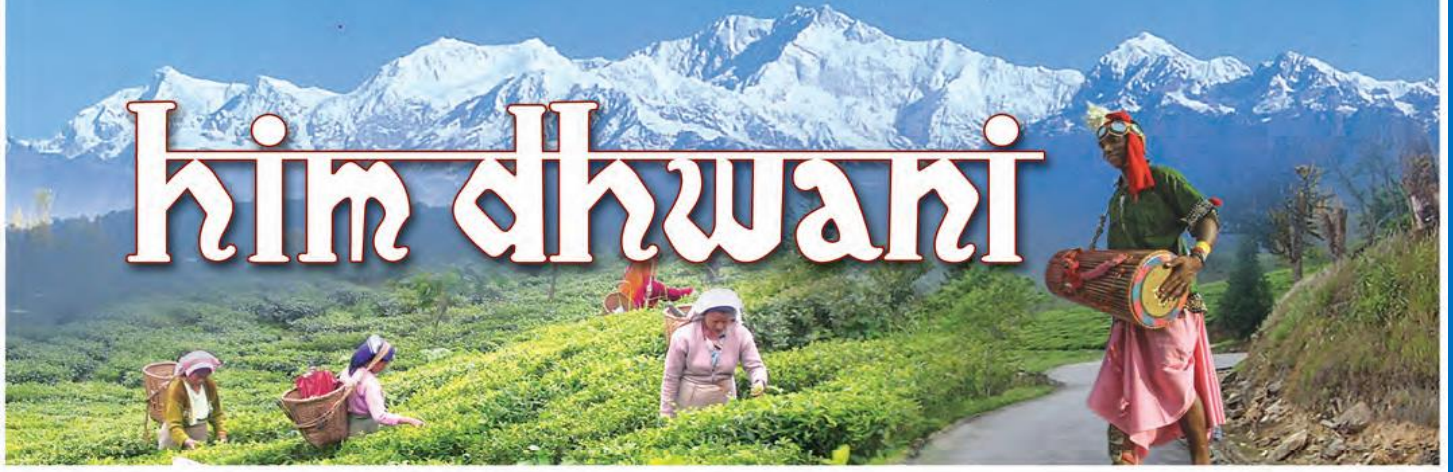


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No.01

Newsletter of Darjeeling Jesuits

February 2024

PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAM

FEBRUARY

- 1- Province Consult
- 3- Curia outing
- 5-7 Nepal
- 8- Meeting (Service of Faith)
- 9- Meeting (GB, LC, Namchi)
- 10- Meeting (Superiors)
- 11- Meeting - Higher Education
- 12- Meeting (Jalpaiguri Diocese)
- 14- Meeting (Budget)
- 17-28 JCSA

MARCH

- 1- St Joseph's School, Darjeeling
- 2- Consult
- 4-7 Nepal
- 8- Meeting (Treasurers/Ministers)
- 9-17 Visit (Bhutan)
- 21- Manresa, Kalimpong

APPOINTMENTS BY FATHER PROVINCIAL

- Fr Peter Bhujel – Assigned to Nepal
Fr Roshan Minj – Tertianship, Shembaganur
Fr Alphonse Lepcha – Tertianship, Sitagarah
Fr Binay Xavier Kandulna – Tertianship, Kandy

POPE'S INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY

For the Terminally Ill: The Holy Father encourages prayers "so that terminally ill patients and their families always receive necessary medical and human care and support."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 10th Feb – Superior's meeting at 9.30 AM at PJR, Matigara
- Province Assembly – 14th May (PM) to 16th May (PM) at Matigara
- DSS Province Retreat – 20th May to 28th May at Matigara

Psycho-Spiritual Program

We are organizing a Psycho-Spiritual Integration program for Priests and Religious from 30th June to 4th August. Resource Persons: Fr Joseph Parakad SJ and his team. Those interested may contact Fr Xavier Alangaram. (Ph. 9679323924)

ST XAVIER'S SCHOOL, ALIPURDUAR

Christmas was qualitatively spent by Fr Siby Joseph, being in Alipurduar, Fr Santy Mathew with his family in Kerala and Fr Vincent George in Lepcha Busty respectively. After the Christmas vacation, the classes began on 3 January. The 2023-2024 ISC and ICSE batches began their Pre-Board examinations on

4 January. On the 5th, our new Provincial, Fr Shajumon C.K. and on the 10th Fr Joseph Victor visited us. We inaugurated a small feeder School in Kamakhyaguri. On 7 January a small programme was organized. Some 30 students, admitted in Nursery to Class 2, have already begun their classes. On 11 January, *Think Tac* Workshop was successfully

conducted for classes 5 – 8, followed by one for the teachers. We began our Winter Routine from 17 January. On the 23rd, Admission Tests for Classes 1 – 9 were conducted. And on the 25th the Class photos were clicked. **Fr Santy** attended the Council's 66th ASISC Conference in Hyderabad. Presently, the Second Semester Examinations along with various on-going School-cum-Community endeavours keep us all busy.

Fr Vincent George

ST PETER'S, GAYAGANGA

The faithful of the parish at Gungaram village were privileged to have **Fr Shajumon C.K.**, the newly appointed Provincial, for the Christmas vigil Mass in the newly consecrated church at Gungaram. They accorded him an informal welcome soon after the Mass. Fr Provincial made his annual visitation of the community on 9th and 10th January. **Fr Gabriel Tirkey's** birthday was celebrated on 11 January with a community Mass. On the same day we received the sad news of the passing away of his older sister **Mrs Lucy Tirkey** in Chhattisgarh. The School reopened for the academic year 2024 on 4 January and on the same day the staff had a day of seminar on Changing Educational Responsibility: a New Perspective by **Fr Sunny Jacob (JAM)**, Asst Secretary of Global Jesuit Education, Ireland.



India's Republic Day was celebrated with much pomp and gaiety with a two and a half hour long scintillating and spectacular parade, patriotic dances and drills by the students of the seven institutions within Gayaganga campus. Hundreds of parents, the general public and several priests and sisters turned up to witness the annual feature. **Capt. Anupum Dey (VM) G**, Chief Operation Officer, Air Force Station, Bagdogra was the Chief Guest. He was accompanied by another 16 Air Force officers and personnel. **Rt Rev Vincent Aind**, Bishop of Bagdogra and Rev. **Fr Shajumon C.K.**, the Provincial were the Guests of Honour. The Chief Guest, in his address, highlighted the values enshrined in India's constitution and how the Jesuits impart those

values to our students while Bishop Vincent focused on Unity in Diversity: the rich multi-cultural heritage of India and how every one of us must carefully preserve this unity in diversity. Though NCC was commissioned in the school some five years ago, they received the uniform only about a week ago and the cadets' presence in full uniform added color to the parade the entire programme. **Fr Simon Kerketta**, **Fr Nabor Dungdung**, **Fr Peter Pappu**, and **Fr Cherian Maliekal** made short home trips while **Fr Gabriel** made a visit to Christu Raja Hospital, Kannur, for a weeklong Ayurvedic treatment. He said he feels much better after the treatment. On being sent by the Bishop and representing the diocese of Bagdogra, **Fr Timothy Tirkey** attended the Conference of Diocesan priests in India (CDPI) meet from January 23 to 26 in Jaipur.

Fr Cherian Maliekal

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, DARJEELING

After the New Year celebrations, the month of January was filled with a plethora of vacations for the school and the community. "Baal Kunj 2024" - a winter camp for the underprivileged children of Darjeeling hills was organized by St Joseph's school. We were delighted in having **Mr Neeraj Agarwal**, a North Point alumni from London as the main guest during the opening ceremony. Each week we had different teachers from the school who volunteered in carrying out various activities for the children. It was also an overwhelming moment in witnessing the children participate with great enthusiasm.

At the community, we had the birthday celebrations of **Sch. Ujwal Kerketta (RAN)** on January 5th and **Sch. Rohan Ignatius (DEL)** on January 28th. This year the vacation has had a scintillating charm on our community. **Fr Stanley Verghese** and **Br P.D Vincent** have gone for their home visits. They would be meeting the probable candidates in Kerala and Mangalore. The scholastics have been sent to other communities to do their ministries across the province. The month concluded with the regents having a picnic on January 28th at M. M. Tarai.

Sch. Aatish Prabhu

ST VINCENT'S, HATIGHISA

The academic year officially opened on 4 January. In response to NEP, we introduced PRE-KG this academic year. 230 students from High School and 174 students from Primary were newly admitted this year. We have started NSS and are also training

the boys for basketball. **Fr Shajumon C. K.**, our new provincial, addressed the staff on 10 January. He complimented all of them for their wonderful service and motivated them to become more committed in their human development. On the 13th, the staff went on a picnic at Dudhia, the day was filled with fun and happiness. Smart boards will soon be used for teaching prekindergarten children in primary school. The school's annual sports competitions were held on the 24th and 25th, concluding on Republic Day with lively dances, final sports events, and prize distribution. On this occasion, we honoured **Mrs Munna Sanyasi**, who retired from the school after more than 30 years of service. She was the event's most important guest.



We gave farewell to her on that day. On our campus, the hostel boys and girls thoroughly enjoyed their picnic. They played, moved around, and cooked throughout the day. There was yummy food at the end of the day. On the 28th, **Sch. Lawrence Mudiappan** went to the regent's picnic at M. M. Tarai.

In mid-January Construction of the culvert began, and we will soon be able to get onto our land across the river. **Fr Alex Beck** organised a picnic for 130 Krush Veer children. **Fr Lawrence Thanislaus** travelled to Tamil Nadu to attend the mass of remembrance on his brother's and mother's death anniversaries.

Sch. Lawrence Mudiappan

NORTH BENGAL ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, RAJGANJ

On 3 January, we began new semester classes with a common assembly in the auditorium wherein the Principal **Fr Lalit Turkey** led the gathering with a prayer invoking God's blessing upon all for the New Year and shared some of his thoughts and concerns. Since last year, the college has introduced a monthly assembly that starts with a prayer and ends with the national anthem after some inputs are given on various themes. The Darjeeling Provincial, **Fr Shajumon C.K.** came on 3 January afternoon to visit

the Jesuits and on the following morning he blessed the 2 floors of the third wing of the college – named Loyola Block-II before addressing the staff and students who had gathered. In both the campuses, after classes in the first half, the second half has been dedicated for sports activities which is bringing a lot of cheers to students who otherwise would like to remain home in the chilly morning that we are witnessing since the beginning of the New Year. Besides these, various co-curricular activities are being organised.

In Siliguri Campus, **Fr Sanjeev Lakra**, the Vice-Principal of the campus, exclusively organised a 2-day fun-filled event named 'Sporting Triumph'. Social Service Cell and AICUF combined to organise a social outreach program by visiting and spending time at an old-age home (Apnagar) near Kawakhali. On 22 Jan, Coca Cola sponsored 'Coke-Studio' organised a half-day musical fest where a budding bollywood singer **Samyak Prasana** thrilled our students. Earlier in the week one of the students, **Lazeem Anee Lepcha**, a 6th Semester student of Political Science, after participating in university organised Adventure Camp, was selected to the national level Adventure Camp to be held in Dharamshala, HP by the Ministry of Youth Affairs. We also had a monthly 'Faculty Lecture'- another good practice that has been initiated wherein following the lecture a very fruitful interactive session and plenty of intellectual discourse take place. **Fr John Kennedy** gave a one day seminar to the teachers of Loreto School, Panighata on Personal Development and Team Building.

Fr Lalit Turkey

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, DARJEELING

St Joseph's College students showcased their exceptional talents and secured first place in the group dance and declamation contest, both held at District level in Darjeeling organized by the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, West Bengal. Buoyed by their success at the district level, the triumphant St Joseph's College team participated to the grand stage of the Sata Level Yuva Utsav 2024 at the Utsav Auditorium in Cooch Behar from January 23 to 24, organised by the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, West Bengal, in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. The journey from district triumphs to state-level exemplifies the

commitment and excellence embodied by the students, reflecting the values of the Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India. This is also a platform for our talented youth to come together and showcase their skills alongside peers from various parts of the state. The winter vacation was



utilized for undertaking essential maintenance and repair works within the campus. Notable among these tasks are the bituminous carpeting of the entire campus, the reconstruction of the college gate, and the college fence. The community members are making use of this time for their research activities, home visits and spiritual renewal.

Fr Donatus Kujur

LOYOLA COLLEGE, NAMCHI

Fr Francis George gave orientation classes to the Tertians of the Congregation of Jesus at St Mary's Convent, Namchi on Eco-Spirituality based on the encyclical letter 'Laudato Si' of Pope Francis and the apostolic letter of Pope Francis' 'Laudato Dei' during the first week of January 2024. **Fr Ajay Raj Lakra** was at home for about two weeks during the first half of January 2024 and returned on 14 January. The Jesuit Community of Loyola Academy, Secunderabad spent about 2 days at LCE as part of the community sharing and spiritual refreshment. They visited important tourist places in Namchi. This was an occasion for the President of Xavier Board, **Fr Dr L Joji Reddy, SJ** to visit our college. **Fr Francis George** attended JHEASA's annual conference at St Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata from 26th to 29th January on the theme: "Discernment-Networking- Collaboration (DNC) where is the Spirit calling us". **Fr Justin Thiraveyam** spent his entire winter holiday at St Francis Xavier Parish, Sakyong taking care of the parish in the absence of **Fr Benny Paul**, the Parish Priest. He returned to the

community on 31 January after having had a fruitful pastoral ministry over a month.

Fr Francis George

ST PAUL'S PARISH, KURSEONG

On 4 January **Fr Peter Jong Lepcha** led nineteen Christeen children for a one day trekking-cum-rosary recitation. The children walked for eight hours through rough and treacherous paths. From 8 to 15 January, **Fr Peter** took special catechism classes for the Christeen children. From 8 to 11 Jan five youth from Kurseong and thirteen youth from Lalmati attended CLC retreat at Loyola Pastoral Centre. From 11 to 17 Jan, thirteen adult CLC members attended an annual retreat at Loyola Pastoral Centre. From 11 to 13 Jan, **Passang Sherpa** and **Rabita Sherpa** took twenty-one children to the annual convention of the Holy Childhood organized by the Diocese of Darjeeling at Divyavani, Darjeeling. Our children performed well during the convention, especially a short play on Baptism. From 15 to 17 Jan, **Fr Peter** and **Fr Devadhas Vargese** went to Pemling, North Sikkim for a short



visit. On the 20 Jan, **Fr Peter** and **Fr Kevin Moktan** took seventeen youth for a picnic at Shivkhola and from 20 to 21 Jan, **Fr Alphonse Lepcha** and **Fr Devadhas** took eighteen youth to Singla for an overnight picnic.

Fr Peter Jong Lepcha

LOYOLA NIWAS, UTTAR SALBARI

In December 2023, we conducted residential Marriage school for five couples. It is the first time that the marriage of five couples will be blessed in one season. It is an indication that the parish is slowly growing! The parish youth went to all the villages for Christmas Carols. **Mr Joseph Horo**, one of our parishioners, sponsored four hundred blankets for the poor which were given after carol singing in every village of the parish. **Fr Pascal Xalxo** was the main celebrant for the Christmas vigil mass.

The final profession of **Sr Anubha Toppo**, the first nun from our parish, was celebrated in Kalabari on 31 December. The parish PPC meeting was held on 7 January to plan programs for the whole year.

The Republic Day cum Sports day was observed on the 26th of January at Loyola Higher Secondary School. The local Panchayat and Panchayat samiti members were the chief guest and the guest of honor respectively. They both are old students of our Loyola School. Both were very nostalgic to come to the school and had very pleasant memories to share with the students. All the teachers and the students with 100% attendance in the previous academic session, were given prizes. All the children who scored more than 70% in the previous annual examination, were given medals. Four catholic students who scored more than 80% in the annual examination were given prizes sponsored by **Mr Joseph Horo**, one of our parishioners. **Fr Xavier Lakra, SJ** of Assam Mission spent one day with us on the 26 January.

Fr Basil Toppo

MANRESA NOVITIATE, KALIMPONG

We had a campus picnic here at Manresa on 28 December and the Cluny Novices also joined along with **Sisters Mary Magdalene, Martha, and Joshna**. It was a day of togetherness, joy, and relaxation. We also played Tambola and were delighted to receive different prizes. On 29 December, **Fr Oshish Tirkey** went to Gayaganga to attend his cousin's marriage. We welcomed the New Year 2024 with a thanksgiving adoration and vigil mass, concluding with hot chocolate and snacks around the bonfire. We resumed our Sunday neighborhood ministry after three weeks, gaining various life lessons as we listened to the joys and sorrows of the people we visited. On 9 January, the extended community members came together for the community meeting. **Fr Justin Thiraveyam** who is presently in Sakyong, also joined and provided valuable suggestions about the novitiate.

Jesuit community members from the Andhra province dropped by on January 14th on their way back to Siliguri from Namchi. The New Year witnessed a bumper harvest of turmeric, ginger, gooseberries, oranges, tapioca, cauliflowers, brollies, etc., in our novitiate. We thanked the Lord for this bountiful harvest on 'Makar Sankranti' on January 15th. **Br Gabriel Gurung** provided us with

breakfast consisting of different types of yams and tapioca. We have incorporated reading 'De Statu Societatis Isus' during meals as a table reading after having classes on it. On 23 January, **Fr Jebamalai Raja**, Provincial of Chennai Province, visited Manresa, meeting with all four novices and delivering an inspirational talk, emphasizing the importance of laying a strong foundation for effective mission work. Our monthly recollection on January 25th centered on the theme 'My relationship with God.' We reflected on the significance of personal prayer, daily examination, sacraments, and living out the teachings of Jesus in our day-to-day lives. **Fr Shaji Joseph** attended the Formation Commission meeting on 25 January in Matigara, while **Fr Oshish** participated in the Vocation Promotion meeting on 27 January. On the same day, our first-year brothers embarked on their village experiments in Sakyong and Kurseong. We humbly ask for your continued prayers.

Novice Chris Derrick

SATYA NILAYAM, CHENNAI

In January 2024, a surge of energy, fresh vigour, enthusiasm, and a renewed spirit set the tone. On January 2, our community went to VGP Golden Beach Resort, immersing ourselves into the sea and had joyful water rides followed by a sumptuous lunch. From January 4 to 6, we had a spiritually enriching triduum by **Fr Paul Raj**. After the Christmas holiday break, classes resumed on January 8. On the same day, **Fr Xavier Alangaram (PCF)** visited Nepal and Darjeeling Scholastics, fostering a wonderful interaction. **Fr Dennis Soosai** enriched our gathering by joining us for a special dinner, sharing not only delicious food but also his love and heartfelt sentiments. On January 18 and



19, the National Seminar was organized at Loyola College and Satya Nilayam in Chennai. Renowned speakers addressed the theme of peace and reconciliation, delivering thought-provoking speeches. The two days were brimming with new

ideas and knowledge, creating a profound aura. On January 26, Republic Day was celebrated with a solemn acknowledgement. Homage was paid to those who sacrificed for India's constitution, and a meaningful speech added depth to the commemoration.

Sch. Ashish Soy

PRABHU JISUR GIRJA, KOLKATA

At Xavier's College, Kolkata, semester exams were held in December. **Fr Xavier Allangaram** who made an official visit to **Sch. Pilat Narzari** was cordially welcomed by the PJG Community on December 16. The honorable **Mamata Banerjee**, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, paid a visit to the campus of **St Xavier's College** on December 21 to offer her best wishes for the Christmas and New Year. On Christmas Eve, we hosted a community Christmas gathering that was full of laughter, fun, and good times. We played games, sang carols, and distributed Christmas gifts. On January 8, classes resumed for the new semesters. The 16 January was a Convocation Day at St. Xavier's College Kolkata. Among the well-known luminaries invited to the Convocation Ceremony were the Provincial and Education minister of West Bengal. Over the course of a week, PJG Community members had an official visit from **Fr Arjen Tete, SJ**, the new Provincial of Calcutta. Held on January 23 in the Dhyana Ashram grounds, a day of Formees Gathering with the topic "Collaboration among Religious" was an incredible experience. There were about 140 religious attendees at the event. As a resource person **Fr John Rogers, SJ** was invited who skillfully explained the assigned theme of "Collaboration among Religious".

Sch. Pilat Narzari

ASHA KIRAN, MANGALORE

The Scholastics in Asha Kiran finished our 1st semester exam on 10 December. The community organized ITI courses such as electrical, plumbing,

automobile and stitching in St Aloysius ITI College, Mangalore. We had an Ignatian spirituality course as well for one day. All the scholastics were sent to different mission stations for Christmas celebration. **Sch. Sunit Minj** went to Mundgurd and **Sch. Praful Lakra** went to Vijayapur, north Karnataka. On 2 January, we began 2nd semester classes in the college. From 10th to 13th January, **Fr Xavier Alangaram**, the PCF, came for an official visit to meet the Darjeeling Scholastics. In the community 3rd year Scholastics began conducting TEDx talks on various topics. On 17 January, the community organized a Zoom meeting for the young religious all over India on the topic: "discerning God's will in ecological crisis". On 26 January we participated in the CRI Meeting along with seven congregations.

Sch. Praful Lakra

DE NOBILI COLLEGE, PUNE

From December 27 to 30, the scholastics in De Nobili College joined the Triduum guided by **Fr Jerry, SJ** and renewed their vows. The Theologians and the Philosophers of DNC had a meal together on the New Year day after the community Mass. We had the reflection and sharing based on DSS (De Statu Societatis Iesu) chapter VI which was organised on 11th and 12th January. We held the annual Chotanagpur gathering at the DNC on January 14th. It was a wonderful opportunity to unite and experience a sense of community. **Fr Xavier Alangaram**, the PCF, spent two days with us which was a moment of grace and blessing. We had a meaningful province mass on 15 January praying for all the Jesuits of our province and for the benefactors. We had the South Zone Cultural Evening on 19 January, and it was an occasion for us to learn more about the southern states and their culture. To unite the people of Chotanagpur, a hockey tournament was organised at the DNC on the Republic Day.

Sch. Valerian Kujur

REST IN PEACE

Fr Jose Panadan SJ, (GUJ)	54/33	on 13 January
Fr Leo Florent Tirkey SJ, (MAP)	82/61	on 13 January
Br Benedict Rosario SJ, (KAR)	76/59	on 13 January
Fr Ignatius Fernandes SJ, (BOM)	75/56	on 19 January
Mrs Josephine Bhujel (92), Mother of Fr Peter Bhujel on 28th January		