the Jesuit Conference of South Asia (JCSA). Nonetheless, efforts to persuade a single Province to assume the responsibility for this area continued, since forming a Jesuit Region would facilitate better coordination and growth of apostolic works.

After much persuasion, the Province finally agreed to take over the NWP. In this way, the Delhi Region, dependent on Patna Province, was established on January 1, 1988 with Fr Varkey Perekkatt as its first superior. Since then, within the span of a quarter of a century, the Region has not only grown into a Jesuit Province (2004) but has also extended its activities to more places and diversified its apostolates. A brief description of the apostolic works and activities follows.

St Xavier's Jaipur is the oldest apostolic initiative of Delhi Jesuit Province. Today it is a complex of institutions which includes a higher secondary school, an undergraduate college, a

parish, a vocational training centre and a coaching centre for pre-school children (*balwadi*). The higher secondary school enrolls approximately 4,000 students. The college offers five disciplines and enrolls approximately 1,400 students. The parish enjoys active lay collaboration, and the vocational training centre (XVI) offers training in eight different skills to about 250 youngsters annually from economically underprivileged families. The *balwadi*, another concrete expression of the Society's concern for the poor, prepares about forty children from poor families, so that some of them can be absorbed into the higher secondary school. With the passage of time even more initiatives have been taken up: a school at Mahua and a major educational complex at Newta. An active association of Jaipur Xavier's Alumni continues to help the institutions to achieve their goals.

St Xavier's, Delhi, the second oldest Jesuit apostolic venture under the Delhi Province is primarily engaged in formal educating over 4,100 students. The recently constructed *Millennium Complex* provides ultra-modern facilities and amenities for curricular and cultural activities. *Sahayog*, the Province curia and *Nav Jivan*, a recently inaugurated spiritual renewal centre, are also located on the campus. Here too is the office of the *Delhi Old Xaverian Association* (DOXA) which has a membership close to 10,000, making it one of the largest alumni groups in India, and has branches in many nations spread over five continents.

Xavier Seva Kendra, Almora is situated at the foothills of the Himalayas, and consists of a social service centre and a parish. Its focus is social education and village animation, reaching out to 700 villages and working for the welfare of fifteen million people, primarily by promoting awareness, education and empowerment of the vulnerable sections of society like women and children.

The *Bhiwadi Mission*, situated in the Bhiwadi Industrial Township, 75 kilometres away from Delhi, opened in 1987. Here there is a parish, a senior secondary school, a social animation programme, a Jesuit candidate house and a convent of the FSLG sisters. The parish has close to 75



registered families as members while social concern reaches out to the eighteen nearby villages. Besides activities to empower women, youth and children in the villages, there are two Kelti Centres intended to train unemployed women and drop out young girls in tailoring and embroidery.

Started in 1988, the *Ropar Mission*, is approximately 50 km away from Chandigarh. It consists of a parish, a social service centre, a dialogue ministry and a formal school. The parish which started as small Christian community has grown over the years, the number of Catholic families rising to forty. The social service centre attempts to empower the rural poor through programmes of literacy, self-help and awareness programs, rickshaw pullers' programme, housing programme, and so on. The dialogue ministry focuses on establishing relationship with the Sikh community.

St Xavier's, Shabbad is an apostolic centre, situated in North Delhi, about 35 km away from New Delhi. It consists of a school, a social service centre a parish and remedial coaching centre. Graded as an "A star institution" by the *Times News Network* in Delhi, the school admits 2,100 students and has special teaching programmes for the poor and underprivileged children.

The *Loyola Vocational Institute (LVI)* is an accredited vocational and academic centre of the *National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)*. Every year over 500 youth, mainly young women from the slums and resettlement colonies nearby, enrol at LVI and acquire training in various trade skills ranging from computer applications to beauty culture and library science. The study centre under NIOS gives a second chance to school dropouts and those who failed the Class X or XII examinations. *St Xavier's parish* is a flourishing and active Jesuit parish of about 120 families.

St Xavier's, Behror is approximately midway between Delhi and Jaipur. It consists of a school and a parish. With a variety of co-curricular activities spread throughout the year, today the school has become well known in the locality.

St Vincent de Paul Church, Jahangirpuri, situated behind the Ram Lila Ground of Jahangirpuri, is a small structure with two floors. The hall in the ground floor is used for worship and a first floor serves as the priest's residence. Behind the church, Jesuits have constructed a building with eight rooms. These rooms are used during the weekdays for social activities like coaching classes and other skill training programmes such as tailoring, computer, typing, and beauticians' course. On Sundays they are used for youth animation programmes, catechism classes and other church-



related activities.

Shanti Sadan, Ignatian Spirituality Centre, located at Chatham Lines in Allahabad, a kilometre away from the Ganges, offers a serene atmosphere to those who want to spend time in prayer and recollection. This institute was established to promote psycho-spiritual growth of individuals. To this end, *Shanti Sadan* offers programmes such as retreats, seminars, spiritual animation, counselling, formation and leadership programmes, and orientations for priests, religious and lay people.

In spite of their small number (57 priests, 50 scholastics, and 4 brothers), the Delhi Jesuits constantly seek to reach out to as many as they can, spread over a vast geographical area. Despite many constraints and limitations, drawing inspiration from the pioneers who ventured into this area as early as 1579, they strive to expand their mission to new areas. The brief description given above of the places and apostolates proclaims how Delhi Jesuits pursue the dream and vision of the pioneers with zeal, enthusiasm and passion.

Above, two photos of girls from poor families being taught dress-making and hairdressing at Loyola Vocational Institute in Shahbad. On the previous page, learning at St. Xavier's School, Delhi, and the animation programme for the women of Almora.

Delhi

Review ends after 99 years

“The first Areopagus of modern times is the world of communication,” explained Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini years ago, commenting on the mission of St. Paul to Athens and reflecting on his attempt to announce the Gospel using a language adapted to and comprehensible by Athenians. This same situation has been the experience of *Popoli*, the monthly review published by Italian Jesuits since 1915.

The format of the magazine has changed a number of times during its history: *Popoli* came into being with another name: *Missions of the Society of Jesus*. It was an initiative of Giuseppe Petazzi, S.J. at the outset of the 1st World War, and its director made a point of noting that particular historical moment in the introduction to the inaugural edition. The scope of the new review was “to narrate and promote the great new works of Mission,” with particular reference to the missionary activity of Jesuits. A particularly significant date was 1954, when the “notebook” format changed to a larger one, changing pagination and printing technique as well. The content itself assumed a more universal character, readership was amplified and the maga-

zine entered decisively into the photographic era. A new and still more important step was taken in 1970, when collaboration began between the Italian Jesuits and the Italian directors of the Pontifical Missionary Works.

That collaboration lasted 16 years during which the monthly – which in the meantime had taken the name of *Popoli e Missioni*—inserted itself progressively into the missionary pastoral of the Italian Church by means of a close contact with both the diocesan mission Centers and the Bishops’ Conference. It was also the occasion for Jesuits to become known as a missionary Order – an aspect little attended to in Italy.

In 1986 the Italian directors of the Pontifical Missionary Works decided to create their own review, so January, 1987 began a new phase of *Popoli*. The graphic design changed, and directors changed. After the long leadership of Giuseppe Bellucci, S.J., which gave the review a decisive growth in terms of its readership public and its authority, it was the turn of Giustino Bethaz, S.J. and, from 1999 to 2005, of Bartolomeo Sorge, S.J., already the director of *Civiltà Cattolica* and *Aggiornamenti Sociali*. From 2006 on Stefano Femminis has been the director – the first layman collaborator to direct a review of the Italian Jesuits. With me there is an editorial staff of two professional journalists and one Jesuit. It’s a sign of the times indicating the progressive openness of the Society to collaboration with the laity.

It’s the era of new technologies, of the digital revolution and of social networks. *Popoli* is trying to avoid being caught unprepared, aware that a modern means of communication, in terms of its ‘niche’, cannot any longer limit itself to its paper version: in order to be heard it must construct a true and personal system of communication. That’s why, in 2010, we began a website (www.popoli.info) with a series of items in addition to the monthly edition (news, comments, video, blogs), while in 2011 *Popoli* – the first Italian Catholic periodical to take this step – launched a tablet version, thus signaling as well a presence on *Twitter* and *Facebook* particularly relevant for the numerous subscribers to the *newsletter*.

We’ve then added to these activities in the ambit of the media initiatives which up to a few years ago were sidelines, but which have growing importance today and to which more energies will be dedicated in the future: the organization of cultural events (particularly in conjunction with the Cultural Foundation of San Fedele in Milan, the editor of the magazine, which is branching out in a number of other activities dedicated to cultural,

Below, the first issue of *Le Missioni della Compagnia di Gesù* of 1915 and the cover of the February 1954 issue with the new title: *Missioni della Compagnia di Gesù*.

***Popoli*, the international Missionary review of Italian Jesuits, ceases publication after nearly a century in print.**

In this age of the digital communication, the Jesuits in Milan, faithful to their heritage, are branching out into new ways.

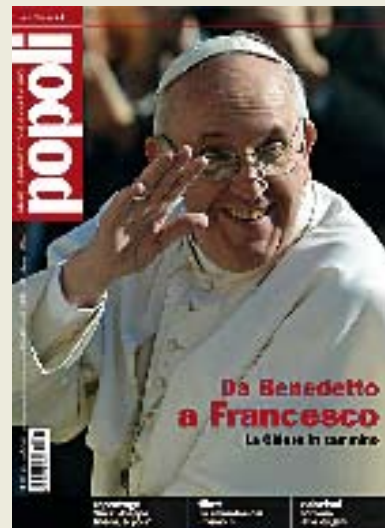


social and spiritual issues); the editors' participation in round tables, conferences and seminars, and collaboration with other works and networks of the Society in Italy.

During its history, then, *Popoli* has known various changes, always trying to interpret and communicate the evolution of the concept of Mission in light of the Gospel, of the social doctrine of the Church and of the apostolic orientation of the Society of Jesus. In the world of today where distances vanish but "differences" seem, on the contrary, to multiply, the task of the magazine has been to bring persons and cultures nearer together, to build bridges of dialogue between diverse religions, and to reflect on how the relationship between faith and justice in the Church can be articulated in the third millennium. This is why we dedicate space to the inestimable patrimony of cultures different from the west's, to themes of immigration, to the knowledge of faiths different from that of Christians, and to accounts of ecumenical experiences and of inter-religious dialogue. Not to pass over the many situations in which human dignity, in the world's south as well as its north, is denied. Though *Popoli* is not dedicated exclusively to Jesuits, the work done by the Society and organizations connected with it (e.g., the *Jesuit Refugee Service*) constitutes an extraordinarily rich font of information.

During this time, then, the magazine placed itself in the line of the new evangelization where, for instance, the old distinction between "the Christian world" and "mission territories" has lost its significance. Above all in an Ignatian perspective, "mission" is nothing other than that which the Church has always done: announce the Good News of love of the Trinitarian God; it is not a concept reducible to the foundation of new ecclesial communities in non Christian countries (the so-called "foreign missions"). This fundamental opening-up has allowed us to renew the readership profile of *Popoli* and to enter into contact with a sector of readers not necessarily part of ecclesial life. In addition we note that the lay mass media – ordinarily 'suspicious' of Catholic information – have shown increasing attention to the work of *Popoli*.

Despite these encouraging results, the magazine



has had to deal with the difficulties inherent in the Italian publishing world. For decades, this has been in a deep, chronic crisis. New forms and new ideas are also needed when confronted by the digital world. There is a new information "continent" in which to live, with which to come to terms, and to infuse with the Good News. It was this that ultimately led to the change, to the decision to cease publication and to devote energies to this new form of "mission." But we do not start from scratch. The legacy of *Popoli* is preserved in the thousands of pages which were printed during the past 99 years. The momentum of that long experience will inform the other activities of the Cultural Foundation of San Fedele. The same desire, which 100 years ago, inspired the Jesuits to found the magazine, lives on: to contribute to the proclamation of the Gospel, placing itself at the service of faith of which justice is an integral part, in dialogue with other religions and cultures.

Translated by John J. O'Callaghan, S.J.

Below, the tablet version of Popoli and the editorial group. During almost 100 years of its existence the magazine has always sought to keep abreast with the times.



Popoli

Living Reminders of a Heroic Age

John Thiede, S.J. – Photos Don Doll S.J.

In the 17th century, the Society of Jesus began a new work for evangelization in the Americas. The Jesuits likely read and adapted their mission plan from *The Only Way*, a blueprint for evangelizing the native peoples by Bartolomé de las Casas, a Spanish Dominican who began his ministry in Hispaniola (today's Haiti and the Dominican Republic), moved to Chiapas, and finally served as a bishop in Peru. Las Casas was famous for his defense of indigenous peoples; he had witnessed the annihilation and enslavement of large numbers of them in Peru, where they

were either killed or forced to harvest natural resources in what was once the Incan empire. The Jesuits thus started a new model, which would later be called *Reductions*.

Many who are familiar with Jesuit history have seen the movie *The Mission*, which depicts early Jesuit work with the Guarani and related tribes in today's Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay. One can still visit these *Reductions*, most of which have been restored but are now uninhabitable. Less well known is that this missionary plan was also instituted in the Viceroyalty of Peru and



Several aspects of the solemn Feast of St. Ignatius with the Moxos of Bolivia, evangelized by the first Jesuit missionaries.

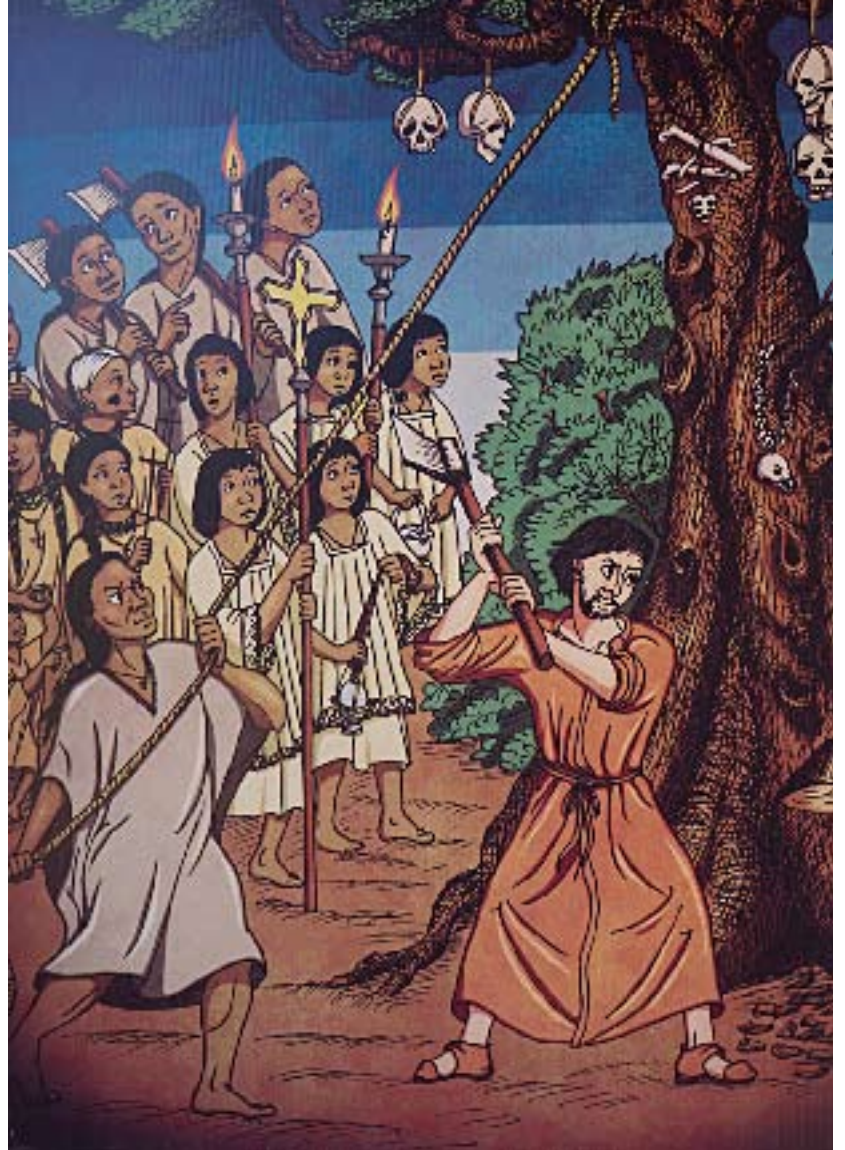
Present are three bishops: Auxiliary Bishop Adolfo Bittschi Mayer of Sucre, Bishop Julio Maria Elías of Trinidad, and Bishop emeritus Hubert Bucher of Bethlehem. Also seen are the tintirinti ("heralds of the feast"); the people celebrating and the "Ensemble Moxos" with the choir of the local music conservatoire.







Above, a Jesuit nursing brother cares for the indigenous. Having acquired trust in the missionaries, the indigenous peoples destroy their idols, overcoming the fear of their revenge.



that a network of *Reductions* extended across most of today's northern Bolivia.

There were two unrelated tribes in these Jesuit reductions. The Chiquitos tribe lived in an area now called the Chiquitania, which spanned a large area to the north and west of Santa Cruz. The Moxos, a separate cultural and linguistic group, lived in a large area of inhospitable climate that stretched north and west from modern-day Trinidad, near the start of the Amazon rain forest. These Moxos people formed a fierce interconnection of tribes which never accepted defeat at the hands of the Spanish or Portuguese armies.

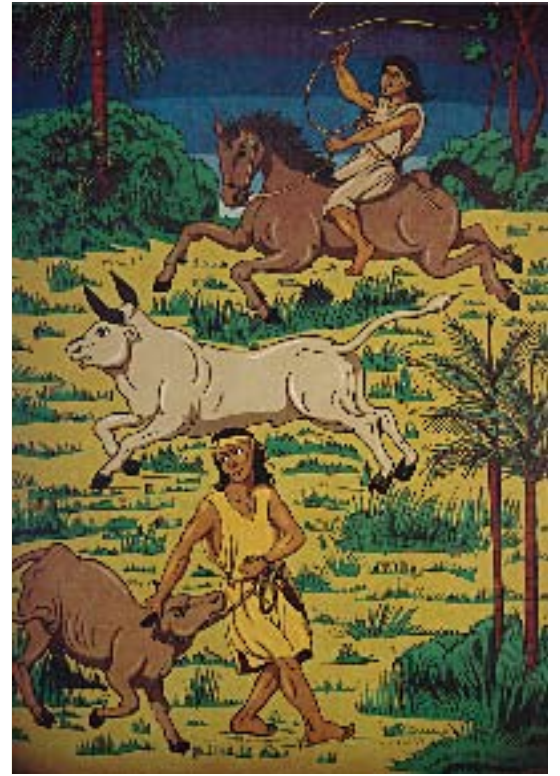
The first Jesuits in this area suffered greatly from the rough climate. A large variety of diseases

like malaria and cholera and predators such as the panther, the anaconda, and a wide variety of venomous snakes and spiders complicated movement during the rainy season. Jesuits had difficulty traversing the land and were forced to travel by river, especially dangerous when encountering the more unknown and violent tribes, not to mention the piranhas and crocodiles that infested the rivers. Eventually they founded several *Reductions*, the first headquartered in Loreto. Most of these *Reductions* took on the names of Jesuit saints such as San Ignacio or San Francisco Javier.

The Jesuits who came into contact with the Moxos people quickly learned to evangelize through art and music, even while they attempted to learn a language that was unrelated to that of any tribe they had previously encountered. Jesuit artists were sent to narrate the gospel stories through paintings and sketches. Musicians were sent with instruments, and they wrote compositions to incorporate indigenous instruments with baroque instruments like the viola, flute, and violin. Botanists recorded the

Reductions

Special feature



Music plays a very important role among the Moxos, especially in religious celebrations. They use both traditional instruments and those brought by the missionaries. The Jesuits also introduced cattle breeding and new crafts, until their expulsion in 1767, by King Charles III. Photos by Bernardo Gantiér S.J.



At the top of the page, images of St. Ignatius on the altar and above, musicians in the procession.

wide variety of flora and fauna, documenting specimens and sending them to Lima for further categorization and study. Linguists developed the first dictionary, divided into three dialects based upon the locations of the various reductions; thus Trinitario was spoken in the east near Trinidad, Ignaciano in the center and south near San Ignacio, and Javeriano near San Javier in the north and west. In San Ignacio there is still a pictorial representation of the day a number of chiefs brought representations of the gods

they had worshiped – the fish god, the panther god, the snake god, and others – and had them burned in front of the cross of Jesus Christ.

Through music, art, dance, language, liturgical processions, and basic catechism the Jesuits were able to evangelize a large area of what had previously been a fiercely hostile grouping of tribes.

The Moxos *Reductions* flourished and quickly became the envy of neighboring Spanish and Portuguese settlements. The Moxos people quickly learned how to harvest crops through cooperative farming. They raised a breed of cattle that flourished and was so plentiful they sold the surplus in Spanish and Portuguese towns. They also were known for their beautiful tapestries and wool work. In addition, they formed one of the largest orchestras in that part of the world and played music by the Jesuit composer Domenico Zipoli, fusing baroque instruments with their indigenous music. Many of these compositions survive today and warrant further musicological study.

The age of the *Reductions* came to an end with the suppression of the Society of Jesus. In 1778, 24 of the remaining Jesuits were led off in chains to Lima, but only 14 arrived safely. Of these, only six would arrive in Europe alive, so rough was their treatment and so rampant the disease on

Special feature

Bolivia



the ships they sailed on. Soon the Spanish and Portuguese settlers, armed for war, forced the Moxos people either to submit to their will or to flee into the Amazon rain forest.

Somewhat amazingly, many descendants from these Moxos tribes preserved their Catholic faith and traditions over the centuries. Each year 12 “caciques,” or chiefs, were chosen to lead the solemn processions at the major holidays – Christmas, Easter, the *Reductions*’s feast day, St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, Trinity Sunday, etc.

Not only did they guard the religious artifacts made during the time of the Jesuits and their reduction churches, but they also kept the traditions instilled by the Jesuits. Even the system of governance of the tribe, tribal council, shared goods, and materials were maintained by most tribes. Shockingly, in 1973 one group, the Moxos who spoke Ignaciano, were “rediscovered.” The first thing they asked for was the return of the

Above and below left, several views of the solemn procession that begins before sunrise. Above left, an elderly “Achus”, who represents the ancestors; his mask and broad hat protect him from the fireworks. A girl in traditional costume.

Suppression

Bolivia

Many couples to be married want to celebrate their wedding during the Octave of the Feast of St. Ignatius. The celebration is often for several couples at the same time.

Jesuits. In 1982, the Jesuits returned and found treasure troves of baroque instruments, music, religious artwork, tapestries and religious artifacts, dictionaries and botany books from pre-Suppression times. The basic structure of the church in San Ignacio still remained, with its almost perfect acoustics due to the design of the Swiss Jesuit brothers who had built it. The Jesuits quickly went to work, starting a grade school for the rural poor and a boarding high school for those in more remote areas who did not have access to a high school education. A health clinic was also started to serve the region. In the 1990s, money was raised to restore the original mission church. While this and the restoration of artwork are still works in process, one cannot help but be impressed by the original architecture, beautiful murals, and altar pieces. More recently Jesuits and their lay collaborators

helped to found a music conservatory, which specializes in baroque renaissance music and in performing the old fusion between the baroque style and native compositions. The baroque music group of the conservatory, Ensemble Moxos, has earned international acclaim.

But perhaps most impressive are the liturgical dances and processions, which date back to the pre-Suppression period. Don Doll, S.J., and I had the privilege of attending the celebrations in San Ignacio de Moxos for the octave of the feast of St. Ignatius. From the announcement procession of St. James the Apostle to the sunrise procession to welcome the town patron, Saint Ignatius, to the closing masses and bull fights, the pageantry and bright tropical colors evident in the native costumes prove inspiring. Some of the dance groups date back to the pre-Suppression Society, including the Macheteros,





who represent the guardians of Ignatius, and the Achus, who dance like whirling dervishes with fireworks on their heads, heralding the celebrations and providing comic relief as the “tricksters” of the procession. Both men and women join in the procession and dance, each year continuing a tradition more than 300 years old.

Now the Jesuits have also been reincorporated into the processions, and in the final procession to close the feast of St. Ignatius they walk near his statue, reminding everyone of the Ignatian heart of the town. Having participated in the celebrations for the 324th anniversary last July, I can only imagine the “fiesta” that will take place next year for the 325th. Proud traditions have been maintained, and new ones express the fusions of Bolivian, Spanish, and native cultures, as the Society of Jesus walks once again with a proud Moxos people.

Moxos



On this page, photos of the new school, Fe y Alegría and, below, Fr Juan Calle Gonzales, SJ, the headmaster.

Fr. John Thiede, SJ, the author of this article, is a professor of theology at Marquette University. The photographer, Fr. Don Doll, SJ, is a professor of journalism at Creighton University.





EDUCATION FIRST

We need to discern carefully how we carry out educational and pastoral ministries, especially among youth, in this fast-changing post-modern culture. We need to walk with young people, learning from their generosity and compassion so as to help each other to grow through fragility and fragmentation to joyful integration of our lives with God and with others. Volunteer work with and for the poor helps young people to live in solidarity with others and find meaning in and direction for their lives (GC 35, d. 3, no. 23).



Integration

50 Years in Service of the Faith

Hermann-Habib Kibangou, S.J.

Fifty years have passed since the creation in 1963 of the Catholic University Center by Monsignor Jean Zoa, then Archbishop of Yaoundé, the capitol of Cameroon. The center, better known by its initials C.C.U., is the oldest as well as the premier University Chaplaincy in the country. It's a work belonging to the Archdiocese of Yaoundé but confided to the Jesuit Province of Western Africa (P.A.O.); it fits in perfectly to the apostolic tradition of the Society of Jesus. In the words of the Convention signed by Archbishop Zoa and Fr. Eric de Rosny (then Provincial of the P.O.A.), the Society promised "to help as far as it can, and in accord with the norms of its Constitutions, in the development of the Church in the Archdiocese of Yaoundé" (cf. Art. 5).

Under this rubric, the Provincial is to "make sure that members of the Society are faithful in carrying out the charge given to them by the Archbishop" (cf. Art. 6). Conceived as a way of serving the faith by engaging the social,

intellectual and cultural world of higher education, the Center set itself from its outset the goal of fostering the growth in itself of various initiatives of the Lay Apostolate, in particular that of the International Movement of Catholic Students, known as the MEIC (cf. Attestation No. 1044/91/58 erecting the C.C.U. as a university parish), with the idea that it would be "a Center of Service for the students, the faculty and the administrative personnel in developing libraries, study and lecture halls, as well as venues for conferences, repetitions, videos and emergency services."

In brief, it is a Center whose mission is "to accompany the work of evangelization through research by proposing an intellectual and religious formation for students, teachers and staff desirous of deepening their knowledge and practice of the faith."

This very practice of the faith leaves an indelible mark from the outset of our pastoral activities by means of a Sunday Mass together in French and English, presided over by the chaplain of the C.C.U. This Mass corresponds generally to the beginning of the term of the State University (Yaoundé I) and it's followed some days afterwards by the formation of leaders of our different group. The pastoral year ends with a visit from the Archbishop preceded by a cultural week: a way of celebrating the end of the year with joy, games, relaxation and prayer.

The university parish of St. Francis Xavier has a dynamic bilingual community (English-speaking and French-speaking) which promises a spirituality combining spiritual, intellectual and pastoral vitality. It is able to schedule daily Masses (at 6:30 in French and English, at 12 noon in French) and Sunday Masses (at 6:30 bilingual, at 8:30 in English and at 10:30 in French); it can foster the involvement of our people in Christian movements and groups; it offers venues for research and reading which attract young students and other seekers. These venues include, for example, the Academic Library and the Library of Spirituality, whose attendants are generous students. And it has

*The inner courtyard
of the Jesuit
community with
the Church of the
University Centre
in Yaoundé.*

Conceived as a way of serving the faith by engaging the social, intellectual and cultural world of higher education, the Catholic University Center of Yaoundé set itself, from its beginnings, the goal of fostering the growth of the Lay Apostolate.





as a resource the Fr. Meinrad Hebga Multi-Media Center.

It's important to note the considerable draw of parish activities like the annual Lenten pilgrimage to Ngoya (located more than 15 kilometers from Yaoundé) which begins on Friday and ends with Palm Sunday, religious concerts, conferences, etc., the ever-increasing number of catechumens for the Sacraments of Initiation and Marriage, the availability of confessors (generally on Friday between 4 and 6 p.m.) and the Radio apostolate.

Other distinguishing characteristics of the parish are: its transparent communication about how funds are handled; its innovative projects of a new and larger chapel (the present one being too small and distant to meet the parish needs) and of a residence for men and women students; the renovation with the help of FACS of the Academic Library, the construction of a Marian Grotto dedicated to "Mary Mediatrix of Grace" (in the process of completion) auguring a better future. The presence of male students at the Catholic Students House is a notable support for parish life (since our parish is 'sociological') and for the life of the Catholic University Center.

Alongside these spiritual, intellectual and pastoral resources exist realities capable of being obstacles to the practice of the faith and to social involvement. These include, for example, the heaviness of some practices of "traditional religion," strikes and unemployment, poor mastery of the Church' social teachings, and the fear for an uncertain tomorrow which

by its very fact puts real brakes on the faith-life of our parishioners. Because of this we are determined to help them for a "new discernment and new ways of perceiving realities both social, religious and political", starting from their cultural and social context.

Summing up, all these elements must be taken into consideration in order to foster the planting of the faith in these young students as well as in the adults who make up our parish community.

It's for this reason that we never cease to repeat to them that "God, infinitely perfect and happy in Himself, in a plan of pure bounty, freely created human beings to enable their participation in His blessed life. That is why, at all times and in every place, God comes close to us, calling us, helping us to search for Him, to know Him and to love Him with all our strength" (cf. Prologue to *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*). How can we express that in deeds? By means of a catechesis which takes into account the social and political realities of daily life. By doing what? By inculcating in our people by example "the imperatives of the Beyond," while helping them to hope in a better tomorrow. The late Bishop Albert Ndongmo

Group photo after the Mass for the 50th anniversary of the University Centre that came into being to promote faith and social, intellectual and cultural commitment in the university world.

Cameroon

Cameroon



Above, several of the faithful at the Mass celebrating the Centre's 50th anniversary. At the top, choir members and students outside the academic library.

(one-time bishop of Nkongsamba, Cameroon) had the habit of telling his flock that “one does not lead people to heaven as if the earth didn't exist.” That's what we mean when we say we need to inculcate in our Christians “the imperatives of the Beyond.”

Even if the majority of our students can't be sure of having three meals a day, we want to teach them to “lift their gaze above accidental contingencies.” In a situation such as theirs of “anthropological impoverishment” (according to Father Engelbert Mveng, S.J., impoverishment is the fact of becoming or being made

poor”), they have to “adapt themselves to secular situations” all the while trying to hear a Christian message in their life-reality where they are face-to-face with other non-Christian realities like sects or other esoteric networks.

Moreover, being a university parish, we want to teach our catechumens to link Faith and Reason in their way of believing and living. In effect, that will help them more to involve themselves in devotions “with an interior attitude of faith” in the bosom of our Christian community.

Twenty years after its being established as a university parish, in October, 2011, I was sent to work at the C.C.U., at first as an Interim chaplain (given that the then chaplain, Fr. Emmanuel Foro, S.J. of Burkina was giving courses at *Hekima College* in Nairobi, Kenya). On July 1, 2012 – 49 years after the creation of the aforesaid chaplaincy -- I took over as its principal chaplain.

In its 50 years of life, the C.C.U. has known a number of chaplains (Jesuits and non-Jesuits) in succession. The celebration of our 50th anniversary had as its theme “Fifty Years of Service of the Faith and Social Involvement.” That commemoration was launched on January 13, 2013, Feast of Our Lord's Baptism, and ended on Sunday, June 23, 2013. In its last week from Monday, June 17 to Sunday June 23 there were many activities around the St. Francis Xavier Trophy and the closing Mass was presided over by Fr. Eugene Goussikindey, Provincial of the Province of Western Africa, with the presence of many Jesuits.

This year the Jesuit presence at Yaoundé (some 31 in all, from a dozen countries) can be a sign of hope for the Society of Jesus, seeing that it's the first time in the history of the province that we have achieved this number in the City of Seven Hills. It is up to us to assure that this presence is one of quality across our various apostolic works. The cultural diversity of our presence at Yaoundé can also be the occasion to celebrate the kaleidoscopic reality of our countries and our cultures – and thus of the Society of Jesus as a whole.

At its beginning the CCU had as its mission to form young students of the Republic of Cameroon according to an integrated spirituality at once intellectual, spiritual and human. Fifty years later, what can we report? That the last fifty years have been chiefly at the service of the faith and social involvement.

Translated by John J. O'Callaghan, S.J.

1963-2013

Education with a Difference

Girish Santiago, S.J.

The North Gujarat Mission is celebrating its Golden Jubilee. It is exactly 50 years since we, the Jesuit Missionaries of this region, had our humble beginnings. First and foremost, we are grateful to God for His abundant blessings, by which, we firmly believe, we got started. It was God who brought us to this land of Camels and it is He who continually labours with us to establish His reign in this region. While praising God for His marvellous works, let us see in particular how this God, the God of the *anawim*, has enabled the missionaries of the Kadi-Kalol Jesuit community to think out of the box and to accompany the poor and marginalized. The Unteshwari Parish of the Gandhinagar Archdiocese has become a Marian hillock centre well-known for its ongoing experiments on inculturation.

Till 1998, the Jesuit missionaries, and their committed collaborators (sisters, local catechists and lay leaders) concentrated their direct evangelical works mainly within the Mission Mandate's exclusive caste-based groups of the Indian society in 19 villages of Kadi block. It was in 1998, six months after my ordination, that I was sent as a young pastor to Unteshwari and face the prevailing situation where I had to live alone and lead the Mission to a greener pasture. However, from the moment of my arrival, I have never felt alone because I have always experienced God's supportive hands, in spite of an attempted external persecution.

With a clear vision and with our local Catholic lay companion Mr Chhanabhai K. Raval, I went about visiting and doing good to the already existing mission contacts. We encountered many abandoned and depressed disabled children, adolescents and adults. The mere presence of such challenged persons was a challenge to my priestly call. In order to respond creatively to the pathetic situations and to celebrate the Jubilee Year 2000 in a meaningful way, with the encouraging words of the then Ahmedabad Bishop and the approval of the Jesuit Provincial, we went beyond our already existing mission contacts, in search of the disabled persons. We crossed our borders with a single-minded frontier outlook.



We felt that we needed to make the disabled walk, see, hear, speak and understand. Thus, we surveyed all the Schools of the entire 119 villages of our Kadi block.

The Jubilee Year 2000 is a special grace for Unteshwari, because of the precious innovative expansion of our mission service, especially to the vulnerable disabled persons, the privileged members of God's family!

We contacted the disabled children, both boys and girls, of all categories. They were seen as non-persons by our superiority complex minded human society. We systematically organized them to get proper medical certificates from the civil hospitals. Then we classified them

Parents are committed to providing education in the family for their children with mental difficulties. One of the purposes of the so-called "inclusive education" is, precisely, to train the disabled.

The North Gujarat Mission (India) is celebrating fifty years since the Jesuit missionaries had their humble beginning in this region. Now it has become a centre well-known for its ongoing experiments on inculturation of the Gospel.

India



Above, a group of operators with the ambulance available to the disabled people who may need it. At the top of the page, the joy of financially disadvantaged boys who have succeeded in obtaining diplomas from their school.

as per the medical model: OH – Orthopaedically Handicapped; VI – Visually Impaired; HI – Hearing Impaired; DD – Deaf and Dumb; MR – Mentally Retarded, CP – Cerebral Palsy and MD – Multiple Disabled. With that, a proposal was prepared and was submitted to the cell of Inclusive Education for Disabled Children, a programme run by the Central Government's department of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), through the supervision of the Gujarat Government's Council for Education and Research Training. The proposal was accepted and was approved in 2000 to serve

such children, especially in their education.

Meanwhile we applied and acquired the certificate of registration under Section 52 of The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and full Participation) Act 1995 from the Social Defence Office of the Gujarat government to work for and with such disabled persons.

From 2000, the motto of our wider and barrier free mission within our New Evangelization process has been – *enable the disabled*. The two objectives of such an inclusive mission are: 1. To integrate and include the persons with disabilities with general community at all levels as equal partners. 2. To prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence.

Today, such an *Inclusive Educational* programme is a well planned, executed, monitored and evaluated out-reach programme of MHRD, under the section of education in all over India. But Gujarat is one of the few States which systematically implements the programme through the Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Today, in Gujarat there are Government NGOs and 56 non-governmental NGOs who directly render their inclusive education to 110,883 disabled students of all categories. We are one of them and the only one Christian Faith Based Organization which works as a leaven in the ministry of enabling and ennobling the disabled. Humbly we say that we are a well respected and recognized organization within and outside India.

The *Inclusive Educational* programme aims at incorporating the family-based physically and mentally challenged children, especially the mild and moderate ones into the common schools of the villages and towns. It very much insists on creating a healthy environment and on offering a space for their integral growth in the midst of other non-disabled children. The school staff, students and parents are encouraged to recognize the nature of each child and accompany him/her in his/her slow and steady learning and other developmental processes.

Through this *Inclusive Educational* programme, each disabled child's study materials, uniform, aids and appliances like walking stick, hearing aid, crutches, callipers, tricycle, brain developmental kit, and the like, are aptly provided by us, with the financial assistance from the Government. The programme offers well trained visiting Special Teachers to enable, educate, empower, employ and enhance the chal-

Gujarat

lenged children in their class and out of class rooms, in their family and neighbourhood environments. For the severely disabled persons the escort allowance, reader allowance for the blind and salary for the special teachers are paid regularly. Each child is individually attended to and accompanied well in his/her learning and in doing by the entire dedicated collaborative team members of our organization.

In order to implement well such an *Inclusive Education* programme, we do have the local, national and international inter-NGO communications and activities as part of our organized net-working system. Locally and globally we do have a stand as a prophetic voice of such 'voiceless'! The parents, management of the schools and the village councils are highly motivated by us to accompany their sons and daughters and to make them differently-abled in their human society.

They are encouraged more to see the strengths than the weaknesses of their beloved ones. This has created a new outlook where the disabled persons joyfully participate in the Gujarat government sponsored sports and other cultural activities as *Special Khel Mahakumbh*. Every year, on 3rd December, the feast of St Francis Xavier, we celebrate World Disabled Day with the disabled and non-disabled to make everybody realize that each one is a true image and likeness of God!

After these many years, in Gujarat, we have been the first one to make the Gujarati New Testament of the Catholic Bible in Braille for the blind in 2012. The blind persons can now 'see', read independently and encounter disabled-friendly Jesus of Nazareth!

As a life-long formative training, we campaign regularly for the implementation of the following facilities: 1) To remove physical barriers posed by stairs, doorways, toilets, water faucets, and other architectural aspects imperative to accessing facilities in every private and public places. 2) To remove the barriers of the teaching system, by providing facilities for accessing information related to the curriculum, by the use of modern technology like computers using specialized software and by providing awareness, sensitivity and solutions for teachers, parents and others. 3) To remove the barriers of the examination system by providing means of free and fair evaluation of the student's knowledge irrespective of his/her sensory and physical status.

Besides *Inclusive Education*, we take special

interest in the wholistic and holistic Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programme for disabled persons within and beyond our mission territory especially in health, education, social, livelihood, employment, empowerment and spiritual sectors. Children are medically treated. Young boys and girls are motivated to get trained in some vocational courses and assisted initially to stand on their own feet. Adults and Aged are encouraged and assisted to run income-generating projects. Also, we freely offer our services to the disabled clergy and religious as per the request and requirement. Indeed it is worth recognizing and serving all types and all categories of the disabled persons without counting the cost!

The Patron of our inclusive mission is none other than Our Founder Father Ignatius of Loyola, physically 'lame' yet 'differently-abled'! In fact, even today his Spiritual Fire within us compels us to educate and to make a difference in the lives of the disabled! Ours is a movement from Unteshwari to move forward towards an abode of inclusion – *Sammilitalayam*, the gained new name of our centre.

Below, the direct commitment of the school authorities to helping the disabled; parents and children take part in an orientation programme.



The Laennec Centres

Olivier Paramelle, S.J.



An Ignatian way of training medical students

Medical studies are unlike any others! In France they last from nine to eleven years, according to the speciality chosen. The State University retains the monopoly. Among the many examinations that medical students must pass those in the first and sixth years are crucial. In fact, only fifteen percent of the students get through the selection in the first year. In the sixth year, at the end of their general training, they must once again pass a national examination of a high professional standard, more complex than the entrance examination. According to the marks they have achieved they will subsequently obtain a place as a resident doctor in a hospital in the speciality that they will be able to choose. They will henceforth be responsible for prescribing or for operating while continuing to deepen their knowledge. From the second year, in addition to internships in hospital, most students complete their career development with a master's in biological and medical sciences. The most motivated students pursue their research to earn a doctorate in science in addition to their doctorate in medicine.

Above, young people study in a large hall at the Centre Laennec in Lyon. The name of these Centres pays homage to a great Breton doctor who lived in the 19th century.

The three Centres Laennec share the same goal: to train men and women “for others” in the pedagogical tradition of the Society of Jesus.

The three Centres Laennec in Paris, Lyon and Marseille are a special feature of the Society of Jesus. Founded between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, they have a history and identity of their own. Their name pays tribute to an eminent nineteenth-century Breton doctor who invented the stethoscope and was an enthusiastic champion of the anatomical-clinical method and of pathological anatomy. A convinced Christian and committed to society, René Théophile Laennec was very close to the Society of Jesus at the time of its restoration in 1814. Today these centres which have many and sometimes different approaches, share the same goal: to train men and women “for others” in the pedagogical tradition of the Society of Jesus.

How can one describe the Centres Laennec? It is paradoxically easier to begin with what they are not! They are not a medical school: they are totally independent of the faculties and no course is taught in them by professors. In fact the Society of Jesus does not direct any medical school in France. Nor, do they serve as a trampoline to satisfy personal career ambitions by offering preparation for difficult examinations. Lastly, they are not, in the strict sense, a chaplaincy where students come to breathe new life into their faith, albeit none of these activities are alien to them! In short, each Centre is a community of future doctors involved in their own professional, human and spiritual formation and keen to be open in heart and mind to the challenges of the world they work in. Indeed, medicine is not a technique! Those who practise it are the first to be confronted by society's paradoxes and complexity.

The Centres Laennec accept students who want to be trained with others. Multitudes would like to enrol in them! Alas, we are unable to accept them all: more than 2,500 students have been admitted after careful perusal of their letter of introduction and, in Marseille, after an interview with the Director. As with all intense intellectual work, medical studies can lead to withdrawal into self, to comparison and to defiance. Crises, doubts and failures are part and

parcel of this adventure. In such a context forming a community welded by respect, solidarity and friendship is a real challenge. For this reason the pedagogy of each Centre is based on team work from the first year. In the face of the stress and rivalry fostered by the spirit of selection in the faculties, students discover mutual help and support. Success means advancing with others to succeed together.

In this spirit the older students gladly help the younger ones. The passing on of knowledge and work methods takes place in accordance with a living tradition that extends far beyond a single generation. With the exception of Marseille, the Centres Laennec do not provide to students accommodation. They are nevertheless open from 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. every day except Sunday. This is why the future doctors speak of their “second home” or “family”. The art of Ignatian pedagogy is thus to avoid the pitfalls of a closed and symbiotic community in order to help students face reality in the uniqueness of their own life. Each Centre has its history. The recognition and faithfulness of “former students” weave a precious relational network.

The Centres Laennec are also a place for intellectual formation. In practice, the future doctors commit themselves to come and work in them every day. They study in silence in large reading rooms where being motivated with others is easier than being alone at home. Moreover,

studying in small groups makes it possible to check on the acquisition of knowledge and the understanding of it: we know well what we are able to explain. The confrontation with what they know enables students to penetrate further into the knowledge of medical practice. Thus the Centres are privileged places “for learning how to learn”. The mock exams, prepared by the students of the year above, are sometimes painful moments of truth... Between the fourth and sixth years “internship lectures” enable the future doctors to get a better grasp of their knowledge with a view to the medical or surgical speciality they will choose. Once or twice a week they train late into the evening, answering prepared questions on clinical cases that are corrected with comments by the hospital interns who are often “alumni” of the Centres Laennec.

Lectures and courses of reflection on medical ethics bolster the students’ intellectual development. These sessions are enlivened by doctors – who are sometimes “alumni” of the Centres – by philosophers and by theologians. They are



Below, a group photo of the students in their sixth year of medicine (2013) at the Centre Laennec in Paris. In addition to their university studies, students at these Centres also find an outlet for their faith.

France





Young university students during an Eucharistic celebration at the Centre Laennec in Paris. Several of them also choose to be involved in deeper and more demanding spiritual experiences, such as participation in spiritual retreats.

followed by discussions and, in certain cases, by reading groups. To conclude this initiation to medical ethics students draft a personal reflection that is read and commented on with their mentor – The Centre Laennec in Paris publishes one of the first reviews of biomedical ethics to come out in French, the *Revue Laennec*. Its editorial committee includes mainly eminent doctors in their own field of specialization, “alumni”, and teachers from the Département d’Ethique Biomédicale des Facultés Jésuites de Paris (Centre Sèvres). An annual university discussion is open to all. The Centres Laennec do not propose a Christian “ready-to-think”. Rather, they provide signposts for a better understanding of today’s society in which students are faced with all forms of vulnerability. This school of responsibility demands of them a real personal investment so that they will give the best of themselves. This entails an apprenticeship in discernment, which is facilitated by mentorship.

In fact, each of the three Centres Laennec is first and foremost a place for individual human and spiritual guidance. So it is that four per-

cent of all medical students enrolled at a French university are guided by Jesuits and lay people. Indeed, they all benefit several times a year from attentive and kindly listening. This enables them to be open to what they experience during their studies, and to what they see, do and feel during their internships in hospital. They also talk about their relationships with friends and family, their extra-university activities and their spiritual life. In short, it is a matter of gaining mutual confidence to establish a dialogue that helps them to mature. This is not that simple! Patience, humility and a sense of humour are good advisors.

Actually, this proposal goes against the tide of a communications culture that is frequently superficial and compulsive. To stop to speak honestly of oneself when one is 18 or 25 years old is already a real spiritual exercise. Some young people are faithful to the Eucharistic celebration. They may also choose to go on retreats, at times organized in liaison with the Jesuit or diocesan chaplaincies. Some took part in the World Youth Day in Rio. Others prepare for Baptism or for Confirmation. In the second or third year of medical studies every student is asked to give time to take a course in scouting or to be involved in a charitable association (visits to the elderly, help to the homeless, school support, etc.). The summer holidays are a favourable time for more specific activities, such as a nursing internship in a Marseille prison, work as a nursing auxiliary in a home for palliative care in Paris, or else a project of international solidarity.

Becoming a doctor is a slow and demanding process that mobilizes all the student’s resources. It requires a long effort of maturation and inner unification in order to respond to the scandal of evil. Lastly, the ambition of the Centres Laennec is to guide medical students in order to make then upright men and women, happy and competent, to serve the most vulnerable. The best reward of the Jesuit and lay mentors is the fulfilment of these young people whose generosity unfolds while at the same time their wish to be “for others” matures.

Translated by Kate Marcelin-Rice

Laennec

The Pastoral Care of Families

Milan Hudaček, S.J.



The conditions of life help determine our way of serving others. When the Society of Jesus in Slovakia was oppressed and forced to live in hiding during the years of communism (1948-1989) the Jesuits succeeded all the same in finding a way to be at the service of others, particularly families. Many of them, for example, maintained contact with the families of those with whom they worked in the same company, with the families of friends, and even with the family friends of their friends. Repeated visits were made secretly, in the course of time, at the service of evangelization.

This journey, in some cases, began when the children came home from school with a new vision of the world without God, without the Church, and, naturally, without the answer of the faith to such questions. The parents did not know how to respond to the questions of their children. At other times opposing opinions were expressed, but this only led to division and discord, as the parents lacked the objective, disinterested insight that could restore peace. It was here that the work of the Fathers entered in, expanding the relationship between them and with the Church.

There arose among lay people, in the years immediately after the Council, the idea of creating a movement for families which, clandestinely, would address their needs in a systematic man-

ner. Lay people—fathers and mothers of families—were ready to give a hand in the activities and to guide the movement in the various regions of Slovakia. The principal objectives of the activity were to face the problems of the communist society, closed in an ideological block, and to experience how to live united with God, in a life of deep faith, in the concrete situations in which one lived. Thus was born at the beginning of the 1970s the Christian Families Movement (HKR,) with its secret journal produced by the Jesuits, with a strong spiritual and pastoral focus.

The Xaveriada is a pilgrimage for families that aims to strengthen faith and solidarity. This photo shows the July 2013 pilgrimage to Velehrad, Bohemia.

During the years immediately after the Council, during the reign of the Communists, was born the “Christian Families Movement,” along with its clandestine journal. Its scope: to revive the faith and to respond to the questions of an atheist society. The movement in the new forms of the society.

Slovakia



Above, young participants in the pilgrimage for families at Velehrad in 2013. On the following page, families visiting the grotto of St Benedict the Hermit in Slovakia and the pilgrimage to Marianka in 2011 (photo by Margaréta Vozariková).

Also giving a hand to the families of Slovakia was the community of about twenty Slovakian Jesuits living in exile in Canada. From their publishing house in Cambridge (near Toronto) they sent to Europe thousands of religious books which entered illegally into Slovakia in the trucks of a Dutch company, risking the severest punishments by the communist police. In fact, there was a complete prohibition of bringing religious books into the country. The majority of these books, sent also to the associations of Slovakian immigrants in Western Europe, were distributed by the Jesuits. More than 3,000 families appreciated in different ways this pastoral and spiritual service of the Society during the

communist dictatorship. It was understandable that the Christian Families Movement would continue its service also after the fall of the communist regime (1989.) New living conditions, freedom, and communication with the entire world, gave a new face to the activity. The Movement began to work together with other religious communities and with the Belgian organization Eurochildren. The new situation made it possible for children from Belgium and Slovakia to visit each other's countries during their vacation periods.

Many Jesuit fathers have continued in the pastoral and spiritual service of the Movement, making available spaces in their religious houses for meetings, monthly retreats, the Spiritual Exercises and for social services. One form of renewal of the families, which continues also today, is the walking pilgrimages to various Marian shrines. Several months before vacation periods, routes of two, three and five day's duration are prepared to give to all the possibility to participate according to their physical strength and age. Such walking pilgrimages can become occasions for the Jesuits to speak and offer spiritual assistance to many people, including those participating for the first time. From their part, many families also help in this work of the Society in practical ways.

For the parents of the new generation this dedication of more time to the formation of their children was obviously very useful. As a first step, space was allotted in our churches of Košice, Banská, Bystrica, Piešťany, Trnava, and Bratislava during the Sunday Mass for the children and their parents. The Slovakian Bishops Conference also prepared a liturgical rite for masses with children. Other activities outside the time of Mass also lead to active contact with the children and the young people. The presence of the later is also increasing such that there are now week day Masses being celebrated in our churches with special songs for them.

With the help of the adults, various choruses were started at some of the Jesuit communities. For example, at the Jesuit communities in Trnava and Bratislava there are three or four active choruses. The choruses are organized according to the age of the participants, or according to professions. The adult choruses sing in various non-liturgical occasions and during public festivals. The choruses of young people, on the other hand, sing at the masses for young people. The same holds for the children and the liturgies designed for them. The presence of the choruses at religious festivals requires meetings for learning the songs. The gatherings, besides being practices, serve also

Xaveriáda

for spiritual formation of the young people and the adults who participate.

One of the fruits of these meetings is the organization of free time, of recreational activities and vacations. The most numerous group is that of the young people, who are always coming up with new projects. This is the reason why, after a certain time, the group of young people left the pastoral care for families program. This new situation led to a new Jesuit apostolate for a more diligent and specific service to them.

The pastoral care of families respects the various needs of the components of the family itself. Collections are often taken up in the communities of clothes or money for economic support for the most needy, among ourselves or in developing countries. Twenty years ago a church collection was started in Slovakia for the poor in various African countries. This continues still today and is done around Christmas time. The choruses of the churches of the Jesuits also organize concerts or visit families to sing while collecting money for the poor in Africa.

Every year the Jesuits organize in Bratislava a trip for the families to various locations in Bohemia and Slovakia, which are interesting from the historical or religious point of view. In these outings also participate persons who rarely come to church. Besides these visits, which are normally for a day, those responsible for the pastoral care of the community also organize a time for vacations in common. For the families being together is important, because many of them are burdened by separation, either because the parents work abroad, or because the children study in nearby countries. Getting together, therefore, is healthy. For the vacations in common they usually go to the seashore in the south.

An important part of the preparation of the vacations in common is looking for sponsors, in order to also give the poor and those from large families the possibility of participating. Often friends of the members of the group come along spontaneously. These usually have only been involved at most formally with their faith. This is an opportunity for our Fathers who accompany the community during the vacations, to offer meetings and more personal conversations. These vacations are a rich occasion to reflect on one's own life, on one's place in society, in the light of faith.

An even deeper service for the families is offered by the Center for the Family, which the Society opened in 2008 at Trnava. In 2013, six persons worked full time in the Center, aided by around fifty volunteers. There are various special-

ized groups for consultations and advice, according to the needs: the divorced, separated, single women, etc. The majority of the consultations are of a socio-psychological, legal, pastoral, or pedagogical character. Also part of the help is the spiritual accompaniment offered by the Fathers of the community, including confessions, spiritual direction, and various forms of prayer.

In 2013 there were 639 visitors (compared to 600 in 2011). The services the Center offered in 2013 were 370 (less than the 700 offered in 2011). People who took part in the activities were 3.750, compared to 6.600 in 2011. The Center also uses internet with its webpage: <http://www.cpvr.sk/> or telephone. Every year the Center organizes in the amphitheater of the city the Day of the Family, inviting the centers for the family of other cities and a vast number of families of the diocese to participate. Besides the various cultural and sport activities, the Day of the Family is a new structure for helping families today in their most pressing needs.

The Jesuits of Slovakia do not have parishes, but they offer ample services to the families in their own churches, which have become true fireplaces for the life of faith in the Lord.

Translated by Robert E. Hurd, S.J.

Slovakia



Above, the emblem of the Xaveriáda Pilgrimage in 2011.





When he started his “Mission Camps” in Puerto Rico, Fr Alfredo Guzmán, S.J., had in mind pastoral work for young people that would combine social action with evangelization, while encouraging vocations and also cultural exchange. During its 15 years of existence, more than 1,500 youngsters have taken part in this project. It has enabled them to come closer to Jesus Christ among the poorest inhabitants of Latin America. Rural communities in many areas have been benefited: Argentina (Pueblo Nuevo, Misiones); the Dominican Republic (Arenoso, Cevicos); Colombia (Santa Bárbara, Nariño); Paraguay (Santa Rita, San Ignacio Guazú) and Costa Rica (Lirios, Puerto Viejo de Sarapiquí).

There have been forty-five missions in five countries of Latin America - Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Paraguay. By making the most of the Puerto Rican school holiday periods, the missions can take place three times a year: in Summer, at Christmas and during Holy Week, with thirty to fifty young people in each group. This allows for a consistent and sustained contact with several rural communities. Very often the same youngsters repeat the experience and bonds of friendship are established with the local inhabitants. In several cases these friendships have continued over many years and are evident in the social and religious projects set up. Those who take part in the camps can be either students or professional men and women, who belong to both public and private institutions in Puerto Rico and in the United States. But youngsters from other countries have also taken part: Panamá, Colombia, Brazil, Haiti, Canada and Costa Rica. The boys and girls hear about the project through the visits made by Fr Guzmán to various parishes, and to public and private schools in Puerto Rico. The young people are invited to take part, while the institutions are encouraged to give their support.

The aim of the project is to help individuals develop their critical faculties and social awareness by means of concrete experience in accordance with the traditions of the Society. The young people of Puerto Rico have responded with enthusiasm, generosity and open hearts. Given the high number of volunteers, there has

to be a rigorous selection process and only outstanding candidates are accepted. After a series of preliminary interviews, the participants are given a preparatory training for camp life, with several trial runs. In this way a group comes to know itself and can form a plan in relation to a particular Mission.

Behind each “Mission Camp” lies a huge collaborative effort to find ways of fostering human and spiritual development, in addition to many hours working out the logistics. Fr Guzmán perseveres in promoting a project which is recognized by the Church of Puerto Rico as one of vision and promise. It continues to grow dynamically and so allows the Society of Jesus to be better known and appreciated in the island.

To help Fr. Guzman, an important professional team has grown up over the years. Their aim is to develop leadership gifts, along with mutual sympathy and social awareness. There are schemes whereby the youngsters can collaborate in house building, and in the provision of such infrastructures as meeting rooms, school and sport facilities, aqueducts and electricity supplies. Catechetical work is available and preparation for the sacraments; population surveys and other contacts facilitate greater inculturation on the part of the missionaries and are a benefit to the communities. The whole process has an Ignatian touch, as spiritual discernment is basic to all its aims: growth in the experience of God and of the Church.

The Mission Camps are a fertile field for vocations. These gifted young people find themselves asking questions about the authentic meaning of their lives and their commitment to justice. The contact with extreme poverty always comes as a shock. Thanks to the spiritual direction they are receiving, they come closer to the life of the Church, and often vocations to the priestly and religious life of the Society of Jesus emerge. Quite a number of the Jesuits in Puerto Rico have been participants in the Mission Camps. In addition, the great majority of those who take part continue to be active members of their parishes and professional groups.

The rural communities look forward to the arrival of the youngsters and are happy to have them as they help to foster both their spiritual and social cohesion. “Something different has arrived



Above, two groups of young participants in the Mission Camps, a project for the promotion of vocations in Portorico.

Since they were started, more than 1,500 youngsters have taken part in “Mission Camps” coming closer to Jesus Christ in the poorest of Latin America.



Mission Camps

José Cedeño Díaz, S.J.



here!”, one woman in Pueblo Nuevo, Argentina, said of them: “Peace has come!” While the camp is functioning, there are various encounters between the mission campers and the inhabitants. Some of the most enjoyable are evening events, when theatrical sketches are put on by both sides. Most of these rural communities lack entertainment, so such events are always a great success. Such an evening begins with the celebration of mass and a session of catechesis. In this way the message of love takes on a tangible form as each gesture shows forth the joy of the Lord. Another celebration that the young people prepare with warmth and gusto are the “Clothes Markets” (*Feria de la ropa*). To avoid the impression of it being a one-way process, the locals are invited to contribute small donations and the profits are used for the common good. Music and short presentations enliven these proceedings. There are also “Home Visits” (*Visitas Familiares*) by means of which the missionaries learn how people really live, their problems, hopes and needs. But the learning is on both sides and, given the possibilities of the different camps, each can help the other.

The benefit from such experiences is not limited to the social sphere: all that is human comes into play, just as one sees in the Gospels. Efforts are made to broaden and enrich cultural understanding by visits to some of the famous sites in the American continent. Excursions of several days to nearby locations are included in the timetable, and in this way Mission Camps have visited the mysterious heights of Machu Pichu and the futuristic architecture of Brasilia, the glaciers of Patagonia and the rhythms of Rio de Janeiro.

Each of the youngsters who has had the experience of one of these Camps has felt the call to go out of him or herself - to work on behalf of a more human and more just world, one that can mirror the values of the Gospel.

Translated by Joseph Munitiz, S.J.

Puerto Rico

A Pilot Project in Chad

Etienne Mborong, S.J.



Foi et Joie Tchad was born in January 2008 when the *Fe y Alegría* movement decided to step in to support a process of development begun by the Jesuits in 1960 in the Guéra region of African Chad. Previously there had been a long period of dialogue between the International Federation of *Fe y Alegría* (including a series of visits from the Latin American branch) and the local state institutions in charge of national education. A pilot project was launched in Chad with three rural schools. Formation courses were begun and personal contact was made with those involved in local education.

The Executive Director at that time was a Peruvian Jesuit, Alfredo Vizcarra. He set up a team made up of local teachers and volunteers, both national and brought in from other countries, along with some official representatives. In 2009 five schools were added to the project and another nine in 2010, so that a network of seventeen rural community schools was established.

In September 2009, Sister Valérie Mukankusi moved from Ruanda to Mongo in order to become acquainted with and acclimatised to the project. Discussions were launched between *Foi et Joie Tchad* and the top education authorities for Abtouyour, the IDEN (Inspection Department of the Ministry of Education). These led to the appointment of two pedagogical advisers, Issa Abdoulaye Ratou and Ardé Matar.

From January 2010 a team made up of Sister Valérie Mukankusi, who was in charge of the *Foi et Joie Tchad* projects, Alizee Avril and the two advisers just mentioned, began an extensive survey to identify and investigate the state of the rural schools in the area. These examined the following aspects: the socio-cultural elements; the interconnection of various needs; the aims and possible lines of action; the assessment of the pupils and teachers; the ideals that could be



envisaged for pupils and teachers in any future set-up.

By September of 2010, the study covered some twenty villages. There was a common agreement that, given the criteria of selection and the methods of evaluation, eight schools should be chosen, and this choice was later confirmed by the Governing Body of *Foi et Joie Tchad*. In the final months of the scholastic year 2010-2011, the team paid regular visits to the villages selected and presented the aims of the Federation *Fe y Alegría* to the education authorities in each one. Actual work with the teachers in the eight schools began in September 2011, and gradually agreements with the Federation were signed in each of the villages.

The education centres provide tutorial-type instruction to the boys and girls of an area and, at the same time, a place where there are lights for them to read at night, a library, and various cultural and social activities, such as games of scrabble, story readings, debates and video, theatre, sport, cinema and dance. Such a centre is very important for the youngsters in Mongo

On these pages, several pictures of the pilot project in the educational sector of Fe y Alegría in Africa. The project also gives children and adults an opportunity for evening study.

***Foi et Joie Tchad* aims to establish a world where all the poor and marginalized may receive a good education which will enable them to transform their lives.**



as it is the one place where they can express themselves and live their youth freely. At the beginning of the academic year 2013-2014, there were 237 students enrolled at the secondary level (School certificate) in the Mongo area. Today's *Foi et Joie Tchad* consists of three networks; (1) 17 schools; (2) St Ignatius Education Centre, with the 237 secondary students; (3) 9 schools.

Among the achievements of *Foi et Joie Tchad* it is worth noting that thanks to the spread of a new awareness, there has been a general increase from 21% to 40% of school attendance, with an even higher improvement in those communities where *Foi et Joie Tchad* is present. As a result of the work, parents have become conscious of their responsibility, alongside that of the state institutions, to ensure education for their children. Another success for *Foi et Joie Tchad* has been that the different religions all work together: there are three main religions in this country - Islam (53%); Christianity (42%); and traditional African religions (12%).

Despite its rapid growth and the impact it

has been making in the communities, *Foi et Joie Tchad* nevertheless faces a number of problems and challenges. Among these, one of the most serious is how to ensure that the students continue to attend classes up to the final year of elementary studies. This particular problem is most acute as the development is located in rural areas and the children have to support their families in the gathering of the harvests or fetching water, and so drop out of schools. An additional reason for the girls dropping out of school is marriage; in this culture, girls can be married very young, aged only twelve or thirteen.

Another preoccupation for those running *Foi et Joie Tchad* concerns the financial backing needed from the Government. The authorities

Fey y Alegría

IHS

Chad



The project makes a library available and organizes cultural activities.

and society in general has to be made aware that, unlike an NGO (Non Government Organization) which works *on behalf* of the people, *Foi et Joie Tchad* actually works *with* the people and therefore needs the support and collaboration of all those involved in education: the Regional Delegate for elementary education and alphabetisation (DREFA), the teachers, the parents and the pupils.

The three levels which *Foi et Joie Tchad* hopes to develop are those of the infant pre-school, the technical school, and the secondary school. Over the next three years, the plan is to develop further. In Africa the population is remarkably young: more than 54% are aged twenty or less. Therefore, a fundamental requirement for both *Foi et Joie Tchad* and for the Society of Jesus is to help the development of a population which has a need not only for theoretical scientific knowledge, but also for a training in modern technology. The pedagogy of *Fe y Alegría* has always had the strength of a tripod: the development of head, hands and heart. And this policy

presents marvellous opportunities for the new work of the Society of Jesus in Africa.

Foi et Joie Tchad is a dynamic educational force that seeks to provide an integrated formation for all the men and women of Chad, one that will help them grow continually in both human values and in technical capacity. Its aim is to enable the people to promote their own development and to become transforming agents in society. Leaders need to be formed in the different social strata to bring about a more just world, one where bonds of fraternal solidarity are formed through education. In particular, *Foi et Joie Tchad* aims to establish a world where all the poor and marginalized may receive a good education which will enable them to transform their lives; one where a community can be built up which is at the service of the human being: a community where inequalities and discrimination no longer exist; a community of the *Ubuntu* (the honest), capable of protecting and promoting the *élan vital* by the transmission of knowledge. For this reason, *Foi et Joie Tchad*, seeks the support of the entire community. The parents of the pupils have to be involved in the academic life of their children. The school and the community are not separate entities, but complement one another.

The work of *Fe y Alegría* is being extended to several countries on the African continent with support from their respective Provincials: Zimbabwe, Kenya, South Sudan, Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is of key importance to stress the role that has to be played by all who take part: the least well off and most in need can help. They need to be encouraged to work for the common good. No single person can claim to be able to do it alone; the strength of a work in common derives from the "we". The Jesuits in Africa have to face up to the inescapable need among the marginalised for an inclusive education that covers the training of teachers and good quality instruction. Education should emancipate a society. And we need to do this as best we can: at times it is only by small steps that one can advance. People need and hope for an ideal education that extends to all everywhere and not just to the élite. We have a mission and a vision, and now the enthusiasm. Our duty for those most in need is a call to action. We must rise to the challenge and develop the strength to answer the call with courage.

Translated by Joseph Munitiz, S.J.



Educating the World about China

Thierry Meynard, S.J. – Director of The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies, China

Students from Colombia visit the Temple of Heaven in Beijing.



Deng Xiaoping's rise in 1978 initiated forty years of huge transformations in China. The world took notice. What Napoleon referred to as the "sleeping giant" awoke! Nixon's political overtures led to economic exchange. Economic exchange required of all nations new cultural interactions with China. Yet, many misconceptions and misunderstandings still generate fears. In a wholesome relationship between China and the world, a deep and mutual engagement of the whole person is truly needed, one which engages the intellect, emotions and heart; through this intentional exchange we can nurture understanding, respect and friendship.

We find a model of such interaction some four hundred years ago between Matteo Ricci and Xu Guangqi. In 1601, Ricci settled in Beijing after some twenty years of preparatory work in the South where he learnt the language and studied the works of literature and philosophy, especially the books attributed to Confucius. Xu Guangqi, like thousands of scholars, came to the capital in 1604 to take part in the triennial imperial examination. The two exchanged their best ideas; they became friends. Their friendship was very productive, for example in the field of mathematics with their publication of the *Elements of Euclides* in Chinese. Through their friendship they were made better persons and had a positive impact, both on China and on

Since 1998 "The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies" enrolls students from Jesuit universities providing them, in the best of Jesuit traditions, with an unparalleled opportunity to examine and understand a complex country and its culture.





the West. Xu Guangqi eventually was baptized and he is considered a founding father of the Catholic Church in China.

Following the footsteps of Ricci, Jesuits collaborated with Chinese scholars in Beijing. Many of them worked at the Imperial Directorate of Astronomy, others worked as painters, cartographers, medical doctors, etc. For two hundred years the Jesuits were the only Westerners allowed to reside in the capital, and they served as a bridge of communication between China and the West.

In 1998, with the approval of Chinese authorities, Father Ron Anton started *The Bei-*

jing Center (TBC) for Chinese Language (later renamed *The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies*) as an institution supported collaboratively by the Chinese Province, the Conference of East Asia and Oceania (later renamed the *Asia Pacific Conference*), and the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities. The first location was the Beijing Sports University. Being myself in the first cohort of ten students, I remember how modest its beginning was: the library counted two hundred books kept in one tiny room, and the permanent staff consisted only of three. Who could have predicted then that TBC would become what it is now? After two years at *Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT)*, TBC moved in 2002 to its permanent location, the *University of International Business and Economics*.

In collaboration with Loyola University Chicago, we enroll each semester some 40 to 50 students from Jesuit universities in the US. Because we wish to be truly international, we also enroll a few students from other Jesuit Universities, such as the *Ateneo de Manila* (Philippines), *Javeriana* (Columbia), *ITESO* (Mexico) and *ESADE* (Spain). In the course of a semester, students see China at work in all its dimensions, providing them with an unparalleled opportunity to examine and understand a complex country and its culture. Through study and cultural engagement, students are then able to contribute to this major global conversation about China.

In the best of Jesuit traditions, the experience in China transforms the whole person - mind, feelings, language, ways to eat and dress, etc. Understanding Chinese culture happens mostly through personal interactions with the Chinese: the professors in the class, the local students who serve as roommate or language tutor, the people met along the trips in Xinjiang or Yunnan. Students stay overnight in remote villages of national minorities; they put away for a while the lifestyle they are used to, including mobile phones and iPads; they become guests. This encounter with the humblest of peoples enables our students to reflect on their values in life.

Besides the semester program, TBC welcomes every year some twenty to thirty groups coming from all over the world: undergraduate or graduate students, young scholastics or provincials, etc. Since Chinese language is becoming more and more widespread among our Jesuit high-schools, we also welcome high-school students for whom we arrange custom-

Beijing



On these pages, several photos of students who attend *The Centre for Chinese Studies* in China. In the large photo on the following page, students of *Xavier's School, Manila*, who are intending to study at the *Beijing Centre*.



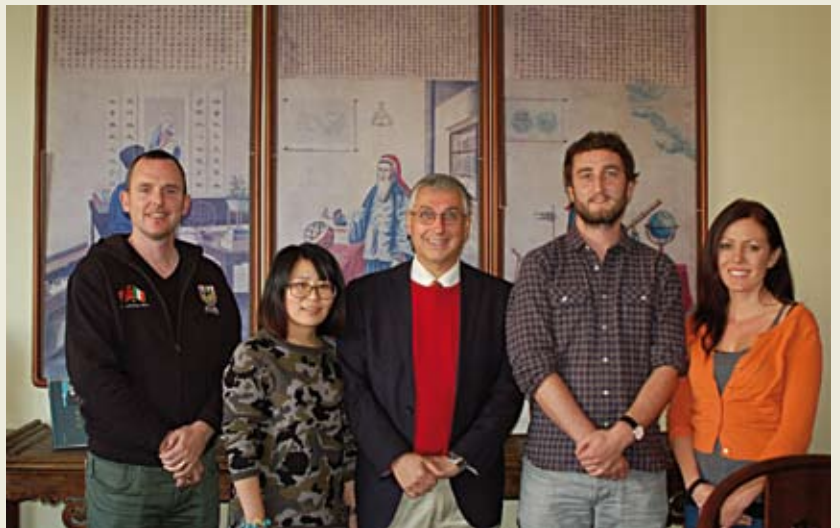
ized lectures and visits to the capital.

In order to serve our mission of mutual understanding between China and the world, our Ron Anton Library holds a unique collection of antiquities and more than twenty thousand books in English, all about China. This rich collection fosters research on any aspect of this country. It includes our collection of *Jesuitica Sinica*, books written by the Jesuits about China in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. For example, we hold a copy of *De Expeditione apud Sinas* (1616), written in the final years of Ricci's life in Beijing, in which he narrates his journey from Macao to Beijing and his interactions with the local scholars. Our collection of original maps and scrolls and ceramic vases and statues calls the scholar back to the reality that, like its language, China is a very visual culture. Today, Chinese and foreign scholars research the interaction between China and the West; they find in our collections a wealth of materials.

As China is becoming a big player in all the aspects of the world, TBC is uniquely situated as an institution to educate the world about China, in the spirit of the friendship between Matteo Ricci and Xu Guangqi.



China





How can we proclaim the Good News to those who are far from God? Often in recognized places of worship, where we offer a “service of the Word”, those who are far from the Gospel are absent. On the other hand in those places where we meet nonbelievers, the Gospel is “implicit”. So where can we find nonbelievers who are ready to listen to an explicit proclamation of the Word? A surprising answer because of its simplicity is: in Church; precisely in our churches. We think that they “cannot be reached”, but in reality they are already in the house of God and their numbers are growing. We think that we are to look for them using a thousand different strategies and that we need to build bridges, but actually they are the ones who have been looking for us for some time. Those who are “far from God” have come to look for us in our home but they have not always found us.

In Europe and in much of the Western world religion faces a strange paradox: the more society is called “secular”, the greater interest there is in the outstanding religious monuments that have been built across our land over the centuries. Visits to the monasteries, cathedrals, churches linked to the great Christian tradition continue to increase, and religious tourism is one of the few sectors that have not been affected by the crisis. The less frequently people go “to Church”, the more they go “into the churches”.

This is a profound paradox and not just a religious one. Precisely because society is a “liquid” and shapeless society, it “flows” to the solidity of the stones of the past which are capable of shaping it. In the “container” represented by the sacred building, contemporary man tries to find his own limits, his own identity. He is like a child in a dark in a room. He looks but he does not see. He wants to touch, to experience.

So if someone speaks God’s Word to him, the Word suddenly acts like a light. The frescoes become visible even to the heart. The mosaics reveal the beauty of life. The very shape of the building shows the “perimeter” of the human person, his/her limits, his/her identity. That is why John of Damascus (8th century) writes: “If a heathen comes and says ‘Show me your faith!’, you take him to church and show him the icons and explain the series of religious paintings to him.”

St. John of Damascus writes:

“If a pagan asks you to show him your faith, take him into church, place him before the icons and explain the series of religious paintings to him”.

The Word proclaimed by a witness to someone who goes into a monument transforms the monument in “monumentum”, that is, in a memorial structure or place. Memory is the backbone of identity and communion because it is the way in which a person learns to look at himself as if he were someone else and thus to look at others as though they were himself. The stones of the sacred monuments of Christianity are the “physical” mediation instrument. Together with the Word they have an almost “sacramental” role. When a believer meets a nonbeliever within the walls of a Christian monument and he welcomes the nonbeliever and explains the message of the holy place to him, then the stones become what Florenskij, when referring to the icon, calls “the framework of an Encounter”.

The goal of the Ignatian youth groups called *Living Stones* is to facilitate this Encounter. They have distant roots in a brief experience of the CLC in Fribourg (Switzerland) in 1991, at Saint-Michael’s Church, where the body of St. Peter Canisius -a Jesuit saint, is buried. At the time there were tourist guides in several other places throughout Europe who did pay special attention to the Christian roots of a monument: CASA in France, *Ars et Fides* in Venice and Florence.... However, *Living Stones* have a dual approach: 1. to live and experience the tour as a proclamation of faith to those who are far from God; 2. to do it as a Christian community that is based on prayer and that invites people to pray. Thus the tourist sees for himself what the stones of the building really represent and the monument, the “artistic place” is transformed into a welcoming centre, into a listening, therapy and mystagogy centre; into a place of encounter.

The name *Lebendige Steine* (living stones) was used for the first time in Frankfurt Cathedral, in 2003, to refer to the volunteers group. They have to be predominantly young because their young age in itself is already a disruptive message in a post-Christian culture that sees faith as “just for old ladies”. For many who are “far from God” the *Living Stones* are first and foremost a “face”; the “face of the Church”, and a surprisingly young one too. Since then, part of the *Living Stones* “method” includes preparing a “prayer corner” in the sacred building where they sing, read passages from the Bible or experience silence. After every guided tour led by the living stones, tourists who so wish can stay longer. They often write a prayer or reflection in a notebook left open which will be read by the living stones community during their evening prayers. However, the “prayer corner” is

Making the stones of sacred monuments become a word, an encounter with the supernatural reality which they point to.

This is the aim of the Living Stones. In the photos, several volunteers working with tourists.

Italy

Living Stones: Evangelizing through Art

Jean-Paul Hernandez, S.J.



first of all for the living stones themselves. After each guided tour they stop before their Lord and “return” to him the people “entrusted” to their care during the visit. This is every living stone’s “priestly prayer”.

The apostolate carried out by Living Stones is conceived as a true “spiritual exercise”. It comes from prayer and it leads to prayer. Before the guided tour, during recollection, the volunteer asks God: “Lord, what do you want me to say to the visitors on your behalf?”. Then, with the “grammar” he has learned during the art and history training, the living stone chooses those points that he feels can best help the listener to meet God. After the tour the volunteer, entering into internal recollection again, asks God: “Lord, what did you say to me through them?”. Thus every encounter becomes an Encounter. On greeting the tourists (often at the entrance to the Church) and whilst looking at them, as atheists or believers who often come by chance, the *living stone* prays: “Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord”.

In 2008 Living Stones organized their first “international camp” at the Church of the Gesù in Rome. It was a 15 day “full immersion apostolic community” that gave birth to the first stable communities that offer their service on a regular basis: *Living Stones Rome* (Church of the Gesù and Church of St. Ignatius) and *Living Stones Bologna*. *Living Stones Naples* were born in 2010 as the “apostolate of the CLC”, and *Living Stones*

Bologna started their service in Ravenna in four of the churches included in UNESCO’s World Heritage List. Today there are other *Living Stones* communities and groups in Genoa, Milan, Cagliari, Munich, Prague, Padua, Turin, Valletta, Bratislava, Florence, Ljubljana. New *Living Stones* groups are currently being created in Palermo, Crema, Lisbon, Santiago de Compostela, Budapest and Seville as well.

Communities are autonomous but they can be recognized by a very distinctive style characterized by the priority given to prayer, the intense community life, the mystagogical accompaniment of the tourist, the simplicity of life, the attention to the poor and to children and the fact that their service is completely free. This last feature is an essential element of their style and is inspired by St. Ignatius’ desire for ministries to be performed without recompense. In fact the proclamation of faith is the proclamation of the gratuitousness of God and can only be done for free. The proclamation of faith creates an “imbalance” in the heart of the tourist which he seeks to fill paying for the service. If the guide accepts payment, the tourist feels satisfied because he is reassured in his belief that gratuitousness “does not exist”, that nobody gives anything without asking for something in return. However, if the *living stone* does not accept payment this healthy imbalance persists and it will lead the tourist to an inner journey. Often rather personal questions are asked at this point: Why are you doing this? Who are you?



Italy

Below, the logo of the Living Stones Movement and tourists intent on contemplating an artistic monument. This Movement sees the great works of art of the Christian tradition as visible prayers.

In the summer of 2013, *Living Stones* Spain launched their service with a month of presence at Santiago Cathedral. Greeting thousands of pilgrims at the end of their journey they could clearly see how the great Christian art is really the visual revelation of the pilgrim's personal experience. About 60 volunteers -including 13 Jesuits, from 8 different countries discovered the "utmost limits" of both post-modernity and the Western world in Santiago. They also realized, from the pilgrims' reactions, that only a "living community" can reveal a Christian work of art. One trainer used to say: "form a Christian community and Christian art will speak for itself".

Besides, the fertility of *Living Stones* also expands onto other areas. In Bologna, their pedagogy has given rise to youth groups that spread the Good News through art in several diocesan parishes. *Living Stones Turin* are planning a service called "art and spirituality" for disabled patients at the "Cottolengo", an institution for the mentally and physically handicapped. Finally, *Living Stones Milan* have been called to take part in the official proposal of the Archdiocese of Milan during the EXPO 2015, with the training of more than 600 volunteers.

The *Living Stones* apostolate has also an intellectual dimension which relates to "conflicting interpretations" of Christian art. For *Living Stones* the great works of art of Christian Tradition are

visual prayers. To understand these works is to enter into that dimension of faith that has generated them. An interpretation of Christian art which excludes this dimension is not truly scientific. In the seminar for Jesuit school teachers run by *Living Stones Rome* in November 2013 it was interesting to study in depth the hermeneutical and pedagogical implications of the *Living Stones* approach. It can be said that *Living Stones* help read art as "spiritual communion through the centuries" and open up new dimensions of knowledge, often lacking in traditional education. In July of 2014 *Living Stones* organized a "three day" course in Florence where about 80 young participants were able to study in depth the scientific value of a theological interpretation of art. A proper training course that combines faith and culture is on the agenda for all European *Living Stones* for 2015. It will be based on the concrete testimony of faith found in artistic monuments and seen as an existential synthesis which becomes invaluable for the understanding of faith.

Living Stones is therefore not only an "apostolate for those who are far from God", but it is a "double apostolate" because it also represents an extraordinary opportunity for the theological training of those young lay people who are particularly motivated in their service. It could even become a "triple apostolate" given the growing interest of many university professors for this type of approach. As it has recently been highlighted by two graduation theses on the *Living Stones*, this type of witness goes beyond the usual limits when it comes to understanding art and to reading recent phenomena like religious tourism and the new post-secular religiousness or piety.

It is no coincidence that the *Living Stones* were born within a spiritual tradition that talks about "looking at the composition of place", "thinking about the way God looks at me", and also about "contemplation", "application of the senses", etc... The Society of Jesus has always encouraged the use of the images at the service of faith and "seeking and finding God in all things" has helped the Ignatian tradition to seek and find a relationship with God in every work of art. *Living Stones* is situated in the triangle formed by faith, culture and testimony that does not limit itself to concepts but rather becomes a physical experience, in other words, Church. To know more about this: <http://pietrevive.altervista.org>, <http://pietrevive.wordpress.com>, <http://pietrevive-munich.blogspot.de>, and above all: <https://www.facebook.com/Pietrevive>

Translated by Silvana Orsi Siquot



WITH THE POOR AND FOR THE POOR

To follow Christ bearing his Cross means announcing his Gospel of hope to the many poor who inhabit our world today. The world's many 'poverties' represent thirsts that, ultimately, only he who is living water can assuage. Working for his Reign will often mean meeting material needs, but it will always mean much more, because human beings thirst at many levels; and Christ's mission is directed to human beings. Faith and justice; it is never one without the other. Human beings need food, shelter, love, relationship, truth, meaning, promise, hope. Human beings need a future in which they can take hold of their full dignity; indeed they need an absolute future, a 'great hope' that exceeds every particular hope (GC 35, d. 2, no. 13).



Liberation

The “Loyola” Foundation

Fernando Alvarado Castro, S.J.

Despite the efforts made in recent years about 41% of the rural population of South Bolivia lives in conditions of poverty.

ACLO seeks to improve this situation.

In the photo, campesinos at work, at the computer science school and participation in a radio broadcast,

Loyola Cultural Action (LCA) is a social work of the Society of Jesus in Bolivia, founded on August 25, 1966. It has as its mission to look to the basic needs of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society. Aware of the reality of people excluded and marginalized, a group of young university students, encouraged by Fr. Jorge Trias, S.J., decided to take on the task of teaching reading in the farming community “Pampa Yampara” in the Department of Chuquisaca. Thus, since 1966, with LCA we have embraced the utopian dream of seeking a good life for thousands of indigenous families, both farmers and urban-dwellers in the southern part of Bolivia.

To do that, LCA chose the methodology of Paolo Freire known as *liberating education*, adapted to the life-situation of these families. Using that, it has formed thousands of adult and young peasants and women over more than 48 years – men and women who have been able to replicate their understanding and experience in their own communities and organizations.

Despite the effort expended, both by LCA, by the families themselves and by the state, more than 40.90% of the rural population of southern Bolivia lives in conditions of poverty.

Even though the high level of absolute illiteracy of some decades ago has been reduced, and educational opportunities have been increased, nonetheless more than 9% of the population does not know how to read or write

– and in the case of women, the percentage is much higher.

Faced with these social realities, the educational philosophy of LCA, sustained from its origins, continues to flourish: its aim is that “indigenous families, both peasants and urban-dwellers” learn to read from their own reality of poverty and exclusion, in order to transform that reality by constituting themselves subjects and agents of their own history and development.

Loyola Cultural Action is one of the social works of the Society of Jesus. Its aim is to promote the human spirit by means of educating the indigenous farming people in the southern part of Bolivia.

Bolivia





On the other hand, about a half-million people in southern Bolivia listen every day to education programs from Radio LCA., some in a native language (Quechua) and others in Spanish. The content of this radio's program is aimed at breaking the chains around the human spirit of these people so that, in solidarity with other social groups, they may succeed in constructing "a Bolivia which is democratic, just, intercultural and marked by solidarity."

In this sense, knowing that egotism has grown and love of neighbor has diminished, constructing a "life of dignity" is only possible with the genuine collaboration of social sectors which are excluded and marginalized like those of the people we are dealing with. For that reason, we continue trying to form leaders who will be able to transform and construct what is needed in different areas, like crops and animals suitable for a particular region, its human rights and intercultural populations, and other aspects, in order to continue building the new Bolivian society.

Below we share some experiences of the holistic education of adults and children which we have been engaged in during these last years.

One of the needs for our people, as for hu-

manity itself, is preserving the environment and adaptation to the climate-change. The survival of the very poor depends on this. Hence we are helping to protect natural resources (water, soil, vegetation) by applying different means like constructing hillside terraces, improving the fertility of the soil, irrigation ditches, re-forestation, techniques of placement for seeds sown on inclines, or planting trees as wind-screens for land-parcels. By doing this we educate families in farming communities and poor suburban locales about how to preserve the environment and manage risks to it. Through such action we are currently assisting more than 137 communities and enlisting the creative participation of some 1,400 families.

On the other hand, due to the effects of climate change like drought, excessive rain-torrents, frost, hailstorms and other natural phenomena, land and cattle growth is diminishing with each passing year. Given this situation, we are trying to better this growth by promoting crop diversification and introducing new ideas for vegetables and fruit trees in family kitchen-gardens. For that we are urging organic production, which fosters the rational use of natural resources and reduces dependence on costly external resources. As a result of this process of technical improvement, we have succeeded in helping more than 2,400 families in 186 communities of southern Bolivia. Over time these families have been able to diversify their agricultural production, in this way ensuring a secure food supply and with their surplus bettering their family income. Thus they are rising out of poverty to live in dignity.

On another front, as a result of the migration from countryside to city, lack of schooling has become a social problem. For this reason we of LCA have taken up again the process of reading-education with which we began. Beginning in 2004, in agreement with the Ministry of Education of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, we rolled out a new program of "Primary Long-Distance Radio Education" aimed at adults and young people older than 15 from rural areas and city slums. To help in this, we



trained the peasants themselves as “Teaching Guides” who, with the support of the teachers of LCA, of written guides for the different materials, and of the radio, constitute 150 centers of education. As a result of this long-distance primary education, more than 2,500 students have managed to conclude their primary grades, while many of them have entered secondary education institutions and some have gone on to professional preparation.

At the same time, from its very beginnings LCA has promoted the civic involvement of men and women. In order to strengthen the participation of indigenous farming communities in public tasks, we have formed, in these last years, 550 leaders who promote in their communities the exercise of rights like equity and especially gender-equality. Given the context of Bolivian life as we find it today, we are mounting a radio program of “formation for women leaders”. In the last two years, as a result of this program we formed more than 350 women leaders, many of them by now directors of their organizations, some with municipal and departmental authority, and many of them are pondering participating in the general elections at the end of the year 2014.

Again, since the decade of the 80’s, we have trained “Popular Reporters” among those peasants and indigenous women who have no communications media within reach. These are chosen by their organizations to constitute the voice of peasants by means of the six radios of the LCA. In the last years we have trained over 1,400 of these Reporters, whose job is to deliver the news to their communities and towns by means of LCA radio. Since they are knowledgeable in the public sphere, many of them have been elected as indigenous authorities and directors, while other occupy public positions as



senators and deputies or are municipal authorities like mayors and council members.

Faced with the emergence of the “information society” between 2003 and 2009, we mounted a program of literacy in the “Technology of Information and Communication” for which we installed eight “tele-centers” in rural towns which are now the responsibility of municipal governments. The primary intent of this was to reduce the technological barriers to information and communication. The people who sign up for this reading program are teachers, popular reporters, students and farmer of the different rural towns.

Finally, as we approach our 49th year, we continue to open an educational future to young people and children in general, with the hope of building together a new society where humanity lives in dignity and harmony with itself, with its ambiance, and with our creator God.

Translated by John J. O’Callaghan, S.J.

Above and on the previous page, indigenous peoples taking a literacy course broadcast on the radio. At the top, women who are preparing vegetables for cooking. ACLO seeks to make the indigenous protagonists of their own future.

Protagonizar

Paula Torres - Susana Reinoso

Leaders in Small Business: a scheme to help families most in need to set up micro-business ventures by small credit grants and personal support which allow re-insertion into the socio-economic system.

For some fifteen years, a Jesuit foundation entitled “*Protagonizar*” has been contributing to the development of thousands of families in one of the most depressed areas of the Argentinian Province of Buenos Aires, the suburb of San Miguel. It comes under the auspices of *Fey Alegría* and has the support of a group of young professionals and business men. It provides financial credit, along with more general support, so that families who are very hard up can regain status and social independence. Small credit grants enable the establishment of micro business ventures of many kinds. The project stems from the revolutionary theories of the Bangladeshi Nobel Prize winner, Muhammad Yunus. Its aim is to offer grants to very poor families who lack employment, so that they can radically alter their living conditions.

The testimony of those who have benefited from this work bears witness to the success of this Jesuit venture in the huge overpopulated ring surrounding the city of Buenos Aires. For a long time, Denis Cabrera, now aged 53, had tried various ways to make a living. Then in 2004, he happened to hear a broadcast by Carlos Zarázaga who, with Fr Rodrigo, had founded *Protagonizar*.

The foundation encouraged him to study in depth something that had always fascinated him: apiculture. With the help of Fr Rodrigo, he first gained the licence to keep bees and later the official certificate of expertise that he had always wanted.

Denis then established financial contact with *Protagonizar*, which made available a credit of 5,500 pesos per month, and with this he set up his business. He keeps two hives in his house, from which he sells his products, but has more hives in a fenced-in area. He makes the round of markets in the area and advertises his honey wherever possible. He is greatly helped by his wife, Octavia.

If anyone asks him what is needed to start an enterprise, Denis will reply at once: “Creativity and cash”, but he will add that team work is essential: “Just as in the hive, one bee alone can do nothing.” Referring to *Protagonizar* he comments: “they understand and analyse my problems; I know I can trust them.” The foundation was a great help in his life and his dream for the future, what he would be proud of, is that his two sons may be able complete their secondary and university education.

More recent is the case of 50-year old Cristina Cejudo de López. In mid 2011, thanks to another woman who wanted to start a business, she heard of the work of *Protagonizar* and was encouraged to contact the foundation. “At the time,” she says, “I had a small kiosk but I had no difficulty in obtaining a subsidy; now I have a warehouse and a monthly credit of 4,500 US Dollars. I can look after my family, as my husband had suffered a stroke, and I have five adopted children.” Cristina is well known in the area and “Lopez & Sons”, as her house is now called, is the store where she is on duty daily from 8 in the morning until 11 at night. “It was the small credit from *Protagonizar* that enabled me to get ahead in an honourable way - simply by working.

My hope is that the business will grow and that my store will provide work for my children. Eventually I want it to become a supermarket.”

In the photos on the following page, several of the activities promoted by the Foundation through micro-credit funding projects to ensure that the destitute have their own resources: the sale of cosmetics, carpentry, the production of bags and wicker-work. The basic idea is that the poor play the lead in their own future.

Argentina



When informed that *Protagonizar* would be celebrating its fifteenth birthday, Cristina wished it many more years of existence: “It is not only the small financial credits they provide; they are willing to listen, to discuss, to explain and to help in finding the solution to problems.” Such a tribute, coming from a woman, with only a small business but with a positive optimistic outlook, is very significant.

As is clear from the above, something more than just economic help results from obtaining micro-credit facilities. Money is obviously necessary, but an individual, friendly process that brings personal dignity is also needed, likewise some plan for the future. The initial impact can be seen almost immediately. Given the chance, even in the most miserable circumstances, people develop their personalities and discover in themselves the talents and energy they need. They gain in self-esteem, and automatically their living conditions improve, as do their surroundings.

There are dozens of successful ventures and the staff who run the foundation are constantly at work. One such business project is that of Claudio Medina, aged 38, with a wife and son: he lives in a slum area called “Las Catonas” and, for about a year, his house has been perched precariously on the side of a stream. His aim was to start a bakery. With a credit of 2,000 pesos he was able to buy sacks of flour, margarine and other ingredients and began to bake bread and cakes, which he distributes early every morning to various shops in the neighbourhood.

Elena Kranchevich, 66 years of age, lives with her husband who worked as a blacksmith. But two years ago things began to go badly as little work came in. They had to do something as they lacked any retirement pension; so this house-wife approached *Protagonizar*. With the backing of a small credit of 1,800 pesos, she and her husband decided to open a vegetable shop in their little house. They bought fruit and vegetables and the minimum equipment they needed for it to function as a shop. In this way a micro-business was launched and they now



have hopes that despite difficulties the shop will continue to grow.

Over the last fifteen years, even if all the hopes of the foundation have not been fully realized, more and more projects have been supported by *Protagonizar*. So far, up to the end of 2013, 1,631 small business ventures have been allotted grants. Of the persons who benefited, 75.8% were female, many of them house-wives. Up to 7,771 credit grants had been allocated, and in the last year alone the

Argentina

Below, basket-work and Cristina with her family: she began with a small kiosk and then, thanks to a loan from the Foundation she was able to upgrade and opened a real shop.



amount lent out came to 21,144,448 pesos. Since 1999, the total amount distributed in micro-credits came to 60,731,363 pesos. The average grant to each family is 2,195 pesos, and the overall repayment rate is surprisingly high at 97.1%.

The team that runs *Protagonizar* consists of ten employees, along with a Governing Body of six. In order to apply for credit, the applicant has to gather a group of four to six other persons, who can be friends, neighbours or family members, and who live near one another; each of them is also starting a small business.

If the preliminary conditions are right, details are taken of the persons involved, and a specialist visits each of them to assess and evaluate the economic possibilities and to judge if the project is credit-worthy. An application form is filled up stipulating the amount recommended by the assessor, in accordance with the likelihood of the credit being eventually repaid. This form is duly dated and signed by the persons and the assessor.

The next step is for the application to come before a credit committee which approves or rejects, changing if necessary some of the conditions (e.g. raising or lowering the amounts for the various projects). Once approved, a payment is made to the group and the co-ordinator of the group arranges for the distri-

bution, allotting to each member the amount that corresponds to each of the micro-business ventures. Ten days are allowed for the purchase of the material or products needed by each. Thereafter weekly payments are made to the co-ordinator, who then pays out what he receives to the individuals.

In 95% of cases, the credit is renewed to such enterprises, and generally once a capital is established, each can increase the rate of repayment. This process encourages further applications for more credit. When repayment is not possible in the case of some member of the group - either because a person reneges (which happens very rarely) or because of some special circumstance (like illness, or theft, or a drop in sales) - the other members of the group have to chip in to cover that person; thus there is a group security and solidarity. As a rule, however, the obligations are met.

There are different modalities in the issue of grants: some are given to individuals, when they have already taken part in at least five group-credit grants and given proof of their sense of responsibility, their commercial competence, and their commitment. There are also supplementary grants, made to allow improvement to buildings being used as the commercial centre for an enterprise, or to buy machinery or other equipment.

Other grants are progressive, enabling an individual to have an initial credit even when not yet in touch with a group of people who could apply for a combined grant. The condition in these cases is that the first credit can be increased only if others are eventually involved in projects and form a group.

The work of *Protagonizar* is only possible thanks to the invaluable support of large firms willing to collaborate. The dream of those who are running the foundation is that this work, which has brought happiness to so many needy families, will increase by another 20% the number of families taking part in such projects and be able to accompany them as they develop.

Translated by Joseph Munitiz, S.J.



Building Peace and Justice

Luis Guillermo Guerrero Guevara – Ana María Restrepo Rodríguez

The Center for Research and Popular Education -CINEP/ Peace Program- is a social institute of the Society of Jesus in Colombia. During its four decades of existence, it has stood by the communities victimized by the armed and social conflict the country has endured over the last fifty years. Its work, inspired by the principles of Faith and Justice, has concentrated on three great lines of action: social research applied to historical problems; assistance to the affected rural and urban communities; and advocacy aimed at influencing key actors and public opinion. The Center's work is a prophetic action because at the same time that it denounces injustice, it announces alternatives to overcome it. Likewise, its work strives for consultation and dialogue among the diverse conflict parties in order to rebuild Colombian society within the framework of comprehensive peace.

In the past thirty years, there have been nine efforts to resolve the conflict in Colombia, including negotiation attempts with the guerrillas, disarmament, demobilization of guerrilla factions, negotiating tables, and agreements between the Government and paramilitary armed groups. CINEP has been an active witness in all of them. What started out, at the end of the 1960s, as a group of Jesuit experts in social issues, highly qualified to formulate historical and structural questions regarding the country's problems, is today one of the oldest, most renowned and re-

spected centers for critical thinking and social assistance in Colombia.

In order to contribute to overcoming the conflict and transforming the country, CINEP works on five social processes: (1) understanding the armed conflict and the shaping of the Colombian State; (2) monitoring and assistance to mobilizations of grassroots organizations protesting against the situation of exclusion and poverty they live in; (3) support to victims of the armed conflict through the systematization of

Below, Fr. Javier Giraldo walking with the San José de Apartadó Community and Teacher-Training Seminary.



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Colombia

Colombia

In Colombia too the Jesuits work beside the communities that are victims of the armed and social conflict in recent decades. Below, Fr. Fernán González with Father Provincial de Roux for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the CINEP.

the memory of the violation of their rights; (4) fostering and formulating regional development alternatives; and (5) follow-up and study of peace initiatives and dialogues in Colombia.

With respect to the understanding of the armed conflict and the shaping of the Colombian State, the research carried out by Father Fernán González G. S.J. and his team over four decades has shown that, contrary to conclusions based on the European model of State, Latin American States are not failed States. The Colombian model is that of a State with a differentiated presence, depending on the political history of the regional contexts. The distance between centers of political power and peripheral regions does not necessarily indicate abandonment by the State or centralism. In some Colombian territories, the local political elites have acquired such great power that the presence of the central State is limited and forced to share control of the territory with the local powers. That is the political reality that should serve as the basis for understanding the alternatives for overcoming the conflict and achieving development and peace. Given those conditions, the armed conflict features different dynamics according to the specific regions.

As far as mobilization and social protest are concerned, CINEP's Digital Press Archive (with close to one million news items on social issues) and the Social Struggles Database have compiled

information about protest actions by workers, peasants, the indigenous population, Afro-Colombians, displaced persons, students, women, environmentalists, and sexual diversity (LGBTI) advocates, among others. This monitoring, which characterizes the repertoires of social protests and their causes, constitutes a significant contribution to the history of social struggles in Colombia and to the understanding of the fact that there are forms of political participation by the citizens that go beyond electoral politics. This historical approach to mobilization information serves as the basis for acknowledging that leftist projects in Colombia, committed to equality and justice, are supported by the alternative proposal of "good living", as a political and social alternative to capitalist development models. In Latin America, this proposal is finding increasing support at the grassroots level.

One of CINEP's most recognized projects is the Human Rights and Political Violence Database (BDDHH, according to its acronym in Spanish). This endeavor, led by Father Alejandro Angulo N., S.J. and Father Javier Giraldo M., S.J., focuses on assistance to victims of the armed conflict and the systematization of the historical memory regarding the violation of their rights. The BDDHH monitors hostilities and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Its main output, the semi-annual journal *Noche y Niebla (Night and Fog)*, has become a legal tool for the victims and an object of memory for the perpetrators' narratives. The BDDHH is strengthened by networks throughout the country and is a mandatory reference for national and international scholars, national entities, embassies, and international cooperation agencies such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia.

The formulation of regional development alternatives is another one of CINEP's recognized fields of work. Since its foundation in 1972, the Center has worked in different territories of the country. Of particular significance is the Magdalena Medio Development and Peace Program (PDPMM, according to its acronym in Spanish). Created in 1995, implemented by a team under



the leadership of Father Francisco de Roux R., S.J., current Provincial Superior of the Company of Jesus in Colombia, and carried out jointly with the local Church, social organizations, and businesses with the greatest impact in the region, it stands out as the regional process that has inspired great social, political, and economic transformations. Today there are over 20 regions in the country with their own programme, inspired by the experience of the PDPMM, according to which the first step toward achieving peace is creating development and not imposing security strategies that favour capital. The cornerstone for fostering development is the respect for Life in all of its expressions. Equality, inclusion, solidarity, participation, and citizen empowerment are values that weaken the development paradigms based on the concentration of capital and the imposition of security strategies to protect its growth.

Finally, in the context of seeking the peace the country desires, CINEP has carried out research and work in peace pedagogy led by the Peace Initiatives team, under the orientation of Father Mauricio García-Durán, S.J. The monitoring of social mobilizations for peace and of peace talks among the State, society, and armed actors of all leanings shows that the victims of the conflict are not actors who lack proposals; on the contrary, they and many other civil society actors have developed strategies for resistance to and interlocution with the actors of the armed conflict, expressing both their rejection of violence and their support of fair and dignified solutions in their territories.

Today CINEP continues to work with diverse social actors, both those who share its vision and those who oppose it, because we have understood that structural conflicts in Colombia will be overcome only if we acknowledge and respect the diversity of visions, engage in constructive dialogue, and generate creative, fair, and inclusive alternatives for coexistence with those perceived as opponents. The history of CINEP's actions is the history of the needs of communities plagued by political, economic, and social exclusion. Our mission to strive for a fair, sustainable and peaceful society has opened up the possibility of rethinking the solutions to social conflicts in the highly diverse and complex Colombian territory. For this reason, in the context of possible solutions to the Colombian armed conflict, other social conflicts and violations of economic, environmental, social, and cultural rights will continue to give meaning to our institution's work.



From top to bottom, indigenous people of the Sierra Nevada on an audiovisual course; learning to cook; an art lesson.

Cinep

A Fire that Kindles Friendship

Fr. Xavier (Javy) Alpasa, S.J. — Executive Director, “Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan”

Young people take a break; on the following page, the production of bags from recycled materials.

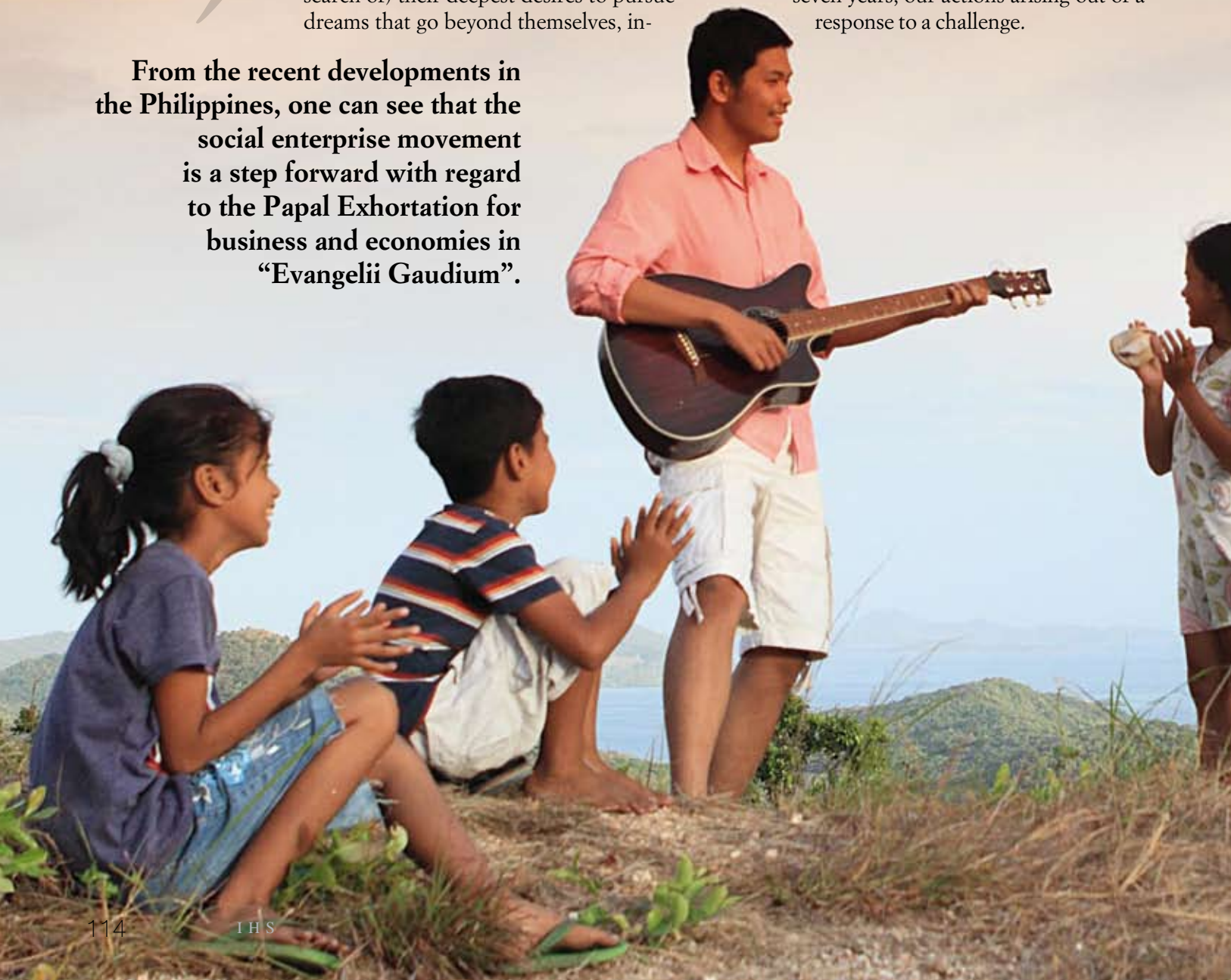
We live in a world where many women earn a mere peso (US 2 cents) for producing a product while a middleman bags 20 pesos (US 40 cents) or more for it. Multiply that by hundreds, thousands of households marginalized by an organized capitalism-driven power and you have an unjust economic structure.

This “holy disturbance” is the compelling impetus for the contemporary buzz about social entrepreneurship. More and more, the social and economic injustices so evident in our world are firing spirited people in touch with (or in search of) their deepest desires to pursue dreams that go beyond themselves, in-

cluding finding entrepreneurial solutions for social issues. More and more, people and organisations are seeing that social enterprises can help in our mission to serve the poor and the marginalised.

The Philippine Province through alumni, partner-organizations and programmes, is at the forefront of this new frontier for the Society and the Church. Its social justice arm, *Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan* (SLB, or “the Church in Service of the Nation”, www.slb.ph), has supported initiatives in this sphere for more than seven years, our actions arising out of a response to a challenge.

From the recent developments in the Philippines, one can see that the social enterprise movement is a step forward with regard to the Papal Exhortation for business and economies in “Evangelii Gaudium”.



Philippines



When we mobilized Street Parliaments in 2007 to address land issues, expose corruption and fight Constitutional changes, we were asked what we were doing with regard to concrete programmes to help the poor and the marginalised. This made some of the organizers stop and think about what else we could do for the poor, over and above the countless institutional programmes already in place.

One answer came through divine providence. A group of gifted, seasoned, well connected and most importantly, passionate and buoyant young people were so disturbed by the distressing conditions in Payatas that they felt

compelled to do something to help the people living in the slums alongside or even on top of the dumpsite.

Payatas is the largest garbage dumpsite in the Philippines with 50 acres of landfill. Around 10,000 families live near the dumpsite with scavenging as their main livelihood and the entire family scheduled to work in shifts. Some are in *pagpag* business, recycling food from the garbage to earn a living. Some years ago, a landslide of garbage reportedly buried 218 people living in the dumpsite, but first hand accounts estimate the number as closer to 1,000 including missing persons.

It is out of this that *Rags2Riches* (www.rags2riches.ph) was born in 2007. The *Rags2Riches* story begins with a sort of “last wish”. Young Designers Guild President Mel Vergel de Dios called me out of the blue to ask for a chat. He wanted to share his idea for *Rags2Riches*. His dream was to reach out to illustrious designers, models and celebrities and encourage them to work with marginalized women who could be trained to produce fashionable products. Days after our animated exchanges, he was murdered.

With his death, the idea remained just an idea until a donation suddenly came in a few months later, giving the project impetus. An *Ateneo de Manila University* theology student Jeremy Kho donated his entire graduation cash gift of 10,000



Philippines

A true and proper crafts industry that provides numerous poor families with work and money has come into being from the recovery of waste materials. Below, rug-making.



pesos (US\$220) to me to be used for any project that would benefit the poor. This became the seed capital for *Rags2Riches*, which was boosted by the donation of a blank cheque by a lay collaborator Rodney Laurel. Three young professionals Memey Mendoza, Ange Benavides-Bulan and Maan Lim visited the Jesuit apostolate area in Payatas several times to identify possibilities. Eventually, *Rags2Riches* was born right there in the dumpsite area.

The idea was to produce, from the scraps of fabric, foot rugs of a quality that could be sold in department stores. Enterprising *nanays* (mothers) salvaged the scraps of cloth discarded by garment factories at the dumpsite and sewed them together into foot rugs. These were sold to middlemen who brought them to department stores for sale.

Suggestions came to evolve and repackage the ordinary-looking foot rugs into a chicer, plain colour rug that might sell better. After some trials, an experiment was conducted with samples of the new product at the annual Ignatian Feast Bazaar organised by the Philippine Province. All the pieces available were sold in a couple of hours.

During this period, a host of friends joined the effort, including Reese Fernandez and her

social entrepreneur husband Mark Ruiz, and Timi Gomez who is now married to Senator Bam Aquino. As *Rags2Riches* grew, these people became the co-founders and pioneering board members. It was a board member, TJ Agulto, who introduced the *Rags2Riches* team to the first celebrated designer, Rajo Laurel.

When the *Rags2Riches* team met Rajo, we gave him a rug and asked him how we could grow the mission. He took one look at the rug and said, "Look guys, this is not a rug, roll it and imagine some buttons and it's a wine holder! Fold it, put an elegant zipper and it can be an evening clutch bag!" And from that time, a fashion industry was born from the discards dumped at Payatas. The *Rags2Riches* product line went from foot rugs that people wiped their feet on to fashionable items such as wine holders, yoga mats and fashionable bags that even the well-to-do were happy to be seen using.

The movement gained momentum as our products and through them, the people it was helping, became known and talked about. The *Rags2Riches* story began to receive media coverage left and right, and awards locally and internationally. Fans and funds grew exponentially from the initial seed capital of 10,000 pesos (US\$220) to revenue of 16 million pesos (US\$355,000), according to the last board report. The mission has assisted scores of marginalized women and several communities – from an initial handful of *nanays*, there are now close to a thousand working with *Rags2Riches*. *Rags2Riches* has also attracted the attention of CEOs (Chief Executive Officer) of top corporations who choose to give *Rags2Riches* products as corporate gifts.

Business suddenly had business in development, and social entrepreneurship mixed and matched tools from management science and development frameworks. The traditional bottom line was stretched to a new triple bottom line of People, Planet and Profit, which is now the minimum requirement for any enterprise to be called "social". *Rags2Riches* adds another "P" – Positive Influence with the hope that the mission inspires others to dive and swim in un-



chartered waters in an innovative way to help the poor.

The *Rags2Riches* story has inspired a host of young people, friends to gather and pursue new frontiers. The majority of these are from Jesuit schools who must have unconsciously appropriated the General Congregation 35 maxims of fire kindling other fires, friendship and frontiers. Filipino social enterprises have reaped awards from practically all social enterprise award-giving bodies and global conferences, including Skoll, Schwab, the United Nations, Business in Development (BiD), TED, Rolex and World Economic Forum. Many of these social enterprises were set up by alumni of Jesuit schools.

As social enterprises have become more relevant in the Philippines, three in particular have become part of SLB's mission. In the aftermath of a devastating typhoon such as Typhoon Haiyan, *Solar Solutions* (www.solarsolutions.ph) rapidly responds to provide people in disaster-stricken areas with solar-powered water filtration systems and community charging stations. As the country struggles with leadership crises resulting from impeachments and corporate scandals, *Heroic Leadership* (www.heroic-leadership.com), based on the bestselling book written by former Jesuit Chris Lowney, offers various leadership formation sessions for different sectors of business, government and academe. *Kawil Tours* (www.kawiltours.com) has helped in relief operations, boat rehabilitation and overall economic programmes for the isolated Jesuit mission island of Culion, which used to be the world's largest leper colony. With the help of *Kawil Tours*, Culion now has a greater re-connection with the rest of world and is an up and coming eco-tourism destination, listed in *National Geographic* as one of the Best Trips for 2011 when it included Palawan.

What is happening in the Philippines is happening in other parts of the world especially in countries where the poverty level is high such as Africa and India. We are seeing the emergence of a new economics named "The Third Sector" by some and "The Magic Formula" by those who have been searching for the elusive solution to poverty alleviation.

In addition, there is growing awareness within the Society of the value that social enterprises can add to our mission. Within the Jesuit Conference of Asia Pacific, social entrepreneurship was the main theme for the 2014 JCAP Social Apostolate meeting held in the Philippines in August.



Social entrepreneurship also aligns well with Pope Francis' challenge to the world's business leaders at the 2014 *World Economic Forum*. The Holy Father asked them to put their wealth to good use in serving humanity and to oversee the "better distribution of wealth". He said that more must be done to promote the "growth of equality" alongside an economic recovery.

In the final analysis, social entrepreneurship is defined to be community-based social business enterprise interventions with the triple bottom line of People, Planet and Profit. People should ultimately be the reason for the existence of any institution.

The Planet is a part of creation and we have the responsibility to care for the universe that God has created. And all these are fuelled by Profit that ultimately should serve the larger interest of People and Planet. Let us then change whatever is contrary to this paradigm.

Above, one of the largest rubbish dumps in the Philippines and people looking for material to recycle.

Recycling

Peace Mission in Kandhamal

Gyan Prakash Kujur, S.J.

On August 23, 2008, Swami Lakshmananda Saraswati, a leader of rightwing organization *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP), and his four associates were killed by Maoists in his Ashram at Jalespata in Kandhamal district, Odisha State. Jalespata is 325 Kilometres away from the state capital Bhubaneswar. The hardline *hindutva* (a movement advocating hindu nationalism and a hindu state for India) leaders accused Christians for the murder. This led to widespread ethno-communal violence targeting Christians in 12 districts of which Kandhamal was the worst affected. The violent attacks continued for about two months resulting in the loss of life and property. Fortunately none of the Jesuit centres (2 parishes, 2 high schools and one community college) in the district were affected. Yet our

men in these centres were equally traumatized as the victims. The affected villagers lived in constant fear, anxiety and were afraid to meet people of other caste and creed.

The letter of Father General to Jamshedpur Province soon after the violence gave new courage, inspiration and invited us 'to become relevant and reconciling'.

The Jesuit initiated *Peace Mission* in Kandhamal had three interwoven stages: 1) Emergency Response, 2) Rehabilitation, and 3) Livelihood Restoration.

The *Emergency response* began within a few days of the carnage at two levels: i) immediate relief works at the camps and ii) fact finding and dissemination of factual information to local, national and international levels. While Prakash



A widespread ethno-communal violence in some parts of Kandhamal district, in August 2008, affected Christians with loss of lives and properties. The Jesuits took up the challenge to restore peace between different ethnic and religious communities.



Louis, SJ (PAT), former Director of the *Indian Social Institute*, New Delhi, coordinated the State specific, national and international fact finding missions, Xavier Jeyaraj, SJ (CCU), the then Secretary for Social Apostolate in South Asia, helped in preparing a concept note on the carnage for dissemination.

The *Rehabilitation* work began after a few months under the guidance of Joe Xavier, SJ (MDU), who was appointed as the Secretary to the Archbishop of the affected Cuttack-Bhubaneswar Archdiocese. He not only coordinated the entire Kandhamal response of the local Church but also coordinated the formation of Jesuit-initiated *Odisha Citizen's Initiatives* (OCI), a secular platform to work closely with the district administration, ecumenical groups and other organizations to continue the relief and rehabilitation of the affected families. OCI, with the support of Jesuits and their collaborators across the world, provided emergency relief materials in the form of medical relief to 20,000 victims in relief camps through *Caritas Germany* and attended to the health needs of people in relief camps and villages for 18 months, thanks

to the voluntary service provided by St. John's Medical College, Bangalore, and the religious sisters from across India. OCI, in partnership with *Catholic Relief Services* (CRS), *Caritas*, *CONCERN Worldwide* and *EFICOR* provided relief kits to 5,100 families. It also supported 102 families with Non-Food Items in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack and constructed 100 houses in Minia Gram Panchayat, Phiringia Block, Kandhamal district.

While rehabilitation work continued, OCI with the support of *Alboan*, a Jesuit NGO in Spain, actively began engaging in advocacy work at the macro level. A few Jesuit lawyers processed the complaints of the victim-survivors into legal suits; actively participated in the emerging secular network of activists in the state; organized a workshop of Secular Writers' in Odisha; prepared *People's Manifesto* from the victims' perspective prior to the local elections; produced a documentary film made by Shailendra Boora, SJ (AND); collated narratives of the trauma and hope from the victims to preserve the memory of the violence; and held training of peace cadres through a month long



Ever more frequently Christians in India are the target of Hindu extremists. The episode in Kandhamal was one of the most violent, as shown in the photos on these pages: houses and churches set on fire and devastated without the slightest respect.



India

India

After the episodes of violence the Jesuits endeavoured to reorganize the people, they promoted legal action against the guilty and created awareness through meetings and public demonstrations.

camp in two summers for the victim survivors and unemployed youth (40 boys and 60 girls) and actively contributed in National People's Tribunal on Kandhamal.

At this stage the members felt the importance of working for a lasting peace and reconciliation among the local communities. And there began the third stage of our intervention, *Livelihood Restoration*.

A task force, with the guidance of Joe Xavier, Ms Rama Hansraj, the State Representative of CRS Bhubaneswar and a few other local NGOs, was formed and it initiated the Peace Building process with the local leaders and volunteers at Mundigodo Gram Panchayat (GP) in Tumudibandha Block. Thirteen out of 21 villages of the GP were selected for intervention, of which one of them was badly affected by the violence. The population consists of two tribal groups, namely Gondos and Kondhos,

dalits, Other Backward Classes and a few others in small number. The Gondo tribals are the dominant group and they are all Hindus. The Christian population is small (only 452) and consists of Kondho tribals as well as some dalit families.

In our initial analysis with the local people of Mundigodo GP on 'what binds them as a community despite the violence', we found that it was poverty that united the victims and the perpetrators and desired livelihood opportunities as a process of peace building initiative. Jesuits being the closest religious group living at Tumudibandha, with the support of *Jesuit-enmission* (Germany), took up the challenge to restore peace between different ethnic and religious communities through building their capacities for livelihood restoration.

The objectives of the *Peace Mission* in these violence affected area included, a) restoring peace in the area through joint programs, b) bridging the gap between the ethnic groups and c) dispelling fear, prejudice and suspicion from the minds and hearts of people. The above objectives were achieved through i) play for peace, ii) social capacity building, and iii) livelihood restoration.

The *Play for Peace* was conducted in all the schools and the effects of it is that the school children began to mingle with one another. Sport events were a time of joyful intermingling which they cherished. Besides, the initial *Shanti-Sadbhavana* (Peace and Harmony) activities of health camps and sports in Schools were some of the joint activities that provided an entry points into the local communities, to conduct household surveys, to assess the damages done and to verify the needs of the people.

Social Capacity Building included all sections of the people. Activities like, education awareness rallies, meetings, trainings for the members of School Managing Committee, *Panchayati Raj* (village governance) institution, *Gaon Saathis* (Village assistant for developmental works) and youth were conducted. Common celebrations like Independence Day, Republic Day, International Women's Day, Teachers' Day, Children's



Day and Gandhi Jayanti (Gandhi's birthday) were organized collectively. In and through all these activities our effort was to gather people together in big number and help them to interact freely and build trust and confidence in one another.

For *Restoration of Livelihood*, OCI organized trainings in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry and forestry for all people. Officials from related government departments were called as the Resource Persons to train in improved techniques and government schemes in their respective fields. This brought confidence among people and hundreds of farmers have benefitted through these efforts. People were linked with government agriculture department for seed, manure, pesticide and equipment; horticulture department for fruit bearing trees; animal husbandry department for vaccination; and forest department for supplying saplings for tree plantation. People were able to avail the schemes and began to see a new lease of life together.

The result was obvious: the defunct *Self Help Groups* (SHG) began to function; they established linkages with the banks for loans for income generating activities; activities of empowerment and income generation for self-sufficiency became vibrant; people became free from the clutches of local money-lenders and above all they began experiencing dignity of life together as a community.

Methodology of our intervention may seem simple but they were very effective. All trainings were held in the villages, except for the monthly review and planning meetings of the staff and the volunteers in the centre. We preferred to take the process-oriented approach than target oriented. The activities were planned as per the needs of the people rather than putting our agenda for action. There were no peace meetings at all; we merely created a platform by inviting them to take part in our programs.

Volunteers were our strength in implementing the program successfully. They do the community mobilization at the village level. Today they are recognized as village leaders by the



government officials and take their help to implement their project.

People say that our intervention has brought a difference in their lives and has reduced to a great extent the caste, creed and ethnic feelings and tensions. In fact, having meals together during the program is a sign of reconciliation. A lot is done yet a lot more is yet to be done. In fact, seeing the success of this *Peace Mission*, the nearby Subarnagiri Gram Panchayat of Kotaghar Block has called us to extend the program. I suppose that is a sign of a great hope that we are called to bring in a broken world today!

Restoring peace and trust has also meant getting going community projects for development, mobilizing women above all to restart activities that produce an income, as can be seen in the photos above.

Kandhamal

Xavier Network

Klaus Vähröder, S.J.

Below, ruins of the famous Reductions in Latin America. On the following page, "the road of the Jesuits" in Paraná, in remembrance of the ancient Jesuit missions. At the top, the logo of the Xavier Network.

In the 1960s, the Mission Procurator for the South German Province, Fr. Joe Übelmesser S.J., took the initiative to call for a meeting with the procurators from the German, Austrian and Swiss Provinces. Later, the representatives from the Netherlands, from Italy and from Great Britain also joined. Thus, the conference, known by the abbreviation AMOK was founded.

The Procurators met once a year. They shared their experiences and looked at the operation of their different Mission Offices: each time they learned something new. A regular discussion centred on the financing of projects, which often exceeded the funds of one single Province. More than once a struggle ensued about the different financial contributions and a word could be heard: "now pull up your socks and don't be so stingy!" We were united in our common effort and the worthy cause.

One of the most meaningful common projects took place in Paraguay concerning the restoration of the Jesuit Reductions and historical missions as a place of cultural architectural heritage. Even music from that time was saved and assembled. The AMOK conference initiated

this effort in the 1970s, which would later be overseen by well-endowed organisations from the Paraguayan state and from UNESCO. The former Archbishop of Asunción, Paraguay, Ismael Blas Rolón Silvero praised the farsighted vision of AMOK in these words: "You have returned to us our historical heritage!"

Over the years, participants changed and new organisations joined AMOK. When the former Mission Offices of some countries and Provinces became NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) for development, the former abbreviation AMOK was given up. However, the annual gathering for exchange in a fraternal and informal atmosphere remained the same.

Some members opted for a closer and more stringent form of cooperation. On 3 December 2004, the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, the *Xavier Network* (in Spanish: *la Red Xavier*) was started. This association was founded – according to Spanish Law – and comprised by the following members: The NGOs *Alboan* and *Entreculturas* from Spain, *Goncalo de Silveira* and *Leigos para o Desenvolvimento* from Portugal and *Magis* from Italy. The Jesuit Mission Office joined a little later. They took the name of Francis Xavier, the patron Saint of the Missions, who desired so much the encounter of cultures and religions. From 1541 to his early death in 1552, he laboured in India and in Japan. We chose his signature to be our logo, in which he sealed his letters to St. Ignatius, his

The Xavier Network comprises of a variety of member organisations – large and small – but they are combined and powered by their common Jesuit identity and their aim to promote justice and faith.





esteemed superior, whom he should never meet again, after he had left for the missions. Our new network should keep up that spirit, which so moved St. Francis Xavier.

As global conditions kept changing, we needed to intensify our cooperation. The causes of worldwide injustice and poverty are often complex and have their origin in globalisation. On the other hand, increasing worldwide globalisation in economics, politics and culture offers us also the increased globalisation of solidarity and help. Thus, our joining of Jesuit organisations and networks in Europe has as its aim a more efficient and collaborative effort among us.

The new *Xavier Network* comprised of a variety of member organisations, large and small, different ways of set-up, different local areas of concern and different financial abilities to give support. However, they were combined and powered by their common Jesuit identity and their aim to promote justice and faith. Especially to benefit the development of those most neglected in the Southern hemisphere. In Europe, the *Xavier Network* wants to foster education and advocacy through the ideal of showing solidarity for the One World.

Thus, several projects were jointly funded and accompanied. Information was shared and we learned from each other. Our Jesuit identity was enhanced and lived. We supported already existing networks in the South, like the networks of Jesuit Social Centres in South America

and in Africa. Our support aimed at strengthening the institutions of our Jesuit partners. The *Xavier Network* developed a programme, how best to react facing catastrophes and how to coordinate emergency relief. The first time this programme was used was in January 2010, when the earthquake in Haiti occurred. The *Xavier Network* was able to pool resources to assist with emergency aid and with the reconstruction of Haiti involving 3.7 million Euros. The organisation *Entreculturas* from Spain coordinated a variety of projects. Partners included the JRS (*Jesuit Refugee Service*), and also *Fe y Alegría*, the education network of the South American Jesuits. The latter would later be strengthened and expanded in Haiti after the earthquake. Most developed is the cooperation with volunteers, which almost all participating organisations of *Xavier Network* offer. The coordinators of the volunteer programmes have regular contact with each other. This serves to identify places of service, to prepare and accompany the international volunteers. They are also prepared for their future after their service.



Amok





At the top, the regular meetings of the Xavier Network to promote ever closer collaboration. Above, a school that teaches reading and writing.

In 2012, the *Xavier Network* celebrated eight years of presence. Cooperation had deepened, but something was still missing. Other European organisations and Mission Offices from Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland were not yet part of *Xavier Network*. Here, the modern NGOs from the South and there the more traditional Mission Offices from the Northwest of Europe: one observed one another from a safe distance. There still was the annual informal meeting of all organisations, yet no closer cooperation had happened. Finally, at the meeting in Nuremberg in October 2012 came the break-through; at this *Kairos* momentum it was felt, that due to external and internal demands and challenges, this dual way of organizing had come to an end. Although we had a great diversity of organisations, it was felt that what was needed was but one network of organisations, there was enough common ground for that.

At two meetings in Drongen, Belgium in 2013, we agreed on common structures and a common way of procedure. Organisations from Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland joined the existing *Xavier Network*. Although constituted according to the Spanish law, the *Network* had always had a trans-European and global perspec-

tive. Moreover, as soon as it can be done, it will establish itself as a foundation according to European law. The Mission Offices from Canada and Australia meanwhile have also joined. The *Xavier Network* groups around a European cooperation, being open to further global engagements. Other European organisations for mission and development are still free to join. The moderator of the European Provincials (presently Father John Dardis S.J.) was named president of this foundation and network. These are the headings of the different working groups: Projects, International Volunteer Service, Advocacy, and Emergency. Each member organisation is free to choose its own the task force.

When typhoon *Haiyan/Yolanda* hit the Philippines in November 2013, the *Xavier Network* had their baptism of fire. The guidelines for emergency aid in case of catastrophes were put into action and all member organisations agreed to provide emergency aid and to contribute towards the reconstruction. The Nuremberg Mission Office was commissioned with the coordination of this effort. Member organisations in the *Xavier Network* received more than 1.6 million Euros to assist the victims of the typhoon. In December 2013, a small team from the German Mission Office and from *Entreculturas* went to the Philippines in order to plan the next steps, meeting with the local Jesuit foundation for aid and social service *Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan* (SLB). *Xavier Network* will assist SLB with counsel and financial aid.

It took 50 years – or two generations - that the former AMOK network developed into the *Xavier Network*. Changes occurred and were inevitable. The understanding of Mission had changed and presently only a few missionaries from Europe are still working overseas. Local Jesuit organisations have instead become the partners of our network. The ever-increasing speed of globalisation, injustice and the gap between the rich and the poor demand a concerted effort to react beyond our frontiers of countries or Jesuit Provinces. Foundational for *Xavier Network* remains the decree “A Fire that kindles other fires” from the 35th General Congregation of the Jesuit Order: “The service of faith and the promotion of justice, indissolubly united, remain at the heart of our mission.” (General Congregation 35, Decree 2, Chapter 15).

Translated by Wolf Schmidt, S.J.

Offering Hope to Refugees

Roberto Granja Maya, S.J.

Ximena, a young woman 17 years of age, who is six months pregnant, entered Ecuador from Columbia several years ago along with her mother, and still has not been able to regularize her remaining in the country. Ximena's mother finds herself under arrest because the State is accusing her of the crime of homicide. Members of the police have found Ximena walking the streets of Quito, asking that they lock her in jail in the place of her mother. Not agreeing to that request, the police bring her to a shelter administered by Catholic religious women, who then approach the *Jesuit Refugee Service* (JRS)-Ecuador in search of help for the young woman.

This is one among thousands of cases of forced migrants, who enter Ecuador because of violence caused by armies and criminal groups, the negative impacts of unjust economic policies, racial violence, and natural disasters.

In the year 2000, the United States approved the *Columbia Plan* which intensified the struggle against drugs and the irregular armed groups involved. Armed conflict broke out in the south of Columbia and was accompanied by spraying of coco fields with glyphosate, which even affected Ecuadorans on the border (which resulted in diplomatic conflicts.) Under these circumstances, thousands of Columbians began to cross the border in search of protection in Ecuadorian territory.

In response to this situation of forced migration, the International JRS asked the Ecuadorian Jesuits to analyse the situation. As a fruit of this analysis, on November 11, 2000, the *JRS-Ecuador* was born. The delegation began with a small team consisting of a national director, two lawyers and a secretary. Their activities were based in an office in Quito, from which they would move to other parts of the country, especially among the populations along the Ecuadorian-Columbian border. The *JRS-Ecuador* offered legal services to migrants who were seeking refuge and wished to regularize their legal situation. It also facilitated the social integration of children, with the help of educational centres, most particularly those of *Fe y Alegría*. They



also collaborated with other institutions, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in securing basic goods for subsistence (food, health care, lodging, etc.). Finally they began to investigate and systematically record their experiences.

The forced migration of Columbians in 2000 produced an economic crisis which led to the collapse of the banking system and the national currency (*sucre*.) Thousands of Ecuadorans felt compelled to look for opportunities in other latitudes, such as in Spain and the United States. In order to care for the families of the emigrants who remained in situations of vulnerability in the country (especially children and the elderly,) the team of the *JRS-Ecuador* began to work under the name *Jesuit Service to Migrants* (JSM).

A member of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Ecuador visits a family of refugees.

At the present time, Ecuador is the country in Latin America with the highest number of refugees, the majority of whom are not regularized. The campaign “Hospitality Opens Frontiers” aims to sensitize and promote welcoming opinions and attitudes towards the migrants who have been forced to abandon their native land.

Ecuador

Ecuador

On these pages: several photos of grateful refugees who feel protected by the action of the Jesuits' Service. In addition to taking in refugees, it does a lot of work for the recognition of immigrants' rights.

JRS and JSM remained independent of each other, as far as work space and finances were concerned. However, in 2007 they came together under the name of *Jesuit Service to Refugees and Migrants* (JSRM,) a title which lasted until the end of 2012. Since then this work has been known as *JRS-Ecuador*. These changes of name recognize the complexity of the reality of human mobility which has evolved in this country.

Currently, Ecuador is the country in Latin America with the highest number of refugees. Between 2000 and 2013 around 171,000 persons have asked for refuge, of which 88% have come from Columbia and the rest from other countries, such as Peru, Cuba, Haiti, Pakistan, or Nigeria. Of these requests for refuge, around 55,000 have been accepted, of which 98% were Columbians. As can be observed, the granting of refugee status is only granted less than one third of the time. Those who have not been granted refugee status (including the thousands who have entered the country and not made a request) end up living in Ecuador in an irregular status without any type of visa. Obviously, these persons "without papers" find themselves in a grave situation of vulnerability and can easily become victims of human trafficking. In this panorama, it is very worrisome to note that, according to the UNHCR, more than 500,000 persons are in need of international protection along the borders of Columbia, of these 250,000 are along the Colombian-Ecuadorian zone.

JRS-Ecuador has grown considerably during the past year in the face of these complex reali-

ties. Even though Ecuador is a small country (283,561 km²) its geographic and cultural aspects are quite diverse. Offices were opened in border centres with Columbia (Lago Agrio, Tulcán, San Lorenzo, and Esmeraldas,) while towards the centre of the country there are now offices in Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Guayaquil as well as in Quito. Currently there is a national director, an official in charge of programs, a financial administrator and 32 collaborators who attend to the following areas: juridical, psychosocial, community organizing, lobbying, and communications. In the juridical realm, consultations, sponsorship, and legal investigations are pursued through the systemization of cases and the production of reports which can be used for lobbying purposes.

Within the psychosocial area, specialized professions selectively help in orientation and crisis intervention; besides, processes of social inclusion are promoted, starting from the realm of education, and food (in extreme cases.) The area of strengthening of base organizations contributes to the formation, empowerment and insertion in the Ecuadorian society through the encouragement of associated initiatives. The areas of lobbying and communication work to influence public opinion, in the state actors and in the social organizations, with the end of improving the living conditions of the forced migrants, creating a positive environment in the receiving society and supporting the promotion of the changes necessary for legal normativity and the public politics of the country.

JRS-Ecuador considers it fundamental to maintain alliances with other institutions such as Caritas, UNHCR, The Hebrew Aid to Immigrants and Refugees Organization, The Norwegian Refugee Council, The Hope Foundation, Save the Children, etc. On the regional level, *JRS-Ecuador* is part of the Jesuit Service to Refugees of Latin America and the Caribbean (RJM-LAC). As a demonstration of this desire to work together, *JRS-Ecuador* has joined with the JRS-LAC, the JSM-LAC and the Conference of Jesuit Provincials of Latin America in the implementation of the campaign "Hospital-



ity Opens Frontiers.” This campaign aims to sensitize and promote both welcoming opinions and attitudes towards migrants who have been forced to abandon their native lands. It is also worth highlighting the formation of the “Binational Team” between JRS of Ecuador and Columbia, in conjunction with JRS-LAC, since 2012, with the goal of promoting a Culture of Peace in the border regions, promoting “processes of solidarity and hospitality which offer protection to persons in forced migration, with an emphasis on children, adolescents, women, natives, and those of African descent.”

As regards current challenges which the forced migration present us in Ecuador, it is worth noting the presence of Haitian migration since the earthquake which struck their country in 2010. This is a vulnerable population due to its irregular migration status, such that on the one hand they lack access to the help which the refugee population receives, and on the other hand, they cannot return to their country. This is a very vulnerable population due to its lack of social integration, beginning with the fact that the great majority do not speak Spanish well. To support this Haitian population JRS-Ecuador has promoted various projects, for example, a Spanish School in Quito, with the collaboration of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador, as well as also a small project producing marmalades, with the help of the Novitiate St. Ignatius, for Haitian mothers in a most vulnerable situation.

The migratory normativity is another urgent challenge. *JRS-Ecuador*, along with other civil organizations, is contributing to the debate on the creation of a new Law for Human Mobility, in support of the current constitution, which privileges human rights over the criminalization of the immigrant, as Article 40 affirms: “...no human being will be identified or considered as illegal because of their migratory status.”

Beyond the legal aspects, the work of the JRS proceeds with individual faces, such as Ximena, who appeal to us in the construction of an Ecuadoran society to an equalitarian, inclusive and supportive coexistence. We have contemplated these suffering faces—which bring us nearer to



the face of Jesus Christ—these last fifteen years of institutional life in those in whom we have obtained some successes, some frustrations, but above all, much hope.

To conclude this presentation of *JRS-Ecuador* and to honour the memory of Fr. Arrupe, we quote Fr. Peter Hans Kolvenbach: “Behind these efforts and uniting them in a single mission is the inspiration of Fr. Pedro Arrupe, who promoted the JRS as a spiritual and practical response to the necessities of the refugees.” We also recall the subsequent mandate of the JRS, summarized in CG 34: “There are over 45 million refugees and displaced persons in today’s world... The Jesuit Refugee Service accompanies many of these brothers and sisters of ours, serving them as companions, advocating their cause in an uncaring world.”

Translation by Robert E. Hurd, S.J.



Refugees

The Hurtado Jesuit Centre

Damian Howard, S.J.

London is one of a tiny number of truly cosmopolitan world cities. It's the sort of location that St Ignatius could only have dreamed of, more a series of worlds than a city, a place where all the world's cultures, languages and nations come together, making it an ideal habitat for his Jesuits. We in the British Province bear the awesome responsibility of serving Christ's mission amidst these strange, colliding worlds.

It sounds an exciting prospect and so it is. But these days, it's quite a challenge too. For one thing, whilst London goes from strength to strength, growing in exuberance and diversity all the time, we British Jesuits, like most European Provinces, are in numerical decline and ageing. For another, London may be hurtling into the future with its own vision of life, but most of us in the Province are not Londoners and do not like to think that the needs of the rest of Britain, until recently mired in economic stagnation, might be neglected so as to feed the London machine.

And yet, there is one surprising thing about the city that makes it quite a draw even for the arch-sceptic: in spite of its reputation as one of the global hubs of 'militant secularism', London is an astonishingly religious place to live in, if only one has the eyes to see it. It is hard, for example, to think of a single religious group that is not represented somewhere in London's vast cosmopolitan sprawl. London is not only a great world centre for Islam but also home to what is almost certainly the most heterogeneous group of Muslims anywhere in the world. And, surprisingly in an officially Protestant country, the Catholic Church is probably the largest single grouping of regular worshippers, thanks to the huge influx of Africans, Latin Americans and Eastern Europeans in recent years. So, even if London is hardly any longer an English city, the need to reach out to its population is something we feel

keenly, infinitely variegated and fragmented as it is and limited as we are.

A recent initiative we have taken to try and do that is the opening of the *Hurtado Jesuit Centre* in Wapping in London's East End. In these days of diminishing vocations it is not that easy to set up new communities with a specific apostolic vision. With the Hurtado Centre it was a matter of several needs coming together at once.

It all started when JRS (*Jesuit Refugee Service*) needed new accommodation. JRS is heavily involved in supporting some of the many vulnerable and destitute asylum seekers who live around London or who are in detention near Heathrow Airport. The main plank of their provision is a weekly drop-in centre to which, on an average day, 120 asylum seekers from all over the capital will pour in to find solace and spiritual support. Scouring London for a new site proved to be rather more daunting a prospect than had been imagined until the deanery of Tower Hamlets, the London Borough which covers much of the East End, invited us to take a look at a building in Wapping which had previously housed the dioceses' youth project. JRS visited the site and realised that the house offered them a wonderful opportunity to develop their work.

But the building also had space upstairs, more than adequate for a Jesuit community of 5 or 6 men. This was a real stroke of luck. Not only would JRS UK, largely staffed by lay-people and religious of other congregations, be associated with a Jesuit community, but the Province

A recent initiative of the British Province of the Society of Jesus is the opening of the Hurtado Centre in London's East End. "For me, the most valuable aspect of living here is that sense one has of being present on a daily basis to a whole set of frontiers."



would be able to house some younger Jesuits in formation. In recent years, London has become a major centre of training for Jesuits from all over the world, most of them studying philosophy or theology at Heythrop College. With numbers having expanded rapidly, we are always looking for places for them to live and Wapping is an attractive location, central but quiet and offering plenty of opportunities for involvement in the local community.

The last piece to drop into place was for me. I teach Christian—Muslim relations at Heythrop, trying to help Christians deepen their understanding of what Islam is and how it poses certain crucial challenges to Christian faith. I had been hoping for some time that we might find a place to live in one of those parts of London where Muslims and Christians rub shoulders on a daily basis. In Tower Hamlets the proportion of Muslims per head of the population is one of the highest of any municipality in Europe at roughly 38% (rather larger, in fact, than the local nominally Christian population). It's a dynamic population, principally made up of Bangladeshis, the latest in a long line of immigrants to the East End, succeeding the Huguenots, the Irish and the Jews of days gone by. They have a formidable reputation as a well organised community and unlike previous waves of immigrants to the East End, they seem to have decided to stay on in this part of London while still continuing to foster links back home in the Indian subcontinent.

Thus was the *Hurtado Jesuit Centre* conceived,

not so much the result of a blueprint or a plan as a series of happy coincidences.

Why Hurtado? I made my tertianship in Chile in 2005 in Calera de Tango near Santiago, an old pre-suppression house of the Society. It's a place where there is still a chapel devoted to the memory of the Chilean Jesuits' recent saint, Alberto Hurtado. The electricity of his legendary apostolic zeal had made an impression on me: writing, giving retreats, serving the poor, intellectual reflection and social analysis... he was the epitome of the contemporary Society's apostolic vision. He had to be the patron of our new venture.

A major aspect of the Provincial's desire for us was that we should see ourselves as very much inserted into the life of the local Church. The Christians of Wapping are the usual assortment of Anglicans, Catholics and non-Conformists that one finds all over England. But sociologically they are a more complex group. Half would be what we call "East Enders", British families who have lived in the area for a long, long time, usually having served in the huge docks and warehouses which dominated the life and economy of this part of London in the nineteenth century (and which have now been converted into elegant residences with views over the Thames and prices to make your eyes water). East Enders have a special place of affection in Britain because of their resilience during the Second World War when they stood up to devastating aerial bombardment. They are also known for a unique working-class culture which is still in evidence today.

The other half are young professionals from all over the world, mainly continental Europe. The majority of them work in the (now rather unpopular) banking sector in nearby Canary Wharf; they have their own problems, working



Above, a refugee who works as a tourist guide at the Wallace Collection, London. On the left, Fr. Damian Howard, author of this article, in conversation with visitors at the Centro Hurtado.



London

London



In the photo, from top to bottom, parishioners at the Centre who are reflecting on the Second Vatican Council; information technology training for refugees; a poster designed by the refugees for a peace prayer project.

long hours, struggling to find time for family and faith and often grappling with serious ethical issues related to the work they have to perform.

These days, a religious community arriving in a place like Wapping cannot really rely on a pre-fabricated plan. It takes time to understand an area, its needs and its changing populations. But we have found it useful to put on a variety of different activities to see what works. For example, we have managed to establish a branch of the London Jesuit Volunteers programme, providing young people with a weekly volunteering placement and a chance to meet on a monthly basis and to share and pray in a group. We have managed to put on weeks of guided prayer in local parishes and faith formation events by Jesuit scholars from Oxford and the US, and we network with 'London Citizens' (London's broad-based communities organising movement) and other ecumenical and community initiatives in the area. The Jesuits in formation take part in local apostolates: catechesis, working with altar servers, local youth services, visiting refused asy-

lum seekers and an array of other activities.

For me, the most valuable aspect of living here is that sense one has of being present on a daily basis to a whole set of frontiers. Let me end with an example that has inspired me. I was saying mass in the local parish Church one summer's evening during the 2012 Olympics. I was just beginning my homily when a young Bengali man at the back rather unexpectedly stood up and shouted out, "Father, can I ask a question? There is something I don't understand!" I had noticed him coming in during the penitential rite with a young friend and that both had seemed surprised and even amused to find themselves inside a Church. I wasn't entirely sure how to respond; it's relatively unusual to be interrupted during Mass and the handful of sedate mass-goers in the church were looking rather nervous.

I tried ignoring the interruption but it only intensified. The faithful were beginning to look positively agitated, wondering if this were a deliberate sabotage of their worship. So I took a chance: "Sure, let's talk, but after Mass, in about twenty minutes, ok?" To my surprise this seemed to do the trick. I managed to celebrate the rest of the Mass without any trouble and there at the back of the Church as I left were two Muslims in their early twenties wanting to talk about Christianity. It turned out, much to my relief, to be a case of genuine curiosity. We walked slowly back to the Hurtado Centre and up the stairs to our roof-top terrace. I invited them both in to the residence but they looked hesitantly at each other: "It's a Christian house; we can't go in." I got the distinct impressions that this was their first meeting with a Christian. So we sat outside and talked happily for half an hour before parting as friends.

I can't quite pretend that this is a daily occurrence in the East End of London. Bengali Muslims don't often go into churches. But it does show both the barriers that divide people and the opportunities for encounter which a milieu like ours offers. And it is just that kind of encounter, intercultural and interreligious, which the new Hurtado Jesuit Centre in Wapping wants to promote.

ALL OVER THE WORLD

By sending us to “those physical and spiritual places which others do not reach or have difficulty in reaching,” the Pope entrusts to us the task to “build bridges of understanding and dialogue,” according to the best tradition of the Society, in the diversity of its ministries: “In its history the Society of Jesus has lived extraordinary experiences of proclamation and encounter between the Gospel and world cultures (GC 35, d. 1, no. 6).



Encounter

Land of Martyrs

Eduardo Tampe, S.J.

Four missionary explorers in Chile gave “the supreme proof of love” in their following of Christ and their preaching of the Gospel.

Four early missionaries to Chile embody the reality expressed in the Preface for the Mass of the Martyrs of the Society: “You called many companions of Ignatius to the supreme testimony of love so that, by shedding their blood, they might endow with new fecundity the saving work of your Church and by their example invite us to the following of Christ our Lord.”

The fact is that these men did not win the respect their work deserved but were treated with intolerance. Some violent, fanatical instigator would always appeared to destroy the work that they had so lovingly built up.

Fr. Nicolas Mascardi (1624-1674) entered the Jesuit novitiate of San Andrés del Quirinale; his novice master was Fr. Juan Pablo Oliva, future General of the Society. After his humanity studies he took courses in philosophy at the Colegio Romano, where he was a disciple of Fr. Athanasius Kircher, with whom he corresponded frequently for the rest of his life. He went on to teach grammar at the college of Orvieto in the years 1645-1646.



In 1647, while still a student, Mascardi left for Spain and from there traveled to America. We learn from a letter he sent from Panama to Fr. Kircher that by 8 November 1650 he was already in the New World. Assigned to the Vice-province of Chile, he traveled to Santiago in 1652. He finished his theology studies at the

Colegio Máximo San Miguel and was ordained a priest.

Perceiving his theological acumen, his superiors asked Mascardi to present an examination thesis edited in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He did so, and this text was later published; it would appear to be the first important printed work in Chile. His brilliant exposition convinced superiors that he should be a professor, but the new priest argued against the idea: “I have come here to preach to the Indians, to help them spiritually, and to teach them how to live better and prevent the conquistadors from maltreating them.” Since arriving in the country he had dedicated himself

to learning the Araucan language, which he finally mastered.

Mascardi subsequently began his apostolic ministry among the Araucan Indians while residing in Buena Esperanza. In 1661 he was assigned to the college in Castro on the island of Chiloé, and he was superior there from 1662 to 1669.

Besides his missionary work in that southern region, he worked hard for the conversion of the Puelche Indians who were brought to Castro as captives. Desiring to work also in the home territory of the Puelches, he obtained permission to explore the interior reaches of the Andes. From 1670 on he extended his missionary activity toward the eastern territories of the Andes chain.

A letter that Fr. Mascardi wrote in October 1670 gives us his first impressions of that region: “When I reached the peak of the mountain chain and was able to view its breadth and width, I lifted up a cross and planted it there. I then prayed at the foot of the cross, and those who were with me prayed in their own language, both believers and non-believers. In a loud voice I said, ‘In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I take possession of all these souls, and I restore them to Our Lord Jesus Christ who redeemed them with his blood.’ And as a sign of this taking possession, I had them sound the trumpet and fire twice the musket we had with us.”

The letter continues: “When I disembarked, the Puelches came to greet me and make me feel welcome. Among them was one very old man who was wearing a cross; he told me that he was a Christian and had been baptized 46 years before in Chile.” Mascardi’s missionary labor was not limited to the Puelches and Huilliches of that locality but extended as well to the Poyas, whose language he also learned.

That same year, in the company of his Puelche and Poya converts, he undertook the first of his four journeys to Patagonia. He sought out the indigenous peoples in order to evangelize them, but he also carried out a search for the so-called City of the Caesars. Crossing the Andes, he founded a mission for the Indians living alongside Lake Nahuelhuapi consisting of a small chapel and a humble house, both built with thatch roofs and wooden walls. He then took leave of his new catechumens and the other natives of those regions and continued his journey in search of the fabled Spanish cities.

That same year he undertook another long journey across the eastern slope of the cordillera; it is likely that he reached the Strait of Magellan.

*A drawing showing
Fr. Mascardi
discovering
Patagonia.*

Following the orders of the governor of Chile, he explored the Argentinian pampas and reached the Atlantic coast. Setting off on a new expedition in 1672 and accompanied by many Indians, he discovered the abandoned remains of a village built by the shipwrecked survivors of the English expedition of John Marborough. The expedition had left Puerto Deseado in the Argentine Patagonia in 1669 and had taken possession of this land in the name of the king of England. Mascardi then crossed the vast Patagonian plain, which was inhabited by indigenous groups, and returned to the Nahuelhuapi mission.

Before beginning his fourth expedition in 1673, Fr. Mascardi sent an account of his labors to his superiors and another one to the viceroy of Peru, Count de Lemos, who had sent him some gifts for the mission chapel. Accompanied by friendly Indians, he reached the 47th parallel south. When he returned from that journey on 15 February 1674, he was killed by some inhabitants of the region near Lake Nahuelhuapi.

What Fr. Mascardi sowed other reaped many years later. In him was accomplished the Gospel saying: "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains fruitless. But if it dies, it produces much grain" (John 12:24). He was the first explorer to provide precise data on the people, the flora, and the fauna of Patagonia.

Fr. Felipe Van Der Meeren (1667-1707). Thirty years later, the Flemish Jesuit Felipe Van Der Meeren followed in the footsteps of the ill-fated Italian missionary and explorer. Using the name "Felipe de la Laguna," he reestablished the abandoned mission by Lake Nahuelhuapi.

Van Der Meeren arrived in Chile in 1699 and worked first in the mission of Arauco. He then went to Chiloé, where he was rector of the college in Castro. Hearing of the admirable missionary work of Fr. Mascardi, he left Valdivia in November 1703 and traveled to Nahuelhuapi, where he restored the mission on the San Pedro peninsula. On 22 January 1704 the missionary returned to Castro to seek assistance in building a house and a church.

We have the text of a letter that Fr. Laguna sent to his superiors: "On January 22 I left for Chiloé, sailing through some dreadful straits on the small, poorly made boats of the Indians, not without risk to life. I cross the two mountains on foot since there was no other way to do so; the trail was so bad that I hardly have words to describe it. We also had to cross a wide river named Peúlla on sharp rocks. That was perhaps the hardest part

because we had to ford the river more than twenty times. In places it reached up to the waist, and it was so rapid that anyone who tripped and fell in its current would risk losing his life. I crossed the main gap in the first mountain barefoot and with a cross; in my bag I was carrying my breviary and my devotional books.

"As we reached the peak, some of the new catechumens had pity on my weakness. When they saw my sore feet, they made me put on some crude cowskin moccasins that they had brought for themselves; they were like little boots. With this scant protection I got a little rest and relief, but I could still hardly keep walking. I was tripping on fallen trees and logs and had to pass through many difficult swamps. ... On my trip back from Chiloé I experienced the same and even greater difficulties. Even though they had given me some shoes, when I waded into the first river, they got wet and I hurt my leg. ... But everything gives way before the love of Christ and the desire to win souls." Not all the Indians of the region were as favorably disposed to Christianity as those by Lake Nahuelhuapi. In 1706 Felipe was badly beaten by an angry conjurer. In 1707 he decided to travel to Concepción for a talk with his Superior. Accompanied by his aide Lorenzo de Molina and three Indians, he set out cheerfully. In Rucachoroy the chief Tedihué, who was still a pagan, offered him a cup of poisoned brew. After suffering sharp pains for three days, the missionary died on 29 October 1707.

Fr. Juan José Guillermo (1672-1716) arrived to take the place of the Dutch Jesuit. Born on 12 September 1672, he entered the Society in Sardinia on 22 December 1688 and was ordained priest on 26 January 1698 in Seville, Spain. He was then assigned to Chile, where he arrived in February 1699.

Starting in 1704 he served as assistant to Fr. Felipe de la Laguna in the re-established mission of Nahuelhuapi. He worked hard to create a well stocked library in that remote district, and he wrote several works: a dictionary and grammar of



A drawing by Fr. Mascardi of Our Lady and local people in prayer. This great missionary wrote: "After climbing to the peaks of the Cordillera, as soon as I saw the mountains and plains, I set up a cross".

Nahuelhuapi

Chile

the Poya language, a biography of Fr. Mascardi, and several treatises of morality. At the same time he worked hard for the spiritual development of that promising new outpost of Christendom.



The map shows Fr. Mascardi's journeys. He was the first explorer to make known the exact ethnography of Patagonia and he also provided information on the flora and fauna.

After the unexpected death of Fr. Felipe de la Laguna, Guillermo was named to succeed him as superior of the mission. He decided not to investigate further the cause of the priest's death in order not to stir up the Indians and also to avoid possible punishments on the part of the Spanish authorities. He dedicated himself to carrying on the work that had already begun.

He used his talents to teach the Indians the rudiments of agriculture and livestock raising. To that end he bought some cows from a troop that was traveling to Chile. The mission on the peninsula of San Pedro suffered a terrible tragedy at this time, when a fire reduced it completely to

ashes.

Like his predecessors, Fr. Guillermo had a passion for exploration. His desire was to find a shorter route between Nahuelhuapi and Chiloé. When he heard that the "vuriloches" ("mountain folk" or "inland people") knew of a secret passage along the eastern slope of Mount Tronador, he set out to find it, believing that the interests of the mission would be better served by it.

In December 1715 he made his second attempt to find the route and finally succeeded. He explains it thus: "We entered by Los Baños and followed the traces left two years before by the earlier search party. It was easy to make headway and remove the brush that encumbered the trail. In this way the mules could pass through and reach Ralún, a port from which we could embark for Chiloé."

Fr. Guillermo crossed the cordillera twice, first one way, then the other. The pagan Indians

became fearful that Spanish troops could use that pass to invade them, as had happened in the previous century. They were therefore not pleased with the missionary's discovery and made plans to kill him.

A few months later, when Fr. Guillermo was on his way to visit a sick Indian on the banks of the Limay River, he was offered a cup of brew, which he drank unsuspectingly. As he was returning to the mission, he experienced severe vomiting. Three days later, on 19 May 1716, he was dead.

Fr. Francisco J. Elguea Romero (1692–1717) was born in Santiago and entered the Society on 4 October 1707. He received all his formation in Chile. After Fr. Guillermo was poisoned by Indians, the vice-provincial superior assigned Fathers José Portel and Francisco Elguea to the Nahuelhuapi mission that had originally been founded by Fr. Mascardi in 1670. When Fr. Portel fell sick, Fr. Elguea traveled there in the company of a young English convert named John.

During his time there Fr. Guillermo had provided the mission with cows, which had multiplied rapidly and were greatly coveted by other Indians of the region. When the youthful Fr. Elguea arrived there in 1717, protecting the cattle from rustling became for him a major problem. Kind words were of no use, and the Indians were not willing to await the arrival of the superior to decide matters. Determined to seize the cattle in whatever way they could, they were egged on by the same chief who was thought to have given the poisonous brew to the earlier missionaries. But when the chief met together with his warriors, their conspiracy involved not only cattle but the missionaries themselves: "What help are those fathers to us? They preach that we shouldn't get drunk, that we shouldn't have more than one woman, and other things that do nothing to help us in our misery."

These arguments make it clear that the conspirators were not so much the Poyas who belong to the mission; they were the less Christianized Indians from outlying areas. On 14 November 1717 they attacked the mission and killed the young Englishman, Fr. Elguea, and an Indian couple from Chiloé, bashing in their heads with their weapons. They ransacked the church and the mission house before setting them on fire.

Right there on the shores of Lake Nahuelhuapi, the last and the youngest of the four missionaries martyred for bringing the Gospel to those remote regions was given Christian burial.

Translated by Joseph V. Owens, S.J.

The story of the Society in Myanmar is a story of gratefulness – to the local Church, friends and God. Myanmar is a rainbow nation of 135 tribes and four major religions. Once courted as the “pearl of the East” by the British for its resource rich lands and forests, it fell into a vicious spiral of poverty and oppression from 1962 to 2010 at the hands of a military junta led by a dictator. A bamboo curtain closed the nation to international observance. The once rich nation became impoverished and the policy of “one nation, one religion and one race” provoked more than 20 ethnic conflicts. Nearly a million people were displaced, and grinding poverty resulted in thousands falling victim to human trafficking.

GC35 called for Jesuits to rededicate their creative energies in “frontiers”, and Myanmar is a long-standing frontier that requires considerable creativity in mission. Although Jesuit interest in Myanmar goes back to the time of Francis Xavier, it was only with the ordination of the first Myanmar Jesuit priest, Wilbert Mireh, on May 1, 2013, that the Society of Jesus began to form its identity in the country.

Francis Xavier had urged Ignatius to send Jesuits to Pegu Kingdom (part of modern day Myanmar). Eventually in the 17th Century the first group came from Goa to minister to the families of the soldiers fighting for Don Brito, a Portuguese chieftain aiding war efforts in Syriam near Rangoon (Yangon). An internal conflict later saw the missionaries fleeing to central Burma. At least two were killed.

It was not until the mid 20th Century that Jesuits returned to Myanmar. The Church in Myanmar appealed to Rome to send Jesuits to staff the new seminary. The Maryland Province was assigned the task and seven Jesuits arrived in 1958. The group impressed the local Church with its wisdom, hard work and versatility. “It was too good to continue,” one wrote. Yes. They were expelled in 1966, and returned to the United States with tears in their eyes, almost losing hope for a Jesuit presence in Myanmar.

Jesuits did return, albeit under the radar. Some Bishops who had studied in the seminary nursed hopes of a return of the Jesuits. When

From Discretion to Frontier

Chinnappan Amalraj, S.J.

Myanmar began to open up, moving from one-day visas to 7-day visas to 28-day visas for visitors, the Bishops, led by Archbishop Matthias U Shwe, knocked at the door of the Jesuit Curia in Rome to ask for the Jesuits to return. Before acceding to their request, then Fr General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach insisted the Bishops commit to ensuring local vocations to the Society.

The Bishops returned to facilitate the return of Jesuits as English teachers in local seminaries. The pioneers, Fr Leo Cachet SJ, of Nepal Mission, and Fr Clay Pereira SJ, from the Thai Region, arrived in 1998. They were later joined by many volunteers from various Provinces. In an era of suffocating surveillance and midnight knocks, the pioneers held steady, enduring privations and restrictions. They assumed many roles – as merchants, garment consultants, timber brokers.

The fledgling Mission took its toll – some left, one even went mad. Not many put money on the Mission’s survival. But the two pioneers set out to establish the Mission with typical Jesuit bravado, connecting with those in power, collaborating with local people, identifying supporters and setting up institutions.

Although Jesuit interest in Myanmar goes back to the time of Francis Xavier, it was only with the ordination of the first Myanmar Jesuit priest, Wilbert Mireh, on May 1, 2013, that the Society of Jesus began to form its identity in the country.



The importance of learning how to do accounts, for the head of a family too.

Myanmar



Myanmar



Above, at work in the rice fields; on the previous page, below, harvest time. On the right, sunset over Bagan, a place of historical importance known as the "City of the Thousand Pagodas".

A candidate house was opened in Taunggyi, Eastern Shan State, in 1998. From the first batch, three joined – but they soon left. "I was afraid. The long Jesuit formation would have made me an old priest," said the first candidate to leave. He became a diocesan priest. Undeterred, recruitment continued, with the local nuns and priests ensuring a steady flow of candidates from major ethnic groups: Kayahs, Kachins, Chins and Karens. In 1999, the novitiate opened, although officially there was no novitiate, only young men "supporting the nearby centre for the handicapped". Novice master Fr Wardi Saputra, of the Indonesian Province, worked tirelessly with novices for the next 11 years. His hard work has yielded results – three of his novices are now priests, and scores of others are doing philosophy and theology studies.

With no name, no home, no institutions, the pioneers ventured into apostolic endeavours. In 1999, an English language institute, *Saint Aloysius Gonzaga*, was established in Taunggyi. It is today recognized as a quality centre of learning for local people of all religions. Occasional retreats and seminars were also conducted there.

In 2003, the candidate house moved to Yangon. More Jesuits, from Korea and Philippines, joined the Mission. *Campion Language Institute* was established in 2005 in the heart

of the city, drawing students from all strata of society. As Myanmar has the highest mortality rate for mothers during childbirth in Southeast Asia, *Campion* established a community health workers training programme that reached out to the remote villages. At the request of the Bishops Conference, the Jesuits also conducted nationwide English language diagnostic tests for seminarians entering into philosophy and theology studies.

Access to the poor was limited. Work among the poor was a dangerous activity, and the few NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization) allowed to enter worked under suffocating surveillance. The socialist government declared it had "solved" poverty. Yet Myanmar was one of the poorest countries in the world. War and want displaced millions, and poverty drove the youth into unsafe migration. Thailand and Malaysia host millions of illegal migrants from Myanmar. Human trafficking is rampant in the border districts. Mindful that the *Jesuit Refugee Service* had been blacklisted for "support to insurgents" for its work with refugees along the border, the Mission's response was guarded.

That changed on the night of May 3, 2008 when *Cyclone Nargis* struck Myanmar with devastating force. More than 150,000 people perished in a single night and 2.4 million were left homeless. Jesuits were swift to help the Church respond



to the disaster. The universal Society reached out with generosity. A *Myanmar Rehabilitation Initiative* (MRI) was formed and it eventually built 3,500 shelters, three monasteries and seven schools, and enabled nearly 30,000 children to return to school. *Disaster Risk Reduction* training sessions were also designed for NGOs and church groups. Today MRI continues to work in the slums shelter programme, supported by the Jesuit parish in Singapore. Recently, at the request of the Church, a social research centre, *Arrupe Research Centre*, was opened. It is headed by Dr Walter Fernandes SJ, a social scientist from India.

Myanmar is a great example of how human relationships and social capital developed long ago can facilitate our mission today. The Maryland Jesuits left an indelible mark in the memory of a young Church, so the Church continues to seek our services as it comes out of its long night of silent tears, oppression and confiscation of its lands and institutions. Its constituency is the ethnic communities, highly challenged economically and culturally. Regular requests for social mission retreats and courses for clergy from 16 dioceses keep us busy, and our support is sought in bringing Catholic Social Teaching to the laity. In 2013, the Jesuits helped the Church reset its socio-pastoral agenda and find its voice in civil society. We also helped design and conduct a national seminar on *New Myanmar – Challenges and Opportunities to the Church*, resulting in the Bishops Conference's first pastoral letter. Jesuits have helped to set up the *Justice and Peace Commission* and on advocacy approaches. In mid-2013, the *East Asian Pastoral Institute* began a collaboration with the Bishops Conference to conduct its first course on Psycho-Social integration, which helped the Bishops arrive at a code of conduct for professional standards.

Formation remains the priority. Since 1999, the Mission has seen a significant increase in vocations and for the last three years, novices from the Thai Region have come to Myanmar for their early formation. As the number of local Jesuits increases, more men are available for vo-

cation promotion and the various apostolates. Scholastics played a major role in the mission planning workshop in December 2013, and there are plans for scholastics to work among those displaced by war, as well as in education. One scholastic is already deeply engaged in a huge micro credit project for farmers in the Delta. For the young Myanmar Jesuits, exciting challenges await on their doorstep.

Of the 45 Jesuits in the Myanmar Mission, only 10 priests and three scholastics are from other Provinces. What began as an ad hoc Mission has firmly taken root with formation, education and social outreach benefiting hundreds? Jesuits from six countries are proving to be the “scaffolding” for the local Jesuit structures being built to serve the Church and nation in the long term.

As the country opens up and foreign capital flows in, Myanmar stands at the threshold of a new world of hope. That the Society of Jesus, despite a wounded history of death, expulsion and hidden life, finds itself at this exciting frontier is both grace and challenge. The new generation of local Myanmar Jesuits welcomes that challenge.



FATHER WILBERT MIREH

Father Wilbert was ordained on 1st May 2013. He is the first Myanmar-born Jesuit to be ordained since the Society was founded 474 years ago. He writes: “God’s salvation plan for the world is beyond anyone’s comprehension; and yet, it is central to our faith. In the Myanmar context, I believe that the Jesuits have been called by the Lord to join him in carrying out his plan. As the first Myanmar Jesuit priest, I believe that my vocation is not mere chance but an important part of the divine mission. I am thankful for the vocation and hopeful of ‘a good running race’ amidst the joys and the challenges.

The mission experience in the country is both a spiritual privilege and a practical challenge. Given the fact that many people are needy in many ways, we can do much for the betterment of the people; but we are also uncertain about many practical things. Even the existence of the Society of Jesus is still to be “official” in the country. Nevertheless, the Lord who has called us to join him in the mission will always be with us to accomplish it.”

An Inculturation Challenge

Franco Martellozzo, S.J.

Fr. Franco Martellozzo, a missionary in Chad, shares his thoughts on the pastoral initiatives of the Church in Chad in the context of inculturation. He describes “Mag Nay”, a traditional ceremony of reconciliation, as an example of ancestral experiences that can help in acquiring a better understanding of Eucharistic catechesis. Studies are under way for a greater integration of the cultural values in various Christian celebrations.

Centre, navigation on the River Chari. Below and on the following page, several scenes of propitiatory sacrifices in honour of the ancestors or of the river genie

In 2011 the team of priests of the Diocese of Mongo had withdrawn for several days, first in Bongor and then in Bakara, “to dream up our Church’s future” and on the basis of these dreams to open some new routes. One of the first remarks was that rural catechesis in the Parishes of Baro, Bitkine and Dadouar was in a deathly crisis and that this was partly due to the inappropriate national method. The decision was taken to think up a new evangelization for the rural communities in our countryside relying on a suitable catechesis. With God’s grace, a project came into being and developed from this meeting.

This project rests on three pillars:

a. *Catechesis is not one activity among others.* Rather it must become the spearhead of all a rural community’s activities. It will therefore also be at the heart of developmental activities. It is in the name of their faith in God the Creator, the Father of Jesus, that catechumens respect nature. They do not abuse the goods of the earth – and in particular drink – they use water properly, keep their house clean and cultivate their fields well. This was also an intuition of Marcel Ngarindi, a catechist from Bousso in the 1970s; spurred by the Faith, he was responsible for bringing about the development of an entire region.

b. *The texts of the national catechism must become real food* for children and for the illiterate. This requires a method inspired by modern pedagogical techniques for the understanding of the texts and their application to life. We thus decided to put all the texts into images, thanks to Idriss Bakai, a local artist (and this has already been done).

c. *Knowledge of the ancestral culture is funda-*

mental for a discernment of the inculturation of catechesis.

“...I am thinking not of an archaizing identity that devours itself, but of one that consumes the world, in other words that pillages the entire present in order better to evaluate the past and, even more, to prepare the future. For in the end how is it possible to measure the ground covered if one knows neither where one has come from nor where one wants to go?” (Aimé Césaire, *conférence des peuples noirs de la diaspora*, Miami, 2004).

The New Catechesis proposes once and for all to integrate the ancestral values into the Good News, along with a harmonious development linked to the rural context of the communities in Guéra. Here is one example among many: the Eucharist.

It is the important celebration of *Mag Nay* among the Mouroum which is also celebrated, with different names, among other peoples: it is called *Tar Napa* by the Kenga, *Momti* by the Dangeléat and *Zaym* by the Migami.

The Parishes of Bousso and of Bailli are formed of communities that belong to different ethnic groups, each with its own language and customs. Nevertheless they have in common an annual celebration to mark the unity of the clans around their respective ancestors.

The expression *Mag Nay* is difficult to translate. *Mag* means literally “the genie of the tribe”; *Nay* means quite simply “the moon” and consequently every feast linked to the lunar cycle.

These are some of its important moments: 1 – starting in October the elders who observe this tradition begin a very rigorous fast and proclaim a period of general reconciliation. Enemies are





reconciled. 2 – On the established day, all the kinsfolk of the clan's chief meet at his home to listen to his words and to seal their communion with a libation of beer. Great festivities then follow which celebrate unity, peace and prosperity.

1. *The fasts of the elders.* The elders who observe the rites of this feast and who originally came from the villages of Mourum, Tolum and Bembare (of Ngabri stock) meet to decide on when their fast will begin at the end of October, as soon as the harvest starts. They paint their body with red kaolin and attach to their huts special leaves that are called *Kam Nay*. They proclaim a period of reconciliation and peace: "Do nothing evil, do not kill, etc.", and those who intend to make reparation for their shortcomings come to them with victims for sacrifices of expiation and blessing. Indeed anyone who is not reconciled with his brother has no right to share in the *ritual libation on the day of the great feast*.

As for the holders of *Mag Nay*, they make a very strict fast: they must abstain from sexual relations and from eating good sauces and are prohibited from walking on beaten tracks, from washing themselves and from cutting their hair or their nails. etc.

What does this penance mean? The elders say that it is to expiate the people's sins; but to expiate them before whom? And why? Before the *ancestors* of course, but here, as elsewhere, it is impossible to separate the ancestors from the totemic god, *Mag*, and indeed from the Universal Creator God whom they call *Su*.

It is far harder to answer the question: "why expiate?" My meetings with the elder have convinced me that this penance has a highly spiritual

value and has absolutely nothing to do with magical intervention. This way of depriving himself of material goods is de facto a recognition that every good is actually given to us by the ancestors, by *Mag* and by *Su*. It is a radical way of saying: "all the goods of which I deprive myself come from *You*; do not deprive the people of these goods because of their sins".

The penance lasts quite a long time. Finally the elders bury the *Kam Nay* leaves and gather to proclaim the immediate preparation of the celebration: the preparation of the food and drink, the summons of the absent, etc.

2. *A reminder of the law of the ancestors and libation.* On the established day each community of the clan meets at the home of the clan chief who is usually the oldest. There are several clans in a village, but it is the clan that has been closest to the holders of *Mag Nay* in the past that has the right of precedence in making this visit. The ceremony begins at one o'clock in the afternoon and no one is entitled to touch the beer before it. The chief of the clan, his grandchildren on his right and on his left, stands in front of the whole clan that has gathered, men, women and children. He first makes the invocation of the ancestors: "You, my ancestors..." (he begins by naming the first one and continues to the last, his own father, who has bequeathed this feast to him as a legacy) "and it is now up to me to continue this custom!"

He then proclaims the law of the ancestors in the form of a curse. "If I have possessed my brother's wife, if I have killed with fetishes, if I have stolen, etc., may my life be taken from me before the feast next year! And you, my children, if you have failed to obey these laws, you will not be alive to celebrate this feast in the future!"

After these words two children present a calabash to him that contains a "gombo" sauce (a



Mag Nay

Chad

Fr. Franco Martellozzo, the author of this article, in priestly attire. Fr. Franco has been a missionary in Chad for many years and has done a great deal of research on the inculturation of the Gospel in the African cultures. On the following page, a mother in front of her wood stove and the church of Bousso, one of the parishes in which Fr. Martellozzo has worked.



special sauce based on local vegetables). Each participant then advances to line up in front of the elder who, as a blessing, oils his or her body with this “gombo” sauce, saying: “*Rosi kul lom*” (may you be happy!). The children then present a calabash of beer to him, he takes a small sip making gestures expressing joy and then passes the same calabash to the children. Everyone tastes it making joyful gestures. This is followed by the burst of the small tom-tom, called the *banjin*, that announces to the other clans of the village that the ritual libation is accomplished. Everyone then begins the ceremony for himself.

This is the description of Gabriel Ratangar, a catechist who died in 1998 and who had experienced the ceremony in his natal village as a child (cf. Ratangar: *Il difficile incontro con la fede cattolica*, Padua, 2002). It should be noted that it is the only ceremony in which the women and children fully take part. I even wonder whether this first part of the *Mag Nay* is not the most ancient root stock of the traditions of the Mberi-Mouroum region on to which the initiatory ceremonies and their secrets were later grafted.

I would also like to record the elder’s prayer in its entirety as it is found today in the *Mouroum* language. This is the translation: “Today’s sun will see a being die, whether it is the baby chicken of the hen or one of the young of man. You, my ancestor, have imparted this custom to me, your son, as your ancestors (he pronounces the names of all known ancestors) did before you! Therefore I ask you to give me your help with the sacrifice I am accomplishing today!”

“If I have stolen, breaking your law, or if I

have slept with my brother’s wife, etc. may misfortune be upon me who am sacrificing here! And if among you who are present here any man has stolen or if he has slept with his brother’s wife, or, etc. may misfortune be upon his head!”

In setting the gourd of beer upon his tools, he says: “may the beer that I hold in my hand grant that these tools continue the same goodness as previously and give me results! All these goods that *Su* gave the ancestors, and may misfortune befall the one who harbours an evil plot against me!” (M. Ngarindi Diamra 25 September 1993).

It is then that the festivities explode and mark the beginning of the ceremony for the other clans too. However on the afternoon of the third day all those who do not belong to the clan must leave. The elder then dispenses new advice and ends by anointing the shoulder of each one of the clan’s members with sacred oil, while pronouncing words of blessing.

COMMENTS

1 Here is a first important observation! If the religion of the genies seems like that of the bogey man who watches over his melon field, the religion of *Mag Nay* seems above all like the one that preserves the unity of the group and the solidity of the social fabric. Death threats are of course included; however, they are no longer closed into an individual-genie relationship but rather fit into a far broader one: individual-clan group-genie-ancestor.

2 It should also be recognized that this great annual ceremony has many features in common with the Jewish Passover and, especially, with the celebration of the Eucharist. To sum up:

- *Mag Nay* celebrates the Law of the Ancestors who save the clan, each of whose members, including women and children, drink the sacrificial beer as a sign of vital communion.
- The Jewish Passover celebrates the liberation of the Jewish ancestors and the Covenant on Sinai. Infidelity to this Covenant leads to the death of the Jewish people. They relive the salvation of old through the meal of the Paschal Lamb.
- The Eucharist celebrates the liberation of

all humanity through the death of Jesus, the Lamb of God and our ancestor in the New Covenant with whom we communicate under the species of the bread and the wine.

I had confirmation of this intuition in 1993 in the village of Sara Moursal. In my homily, after I had made the connection between *Mag Nay* and the Eucharist, two very elderly Christians wished to meet me. They declared: “previously we understood nothing about Mass. Now at last it all appears to us as simple and very clear”.

3 Here therefore is a path to take – far better than that of the genies – for an inculturated proclamation of the Christian Revelation. To achieve this we need a *Eucharistic catechesis* that integrates all the problems, in the first place those of the Christian community and then those of society, like the celebration of *Mag Nay* that included the solution of all the clan’s problems. Yes indeed, all the problems of society which (today) are no longer the same as they were in the past. Moreover it is at this level that each community must reflect: what are the problems that beset it today? Misunderstanding in the community but also famine due to drought, the exploitation of money-lenders, alcoholism, drugs, the lack of agricultural technology, the lack of water and the break-up of families, etc.

It was in this broad Eucharistic perspective that in the year 2000, as a visible sign of their Baptism, the catechumens of Baro repaired the large dam that was later to feed the village’s well. The village had been without water because the large dam was broken and no one had taken the initiative to repair it. During a retreat, becoming aware of the link between their faith and the social well-being of the village, the young candidates for Baptism decided to tackle the great dam with wheelbarrows, spades and pickaxes. The water returned to the well and, following their example, an association subsequently came into being which today includes all the Muslim populations in the region and has since built hundreds of dams. Faith thus became water and life.

The most important fact is that this association for building dams recreated the unity of society which the new religions, both Muslim and Chris-



tian, had shattered. And this is no small achievement in a region where religious extremists seek to upset the balance between religions to impose a dangerous vision that leads to conflict.

In this Eucharistic perspective, open to all races and religions and fraternally committed to seeking the solution to society’s problems, all the Catholic communities in Chad can find a foundation, their food and their fulfilment. To this end, after years of reflection and experimentation, the Vicariate of Mongo has launched a new catechesis in our Kenga, Dangaleat and Migami countrysides.

Translated by Kate Marcelin-Rice

Catechesis



The comic book is a visual art representing the feelings, the culture and the aspirations of a country. Its heroes are part of popular local imagination. If they're young they represent the passion, the enthusiasm, the difficulties and the hopes, but most of all the vision young people have of their world and their future. The societal contexts of heroes allow us to discover in and behind their histories a description of the societies themselves. Some comic book heroes have taken up domicile in a past of a certain type, in a future or in an imaginary world; others live among us, but with super-powers. In every case they are representative of our hopes, our fears, but also of the local view of the world and of our history. Finally, certain heroes make use of humor to describe the dysfunctional character

of our society. Whether they are called Mafalda or Patoruzito in Argentina, Corto Maltese or Pepito in Italy, Gaston or Tintin in Belgium and in France, Prince Vaillant, Spiderman, or Calvin and Hobbes in the United States, Turma da Monica, El Jabato or Mortadel and Filemon in Spain, Astro Boy or Dragon Ball in Japan, The Moomins in Finland -- not to mention others -- they are there to make us dream, smile, reflect or live their great adventures. To know the different comic book figures is to know a people. Comic books are sometimes so tightly bound to a culture that, translated into another language in another country, they have only very limited success. The stamp-issue on local comic books fit into the policy of certain countries to print stamps about natural riches (flora and fauna) or ar-



Stamps and Comics

Roland Francart, S.J.

chitectural or artistic styles proper to a country. So doing, these countries invite us to discover their paper heroes, but through them an aspect of their culture and its richness.

Brother Roland Francart, S.J. (South Belgium and Luxembourg), geographer and amateur/expert on comic books, has collected postage stamps and tracked editions of courier-stamps since he was very young. His collection features at times Geography (one stamp per country), then Hagiography (one stamp per Saint or Blessed of the calendar), and then Comic Books (one stamp per hero). For this last category he has formulated lists, established catalogues, created (with a French friend) a trimesterly review called *Philabulle* which gives announces novelties in real stamps, in personalized stamps, in cancellations, etc. of comic book personages around the entire world. He has mounted many philatelic exhibitions in Brussels, Lille, Paris and especially in Angoulême, Comic Book capital of the world. He combines this specialty with directing the Centre Religieux d'Information et d'Analyse de la Bande Dessinée (CRIABD) which he founded in Brussels in 1985 whose purpose is to promote Christian comic books (Biblical subjects or Lives of the Saints). The Jesuit university of Namur stores 1,000 albums in French, and more than 1,000 albums in 40 other languages are preserved at the Catholic University of Leuven (Kadoc).

Sites: <http://philabulle.free.fr>, www.criabd.com and <http://criabd.over-blog.com>

Translated by John J. O'Callaghan, S.J.

