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From the Provincial's Desk

One of the questions I keep asking myself in the context of a number of Non-Catholic Institutions competing with our institutions is “are the schools and colleges we run in our country truly Catholic Institutions?”. What makes our institutions Catholic? The Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education speaks of a dual purpose of our institutions – to educate and to evangelize”, thus preparing children and youths for responsibilities as adults through a synthesis of knowledge, culture and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately many of our institutions are engaged in educating and not on evangelizing. There is a crisis of values plaguing our educational institutions.



It is my conviction that if we want our institutions to be really Catholic, they need to provide opportunities for sacramental preparation of our Catholic children as well as opportunities for further evangelization and catechesis with parents. Building the enrollment of our Catholic Institutions can directly benefit the life of our parishes. This is possible when we focus on recruiting and forming teachers, leaders and support staff who are skilled at teaching the Catholic Faith by their words, deeds and the model of their life. Secondly our institutions can become Catholic if the educational process integrates religion with every aspect of the curriculum and school program. Thirdly through partnerships with parents, educators could engage in the formation of youths for their future responsibilities in the Church and the world.

Hence, I, as the Head of the institution, need to ask myself to what extent does my school or college mission statement includes these three important characteristics of a Catholic Institution. I am of the opinion that my institution is truly Catholic if the graduates from my institution actively practice their Faith, integrate religion with all aspects of their life, prioritize family life, actively participate in neighborhoods and communities, discern their vocations and support the school or college community.

APPOINTMENTS BY FR GENERAL

Fr Sean O. Carroll SJ, the Provincial of the United States West Province.

PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 2021

- 01- NAAC – St Joseph's College, Darjeeling
- 05- Joint Consult between NEP & DAR
- 08- Meeting with Bishop Clement
- 09- Visit to Kalimpong – Land Dept.
- 12- Formation Commission Meeting
- 13- Meeting of the Superiors and DOWs

- 14- Outing with Curia Employees
- 16- Province Consult in Namchi
- 19- Visitation (Deacon) – Manresa
- 20- Workshop on NEP at LPC, Matigara
- 22-26 JCSA Meeting
- 27- Finance & Development Commission Meeting

LEFT THE SOCIETY

Novice Subhash Basumatary on 27 January 2021

HUMAN LIFE DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH CENTRE (HLDRC), MATIGARA

January was a graced filled month for HLDRC. We reached out to 800 underprivileged children of our study centres in Terai and Doars region with much needed sweaters to beat the cold. Warm clothes were also distributed to the teachers there. We thank Mrs Patrizia Bianconi, SOS-INDIA & Gruppo Missionario

Parrocchia Ss, Nome di Maria for their great support. We also received some local help for the needy students during this winter. HLDRC was packed with students of **Computer Hardware & Networking**. Job training and placement program was given by TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES (TCS) for 100 hours to 25 and 23 students respectively. Four students were placed in jobs during their training period itself and the rest are in process. A new

initiative for women and men SHGs was taken by HLDRC at Lankapara closed tea garden and Gaikata tea garden in Jalpaiguri district. Permission was got from the local administration for winter crop cultivation of Mustard seeds in 8 acres and 10 acres of land in those places respectively. The crop was a blessing for the villagers in this pandemic time. Several green vegetables were also cultivated along with mustard. The farming activities united the people and opened the space to find alternative means of livelihood in closed tea gardens. Similar farming initiatives are going on in four locations, started by **Fr Pascal Xalxo** with the support of Lok Manch community leaders. Our negotiating skill is bearing fruits in accessing the unutilized land and water resources. This project is supported by the **Canadian Jesuits International** and the **General Curia, Rome**.

Fr Amid Kujur is managing the youth employment training program and making every effort to upgrade the program. He is also busy with creating the baseline data for all programs. He plans to improve the entire documentation & Management of Information system to maintain proper record keeping at the center. Fr. Pascal went for a much deserved home visit after two years and spent 15 days with the near and dear ones. Now he is back in the office with new spirit and energy to lead HLDRC in 2021.

Fr Pascal Xalxo

NORTH BENGAL ST XAVIER'S COLLEGE, RAJGANJ

Online classes have resumed after the winter break even while waiting for notification from the state government to reopen in-person classes. However, other works have progressed without much hindrance. After our Institutional Information for Quality Assessment (IIQA) was approved with just one minor correction, the college is on the way to upload the Self Study Report (SSR) in the second week of February. Thanks to **Dr Bipransh Tiwary** (NAAC coordinator), **Mrs Nitya Rai**, **Ms Priyanka Chakraborty**, **Mr Partha Sarthi Dutta** and **Ms Shradha Rai** for their dedication and hard work, working day in and day out to meet the deadline. Our heartfelt thanks also to **Mr Peter Rai** and **Mr Abhijit Bose** from IQAC team of Salesian College, Siliguri for guiding our team by meticulously going through our team's preparation and reviewing the SSR. 21st January was quite a historic moment for the college, as the first batch of NCC wing for girls was inaugurated in a simple ceremony attended by the entire staff and NCC cadets in the presence of two army officers, **Mr Sumik Singh** and **Mr Ramesh Singh** of Subedar Major rank.

For the Jesuit community too, 2021 proved to be a milestone year as the foundation for the construction of a new residence was blessed by the community superior **Fr Gabriel Tirkey** on 8th January. Once the residence is ready, we will be even more hospitable to our guests! **Fr Arul Selvam**, the RCF of Nepal Region was here to meet his three scholastics. Soon after his visit, **Sch. Krish Murmu** left for Ahmedabad to continue his college studies. Earlier **Sch. Jayraj** returned to Namchi to resume his B.Ed while **Sch. Rajan Minj** and **Francis Xavier** went back to Satya Nilayam to complete their Philosophy Studies.

Fr Lalit Tirkey

GANDHI AHSRAM SCHOOL, KALIMPONG

In December, the school conducted offline annual examination in the respective study centres, set up after the lockdown was lifted, in different villages. The progress reports were also distributed in the village centres and it was an occasion to interact with the students and the parents together. On 19th December we had a meeting with our staff for a general evaluation of the academic

year 2020. In St Joseph's Church, 5th Mile, **Br Gilbert Lepcha** prepared the choir for the Christmas celebration. On 25th December **Fr Binod Kerketta** helped out **Fr Benny Paul** for the Mass at St Francis Xavier's Church, Sakyong. On January 4th and 5th **Mr Chogen Lepcha** and **Fr Binod Kerketta** visited the houses of those students who had given their names to get admission for the academic year 2021. During the winter vacation from 8th to 22nd January, the school organized the **Winter Foundation Course** for classes 7 to 10. Four teachers from the school helped them in English, Nepali, Math and Science. During this course the students were taught the basic skills of reading, writing, comprehension, understanding the basic concepts and new vocabulary. At the end of two weeks, the students are confident enough to face the new academic year 2021. The road construction in the campus is in progress.



Fr Binod Kerketta

ST PETER'S, GAYAGANGA

We had the wedding of 12 couples at different Masses, in January. **Rt Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind** blessed a couple, and **Fr Bijay Kindo** blessed one of his relatives. To address the spiritual yearning of the faithful, the parish recommenced the village Mass after withholding it since the beginning of lockdown. This has brought down the number of Sunday Masses at the parish church premises from six to four. The Mass in the hall is assigned particularly for the catechumens. Bible Day was celebrated on the fourth Sunday of the month. The Mass attendees came with their bible to commemorate the day. Parishioners celebrated the Republic Day with Mass and flag-hoisting. The year being dedicated to St. Joseph, the parish has begun a special prayer in honour of him after Mass. The parishioners are also encouraged to pray in their families.

Besides the Phase X of midday meal, St. Peter's High School distributed masks, greeting cards, school uniforms and study aids to the students. Meetings of the education commission for the diocese level and the Province were held at the school. The officials of the National Cadet Corps (NCC) inspected the school as they seek to conduct a camp here. The primary school distributed books to the students. The community celebrated the anniversary of the priestly ordinations of **Fr Nabor Dungdung**, **Fr Roshan Minj** and **Fr Augustus Ekka**. **Frs Peter** and **Augustus** attended the clergy recollection organized at the diocese level at Loyola Pastoral Centre, Matigara, for the first time after the lockdown. **Fr Nabor** has gone for his home visit.

Fr Augustus Ekka

ST VINCENT'S, HATIGHISA

The primary and High school saw a steady flow of parents wishing to complete the re-admission and new admission process for their

wards. Book distributions followed and the teachers are set to resume their online tutorials. This is the first time that online modules have been prepared for the primary children. Wi-Fi access points have been extended to the primary to help teachers further their goals.

We condoled the demise of **Fr Lawrence's** mother, Late Mrs Gnana Soundari, who returned to the Lord on 4th January 2021 at the age of 81. The primary staff organised a memorial Mass on 17th of January.

Fr Lawrence officially took over as the Coordinator of the Education commission for the Diocese of Bagdogra at a meeting held on 16th January 2021 at St. Peter's School, Gayaganga. His Eminence **Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind**, in a common address, thanked the outgoing Coordinator **Fr Pradip** for services rendered and prayed for the incumbent.

On 23rd January, a meeting of the Secondary and Higher Education Commissions of our province was held at Gayaganga. A report on the assessment of the Province Apostolic Preferences pertaining to education, the annual plan in view of the Ignatian year ahead and Fr. Provincial's robust reminders regarding the "frontiers that our institutions need to envision" were the highlights. The approach road has neared completion and continues to receive the appreciation of all who come to check the work in progress. We thank **Fr Klaus and the German Province** for this generous support. In the school, the computer labs set-up is nearly complete. Our heartfelt thanks are to **Magis, Rome**, for sponsoring the project that includes 31 computers.

Fr Alex Beck made arrangements for two Marriage preparation classes catering to nearly 23 couples and blessed as many marriages this month. Confirmation classes were also conducted and children have been responding in heartening numbers for the training of altar servers. Fr Alex attended the clergy recollection on the 28th. With the picnic season at its peak, the high school and primary staff took off to Dudhia for an outing on 27th of January. **Fr Alvin Minj** was able to organize two football matches for the youngsters, a move that drew many enthusiasts, including a club coach who volunteered to train them.

Sch. Ruell Paul

WERY NIWAS, KURSEONG

From 3rd to 6th January, twenty-one youth and from 10th to 16th January, nineteen Adult CLC members attended CLC retreat at Loyola Pastoral Centre, Matigara, organized by **Fr Frank Subba** and team. **Fr Peter Jong** attended the JEPASA meeting on 6th January. The parish youth organised a meeting on 17th January to prepare the annual plan. SCC also had a meeting on 18th January in which Ms Nirmala Baraily appraised about the programs of Diocesan Service Team (DST) for 2021. From 21st to 23rd January **Fr Peter Jong** went home to make health card and for vocation tour. On 24th January the Nari Samaj had an Annual General Meeting. On 26th the youth went for a picnic to Singla. Catechism classes for Christeen and Crusvir are going on in a full swing. On 4th January, **Fr Kevin Moktan** left for Lonavla for a two-month course. **Fr David Ekka** had gone for a home visit and he is now back. Sebastian Lepcha who aspires to be a Jesuit stayed in the community from 23rd to 25th January.

Fr Peter Jong Lepcha

LOYOLA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, NAMCHI

Online classes started for the First Semester B.Ed and the First Semester M.A Education courses on 18th January. The Professors working from home conducted classes through Google Meet. **Fr Justin Thiraveyam** joined the Community as Minister, Treasurer and Assistant Professor on 19th January. **Fr Francis George** attended the State Teacher Educators' Conference conducted by SCERT on 21st and 22nd January. **Fr Cherian Padiyara** hoisted the National Flag on Republic day 26th January in the presence of Jesuits, Students and Supporting Staff. The same day the Supporting Staff had their Annual Picnic in the campus.

Fr Francis George

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, NORTH POINT

St Joseph's School is on winter vacation and the new academic session will begin on 22nd February. The Winter Camp for the underprivileged was not conducted this year at North Point due to the pandemic. However, this winter, two football tournaments were conducted for the youth through '**Khel Utsav**', by the Darjeeling Police, at North Point ground. Several football teams (boys and girls), participated in the tournaments from across the hills and the plains.

Two groups of youth from Kerala visited North Point in their 'All India' tour. This was their second visit here on a 'Van Life Expedition'. The annual maintenance work is going on at the school before the new academic year begins. **Fr K. L. George** and **Sch Amit** have returned from their home visits. **Frs Stanley, Leo, Anuranjan** and **Br P.D. Vincent** are on their home visits. **Frs K. J. Joseph and Anuranjan** have been helping with the Sunday Masses at Sittong, Rimbik and Lepcha Busty.

Fr Anuranjan Ekka

NEWS FROM VINAYALAYA, MUMBAI

We had the Speech *Declamation* on 10th December as a part of oratory skills training. We also had a presentation on different articles from "Jivan", "Down to Earth" and "Vidyajyoti" as a part of *writing and speaking skills* on 22nd December. From 22nd December 2020 to 04th January 2021 we had Christmas holidays, for about two weeks. The Christmas was well celebrated which included many different activities: community gathering, carol singing, games, BBQ etc. We had "*Triduum*" from 29th to 31st December directed by Fr. Ryan (KAR). On the last day, we renewed our vows. Our classes resumed on 4th January 2021. A course on "*Critical Thinking*" was conducted by Fr. Jeevan for us. He instructed us many valuable lessons on the subject through his expertise.

Juniors Binod and Samson

ST XAVIER'S SCHOOL, ALIPURDUAR

In spite of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, St Xavier's School is witnessing a marathon construction works of Plus Two wing and the Jesuit residence under the able leadership of **Fr Siby Joseph**. He is out at 6 am and moves from one site to the other before he winds up the work at 6 pm in this creepy winter. **Fr Freddie Baraik** has become perfect as an online teacher by making strenuous efforts in acquiring digital knowledge. He also renders his pastoral service to our parish as and when needed.

For a break from the online classes, **Fr Santy Mathew** accompanied our teachers on a trek to Lepchaka which is above the Buxa Fort. It's a proud moment for all of us that we received the permission from the CISCE(Council) to begin ISC from the 2021 academic year. Though our residence is demolished, we

never ceased to receive guests in our community. **Fr Siby's** brother, his family and relatives from Delhi visited us during the Christmas vacation. Recently **Fr Simon Kerketta** visited our community with his two brothers and nephew. **Frs Provincial, Cherian Padiyara** and **Justin Thiraveyam** paid a visit on 16th January and left for Matigara on 17th January via Kelabari.

Fr Santy Mathew

JESU ASHRAM, MATIGARA

This year 12 nursing students successfully completed the three year Health workers' training from Jesu Ashram. They were given a farewell on 29th December. This group was very fortunate because all the 12 got jobs by 6th January. This year, 18 young ladies joined the same course on 2nd January. The programme began with a two-day orientation programme given by **Fr Vincent George and Sch. David Ekka**. The newcomers are given a spoken English course till the end of April. This year the outreach programmes of Jesu Ashram started from Gointha bazar of Gumguma Parish where 184 blankets were distributed to 77 families on 7th and 14th of January.

With **SOS India's** generous sponsorship a new, concrete Rehabilitation Centre was built in Leinn Colony for destitute leprosy patients (men and women) who were living in thatched houses earlier. It was blessed on 29th of January by **Fr Provincial**. The Rehabilitation home is now known as "Brother Bob's Home". It has four living rooms and can accommodate 12 persons. Thanks to SOS India for their love and compassion for the destitute who are affected by Leprosy.



All the inmates of Jesu Ashram came together to mark the World Leprosy Day on 30th January. The Programme began with lighting of the lamp led by **Mr Lazrus Kujur**, one of the Leprosy patients. The nursing students and staff from the Leprosy ward presented three programmes for them.

Fr Julius Kujur

LOYOLA NIWAS, UTTAR SALBARI

On 31st December, there was a thanksgiving mass in the evening for the faithful in the parish church. Availability of the new vehicle, thanks to ACN International, made it possible for us to offer five Masses on the 1st January: in the parish Church, Totapara village Chapel, Red bank tea garden, and Chunabhati tea garden. Red bank and Chunabhati are in Binnaguri parish.

Fr Bijay kindo left our community on the 1st January, 2021 to join the new community at Rajganj. We will miss his valuable contribution in different areas. **Fr Justin Bage** joined the community on 3rd January. **Fr Bosco Michael**, after the completion of Tertianship at Sitagarha, joined the community on 23rd January. **Fr Basil Toppo** attended the marriage blessing of his nephew on 23rd January at Demdima Parish. It was a joyful moment for his family to have eleven Jesuits including **Fr. Provincial** for the marriage reception of his nephew Peter Paul.

Fr Basil Toppo

MANRESA NOVITIATE, KALIMPONG

Dn Oshish Tirkey joined the novitiate community on 28th December to be the 'Acting Socius' in the place of **Fr Roshan Kiro** who went to attend a sadhana program. On 29th **Fr Frank Subba** gave a pep talk to the novices on the functioning of CLC and his different plans for it. On the eve of the New Year, we had a 'Thanksgiving Adoration' followed by the vigil Mass. On the New Year day after supper we gathered around the bonfire and shared our New Year joy with one another. On 9th January, we had a 'get-together' with the Cluny novitiate Community. The gathering culminated with an interesting house game.

Since the first year novices could not go for the experiment due to the pandemic, we had different classes and activities in January. We had a week of computer classes under the guidance of **Dn Oshish**. It was followed by an intense 'work week' and we carried out different manual works in the campus. An intense study week followed wherein the novices prepared materials on the Sacraments in groups and presented to the group under the guidance of **Dn Oshish** and **Fr Shaji Joseph**. Deacon Oshish has started giving homily at Mass on alternate days and he is taking English grammar classes for us. On the Republic Day, soon after the Holy Mass we had the flag hoisting by deacon Oshish and an excellent speech by brother Anurag.

Novice Pilat

TERTIANSHIP EXPERIENCE

The tertianship, the last and most important stage of Jesuit formation, has helped me tremendously to become more joyful, generous, loving and committed to whatever mission entrusted to me. The reflective study of the various Jesuit documents, especially Ignatian sources, has helped me to know, appreciate and love our Founder St Ignatius and his spirit more. This reflective study helped me to realise how God dealt with St Ignatius as a school master. It also led me to understand more clearly how God has dealt with me all along the way in the past years of life in the same way as St Ignatius. It gives me a sense of great joy to follow St Ignatius in his footsteps as his companion in the Society of Jesus

I found the 30-day retreat as the highlight of the tertianship program. The repetition of the entire Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius that was done in the novitiate helped me immensely to reconcile with God, others, nature and me. It also helped me to grow in my core- graces, overcoming my core-sinfulness. This month-long spiritual journey helped me to see clearly and recognize His plan and His presence all along the way I have walked so far. And I see clearly that He is still guiding and leading me on. I also obtained a better understanding of our three vows and our way of proceeding. This understanding helps me to live my vowed Jesuit life more happily and meaningfully. At this stage, I, having experienced God's love personally, surrender myself lovingly at His feet to fulfill His most Holy will in my life.

Fr Bosco Michel

REST IN PEACE

Fr Ronald victor Menezes (KAR)	48/26	14 Jan 2021
Fr Ambrose Augustine (PAT)	87/58	16 Jan 2021
Fr Maxim Crasta (GUJ)	54/32	19 Jan 2021
Fr Arvind Minj (HAZ)	42/	26 Jan 2021
Fr Anthony D'Souza (BOM)	94/77	27 Jan 2021
Fr Lancelot Pereira (BOM)	90/71	28 Jan 2021
Mrs G. Soundari, (82), Mother of Fr Lawrence Thanislaus		