



Prabhu Jisu Residence, Post Box 3, Matigara – 734 010, Dt Darjeeling, West Bengal

No 9

Newsletter of Darjeeling Jesuits

October ~ 2020

### From the Provincial's Desk



31 October is the feast of St Alphonus Rodriguez, a Jesuit Brother, who worked for forty-six years as a porter of the Jesuit College in Palma de Maiorca, where his saintly life involved doing simple and repetitive menial jobs. He accepted the responsibility assigned to him with the conviction that it was God's will. He was free of egoistic underpinnings. He worked truly in the spirit of the Ignatian Magis. His dedication to a boring job continues to inspire Jesuits the art of hospitality. He blended spiritual conversation with business while attending visitors. As a result he never experienced a dull moment in his life. What gave depth, appeal and credibility to his convictions was his personalized spirituality. He was a man of prayer. He inspired Peter Claver to volunteer for the missions of South America. May the feast of St Alphonus Rodriguez inspire us in our routine responsibilities to live abundantly the life that Christ has bequeathed us! Let us continue to pray for more vocations to brothers in the Society in the context of their decreasing numbers.

### PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAM

#### October 2020

- 03 Final Profession at Matigara
- 10 NBSXC GB Meeting at Matigara  
NBSXC Trust Meeting at Matigara
- 16-17 Interviews, Gayaganga
- 13 Finance Committee Meeting
- 19-23 Visitation – Namchi if travel ban lifted
- 26-28 JCSA Meeting
- 31 DJNB General Body Meeting

#### HLDRC

In the month of September we completed the drinking water project of HLDRC at Ramjhora tea estate. It was a great challenge digging four hundred and ten feet deep to find water. The spread of Covid-19 was an added constraint to the progress of the project. One hundred and five families benefit from this project. This would not have been possible without the support of **Mrs. Patrizia Bianconi, SOS-INDIA**. **Fr Pascal** hopes to undertake more such programs in the most neglected areas of the Doors.



The *Lok Manch* platform, along with the Uttar Bengal Chai Mazdoor Adhikar (UBCMAM) is spearheading an awareness

campaign on food security entitlement and on just wages in the tea gardens of the Terai and Dooars. HLDRC also took the initiative to start employment training and placement programs for the unemployed boys and girls at Matigara. Thirty students are presently undergoing training in computer hardware and networking courses. Due to Covid-19, the students attend the course in two batches, one in the morning and another in the afternoon. A retail management course for three months with job placements is set to begin from November 2020. The program is supported by Canadian Jesuits International (CJI) as part of Covid-19 response to migrants and youth. **Fr Amid Kujur** teaches English language and basic management skills for the above courses. He also accompanies HLDRC field staff to provide additional inputs in their programs.



*Fr Pascal Xalzo*

### MANRESA JESUIT NOVITIATE, KALIMPONG





The novitiate community was extremely happy to have **Fr John Wilfred Lobo**, the provincial, who had his official annual visitation from August 28-29. Having met all the Jesuits of the community, he interacted with the novices for more than an hour and impressed upon them with a thought-provoking phrase, "The grace of God is in our midst, we need to experience it." On August 29, **Fr Rozario (RAN)** spoke to the novices about the Assam Mission of Ranchi Jesuits. **Fr Director** made his annual retreat in Darjeeling from Sept 10-17. Due to the lockdown, we have creative indoor weekend ministries, accompanied by spiritual conversation. The experiences have been quite fulfilling.

*Novices Sushant & Ashish*

### ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, LENGPUI AIZAWL

After living six months in absolute solitude, I welcomed my new companion on 6 August 2020 in the person of **Fr Philip Abraham** from Pfutsero, Nagaland. After his arrival here at Lengpui, he was 'home-quarantined' for three weeks in our residence itself. During the quarantine period he was getting acquainted with the works and people through online mode. He took charge as the Principal on 27 August. He had an extensive meeting with the staff of the college to discuss about the matters concerning online classes, semester exams, etc.

We had the final semester examinations for the final year students in the college campus from 1 to 18 September. St Aloysius College, Mangalore had requested to conduct their final semester exams from 16 to 25 September in our college for the students from Mizoram as they could not travel to Mangalore due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

We are planning to hold the first valedictory function for our first batch of college students on 3 October. In the meantime, **Fr Philip** is busy meeting important officials in MZU, Village Council, YMA, MBSE and dignitaries like the Bishop of Aizawl and other religious leaders, superiors and parish priests as a part of his initiation to his new responsibility. The construction for temporary boys' hostel is awaiting the Covid-19 lockdown to end and have smooth running of interstate transport as things for the construction and hostel paraphernalia have to be purchased from Silchar or Guwahati. **Fr Philip** is having wide range of consultations with Fathers and experts of different fields for the progress of the Mission here at Lengpui.

As the unlock 04 unfolds, we are planning to have regular consultative classes for Classes XI and XII from October. The online classes for the undergraduate students continue.

At the request of the Jesuit Community here, **Fr Melvil**, the Regional Superior of Kohima, temporarily assigned **Sch. Stephen Lalruatsaka**, who is doing his third-year Theological studies at VJ, to Lengpui Mission in consultation with **Fr Wilfred Lobo**. He will be here primarily to help **Fr Philip** in contacting the stakeholders and other important people in Mizoram. **Stephen** was here for a year for regency in 2017 – 2018.

**Deacon Joseph Zoliana (KHM)** will be in our community from 26 September till he completes his three weeks of 'home-quarantine' along with **Sch. Stephen**. He will stay here and prepare for his ordination which is due on 31 October 2020 at the Cathedral, Aizawl.

*Fr Justin*

### ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, NORTH POINT, DARJEELING

The North Point community had a day of recollection given by **Rt Rev. Bishop Stephen Lepcha**. All the dispersed community members along with the college and Kurseong communities were present. The Bishop also shared his expectation from the Jesuits working in the hills especially in the pastoral field.

No entrance tests were conducted this year for the new admissions, however, the selected candidates had an online interview with **Fr Leo** along with their parents. The online lessons



for classes III – V and live stream classes for classes VI – XII have been going on throughout the lockdown. All the students are carrying on with their online tests, assignments and projects. The North Point Weekly has now become fortnightly from this month due to increase in tests and assignments. **Frs Shaji and Boniface Joseph** made their annual retreat in the community. **Sch. David Ekka** has started his academic year with live stream classes from Regis College, Toronto. **Sch. Amit** has started his online lessons as well. During the month of September Lepcha Busty Quasi Parish witnessed nine adult Baptisms, nine received their first communion and two couples had their marriage blessed.

*Fr Anuranjan*

### LOYOLA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NAMCHI, S. SIKKIM

The third semester students organized a short online programme on the occasion of Teachers' Day on 5 September. **Fr Francis**, in his message, stressed the importance of teachers, stating that teachers are the backbone of education sector whether offline, online or blend of both. The final semester students completed their theory examination on 14 September online by the mode of 'Take Home Examination'. The same students completed their final teaching by presenting video clips of their final teaching and attending viva-voce online. The classes are progressing through online mode for the third semester students. **Fr Cherian Padiyara SJ** arrived here on 15 September and after completing eleven days of strict 'home quarantine', has joined the community as superior.

*Fr Francis*

### ST VINCENT DE PAUL – HATIGHISA

St Vincent's high school has been abuzz with prospective students seeking admissions for the new academic year. Additionally, teachers have been circulating chapter wise online material for classes IX to XII and question papers for those between the fifth and eighth grades. **Fr Lawrence Thanislaus** has initiated a spoken English course from 7 September for select students of the High School and teachers of both units (Pry + H.S). Currently in its 3<sup>rd</sup> week, two batches of 60 students and 22 teachers attend the daily sessions. We are glad to welcome to the hostel, **Peter Francis Xalxo**, a candidate from New Dooars division, whose diligent and jovial nature endears him to the other five hostellers presently with us. Despite the lockdown, the vibrant compelling spontaneity and spirit of youngsters, is never far away from the parish. **Fr Alex Beck** dedicated two weekends for creative liturgy and animation of Christ-teens and crusaders in the Church. The 12<sup>th</sup> of September drew one hundred and eight participants and the following Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, saw one hundred and thirty-one attendees. The day's program began with the Eucharistic celebration which was followed by Praise and Worship, "Music teaches Scripture Activities", storytelling and English prayer recitals. Meals on both occasions were prepared by parish youth volunteers.

**Fr Alvin Minj** has been consistently conducting Sunday meetings with the members of 'The Society of St Vincent De Paul' who are pursuing the task of beautification around the church. The community bid farewell to **Raja** who left Hatighisa on 14 September.

With 3 papers of the End semester remaining, Satya Nilayam

conducted the final year philosophy exam in the offline/written format between 22 and 26 September. I appeared for the three hour mains under the supervision of **Fr Lawrence T**, whom I am grateful to for the arrangements made and for scanning and transferring my answer scripts to the department of philosophy in Chennai. I would also like to extend my gratitude to **Fr Xavier Alangram (P.C.F)** for supporting me through these extraordinary times, especially during the run up to the exams.

*Sch. Ruell Paul SJ*

### ST PETER'S, GAYAGANGA

Covid-19 pandemic has not dampened the enthusiasm and spiritual yearning of the faithful. It was visible at various activities in the parish. On August 30, the parish had four special Masses for women to commemorate the feast of St Monica. There were arrangements for village-wise Masses for children, youth and men during weekdays. The parish had a two-weeklong classes for one hundred and three children in preparation for the First Communion. The children received the sacrament in smaller groups during five Masses. There were also a training program for twenty altar servers and marriage classes for seven couples.

**Fr Roshan** took over as the new headmaster of St Peter's Primary School on September 1. The Primary School has been brought under the High School after several decades and henceforth would function under the guidelines given by the headmaster of the High School. Tests are conducted for students of both the Primary as well as the High School, materials for which are handed over to their guardians from time to time.

After waiting for many years, St Peter's High School got permission from 16 Bengal Battalion to begin NCC, JD. Kudos to the SJ team! As of now the school is permitted to enrol 50 cadets immediately and another 50 more will be enrolled every year, as the 3<sup>rd</sup> year batch would graduate. It is hoped that the commencement of the NCC would enhance the job opportunities for NCC graduates. The first batch is likely to begin its training from early 2021. The school has begun online classes also for students of class XI. The High School distributes every month dry ration and sanitizer worth about ₹ 60,000/- through the government's midday meal scheme, benefitting 854 students from classes V to VIII.

On September 4, the community welcomed **Sch. Sujit Minj** for his regency at the High School. He stays at the hostel. After a long wait and much effort, **Sch. Deepak Jans (NEP)** and **Sch. Gorakh** managed to cross the border to Nepal on September 9. **Br Robert** made an eight-day retreat in Matigara in preparation for his final vows. **Fr Simon** gave a recollection talk to the Sisters of the Holy Cross at Hansqua before their congregational feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. **Fr Xavier Alangaram** made triduum under **Fr Cherian** in preparation for his final vows. This month, the community was delighted to welcome **Fr Kennedy**, **Fr Gabriel**, **Fr Donatus**, **Deacon Anthony** and **Sch. Lawrence (NEP)** as visitors.

*Fr Augustus*

### LOYOLA NIWAS, UTTAR SALBARI

After twelve days of stay at Tiyabon Safe Home, Chalsa (a government run quarantine centre for corona positive persons), **Fr Basil** was discharged on 29 August. **Fr Bijay** and **Fr Sebastian** have started three study centres in Totapara, Mogulkata and Kelabari, where class X students from nearby come and study. Some of our teachers go to these study centres to take classes. The centres run for five days a week. We have started two tailoring training centres in Totapara and Dhondasimla with 20 trainees each. This is made possible through Covid-19 relief projects. This will enable our people to generate income locally. We have also started distributing piglets, goats and chicken for the economically poor families so that they can generate some income. Teachers' Day was celebrated on 5 September. A short input was

given by **Fr Sebastian Minj** and **Fr Bijay Kindo**. The teachers attended the Mass and had lunch together, maintaining social distancing. **Sch. Romiyo** left Kelabari on 9 Sept to go to Bengaluru for college studies. **Sch. Krish** is with us, attending online classes of St Xavier's College, Ahmedabad. To prevent the spread of coronavirus, the parish church was closed for a month.

*Fr Basil*

### JESU ASHRAM

Patients of our outdoor leprosy clinics continue to come regularly to collect their medicine. We began admitting new patients in a very restricted way from the beginning of September. We admitted two

cases of tuberculosis, three of leprosy and two destitute women. One of the admitted is Ansari, a leprosy patient who had left Jesu Ashram against the advice of the doctors. We could not refuse admission to her because her condition was terrible with a plantar foot ulcer.



We provide medicine and food for some of our patients who stay in their own homes. Roso Pawan, a rescued woman from the streets



made remarkable progress. When she was brought into Jesu Ashram, she had a critically low level of

haemoglobin in her blood. She had to have blood transfusion. Thanks to the care of all the staff members of the leprosy section, she has received a new lease of life. We also admitted a partially paralysed person in the general ward.

Samika, a class XI student was admitted in Jesu Ashram in the beginning of this year with a severe case of tuberculosis. After having completed the full course of treatment she went home on 14 September 2020.

It was difficult to purchase vegetables during the lockdown due to covid-19 pandemic. Many a time, the parishioners of Prabhu Jesu Parish came to our rescue. We express our gratitude to all the members of Prabhu Jesu parish.

**Fr Cherian Padiyara** left Jesu Ashram on 15 September 2020 to take up the office of the superior of Loyola College of Education community, Namchi. He had been staying in Jesu Ashram since 10



Jan 2019. He taught at Jesu Niketan Primary School, a school for the children of leprosy patients

and the destitute living on the banks of river Balason. He also taught English to the students of the nursing college of Jesu Ashram.

*Fr Julius*



## SCH. SAMSON BASUMATARY WRITES FROM MUMBAI...

We attended a course on 'skills for pastoral ministries' from 3 to 5 August. It was conducted by **Mr Adrian Rosario**. We learnt valuable lessons on how to make our ministry more effective. We had another course from 17 to 22 August on 'psychosexual and spiritual processing' given by **Fr Dudley Mendonca SJ**. The course helped us to discover our inner selves besides teaching us about many aspects of our life. In the first week of September, most of our community members were affected by viral fever. **Binod** and a few scholastics including **Lawrence** had to suffer. **Lawrence** began his philosophy classes on 1 September.

## NORTH BENGAL ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE

An online teachers' orientation on 'teachers for 21 century' was organized by the NBSXC. The resource person was **Fr Daniel Bara**. On 14 September, there was another orientation for Fresher's of 2020 batch. It was live-streamed through YouTube and Facebook. On 24 September, there was an election for the office bearers/executive committee of the teachers' council followed by IQAC meeting that provided an occasion for all teaching and non-teaching staff to come together. The TC provided lunch to all on completion of their first term of three years. Admission has been very encouraging this year. At 340 and counting, it has gone beyond the number of last year. However, with Siliguri campus still not drawing many students because of the ugly looking asbestos roof, **Fr Lalit**, the Principal, had to take a quick decision of putting up new tin roofs in front and painting the roof at the back as a cover up to give a facelift to the campus. It does give a little makeup and an appealing look, soothing to the eyes. We are all bracing for the UG Part-III exams starting from 1 October. Though online and offline options are available for students, it was really a nerve wracking experience for the outgoing 3<sup>rd</sup> years, waiting and watching the tug of war between UGC and the state governments until the entry of the Supreme Court to settle the exam related matters!

In the community, **Sch. Barnabas** had the dual task of attending philosophy classes while also writing Part-III 'open book exams' in order to be counted as a graduate! Gayaganga seems to have become the preferred destination of our community. **Fr Gabriel**, had to go for his medical review while **Fr Xavier** went there for Triduum directed by **Fr Cherian M** in preparation for his Final Vows scheduled for 3 October. **Xavier** on return gave one hour session to all the coordinators of all commissions of Chennai Province.

*Fr Lalit*

## HAYDEN HALL

A refresher course for the Community Development Workers (CDWs), part of our yearly program schedule, was conducted in September. In compliance to COVID – 19 precautionary norms and hence, to avoid en masse attendance and make it more convenient for all, this year we did it a bit differently. The course was organized in several of our centers in Darjeeling as well as in



Kalimpong. In Darjeeling the refresher course was conducted from 21-23 September 2020 with a

total of 17 participants. **Sr Chunku Sherpa, SJC**, head of the Mother and Child Health Care team, coordinated the training. With an input by the Program Coordinator of Hayden Hall, **Ms. Babita Biswakarma**, on the vision and mission of Hayden Hall the proceedings got underway. The CDWs from Hayden Hall, Kalej Valley, Rangmook Sonada, Dootheria Tea Estate, Liza Hill and

Lathpanchar were the attendees. **Sr Elisha Gurung, SJC**, a trainer on rural development, from Kalimpong was the resource



person for the first two days. She enlightened them on the topics such as Child and Youth Parliament, Stakeholder

leadership, Self Help Groups, and other related Government Schemes. **Mr Palman Rai**, a former beneficiary of Hayden Hall and now a Booth Level Officer in Ghoom, was the resource person for the final day. He was kind enough to conduct a session on Government Pension Schemes and Scholarship schemes. The course was concluded with discussions on the working guidelines for the CDWs and evaluation of the course.

In Kalimpong, **Mrs Binita Mothay**, who takes care of Hayden Hall activities in the District, organized four such refresher programs with help from Cluny Sisters of St Joseph, Loreto Sisters and Nazareth sisters. Altogether there were thirty-nine participants from areas like Nimbong, Sangsay, Lolay, Gitdubling, Mariabusty, Suruk, Tendrabong, Tanyang and Sakyong. **Mrs Binita Mothey** along with **Sr Elisha, Sr Lucy, Sr Chunku, Sr Emilia, Sr Cecelia, Sr Rachel** and **Mr. Albert Lepcha** from World Vision India,



Kalimpong, were the resource persons. The training covered varied topics on rural and community development work. At the conclusion of the training the CDWs made their own action plans for three months.

The Hayden Hall team is now all set to organize a training program on mushroom cultivation. The training is being conducted in collaboration with two trainers, **Mr Arpan Pradhan** and **Mr Arpan Rai**. It will be conducted in two places for the convenience of the participants. For the residents of Dootheria, it will be conducted in Dootheria Tea Estate and the one in Hayden Hall is for the staff and Women's self-help groups of the municipality.

Hayden Hall, in collaboration with DB Tech, has successfully completed a three month online tea plantation course that'd started in the last week of July. We are now starting another three month advance course for General Duty Assistant, for young people above 18 years.

The Hayden Hall team continue to help and reach out to the needy. In August the team members distributed some staple grains and vegetables to forty-one families in Latpanchar.

*Dipika Adhikari*

## REST IN PEACE

**Fr Jayant Kumar Padival, SJ (KAR)** 71/54 8 Sept. 2020  
**Fr John Berchman Nag, SJ (JAM)** 72/36 10 Sept. 2020  
**Fr Jacob Carvalho, SJ (GOA)** 75/57 12 Sept. 2020  
**Fr Vijay Kumar Prabhu, SJ (KAR)** 80/61 15 Sept. 2020  
**Fr James Thottakath, SJ (KER)** 83/63 15 Sept. 2020  
**Fr Erik Breye, SJ (RAN)** 80/61 18 Sept. 2020  
**Fr Dionysius Rasquinha, SJ (PAT)** 65/44 24 Sept. 2020