



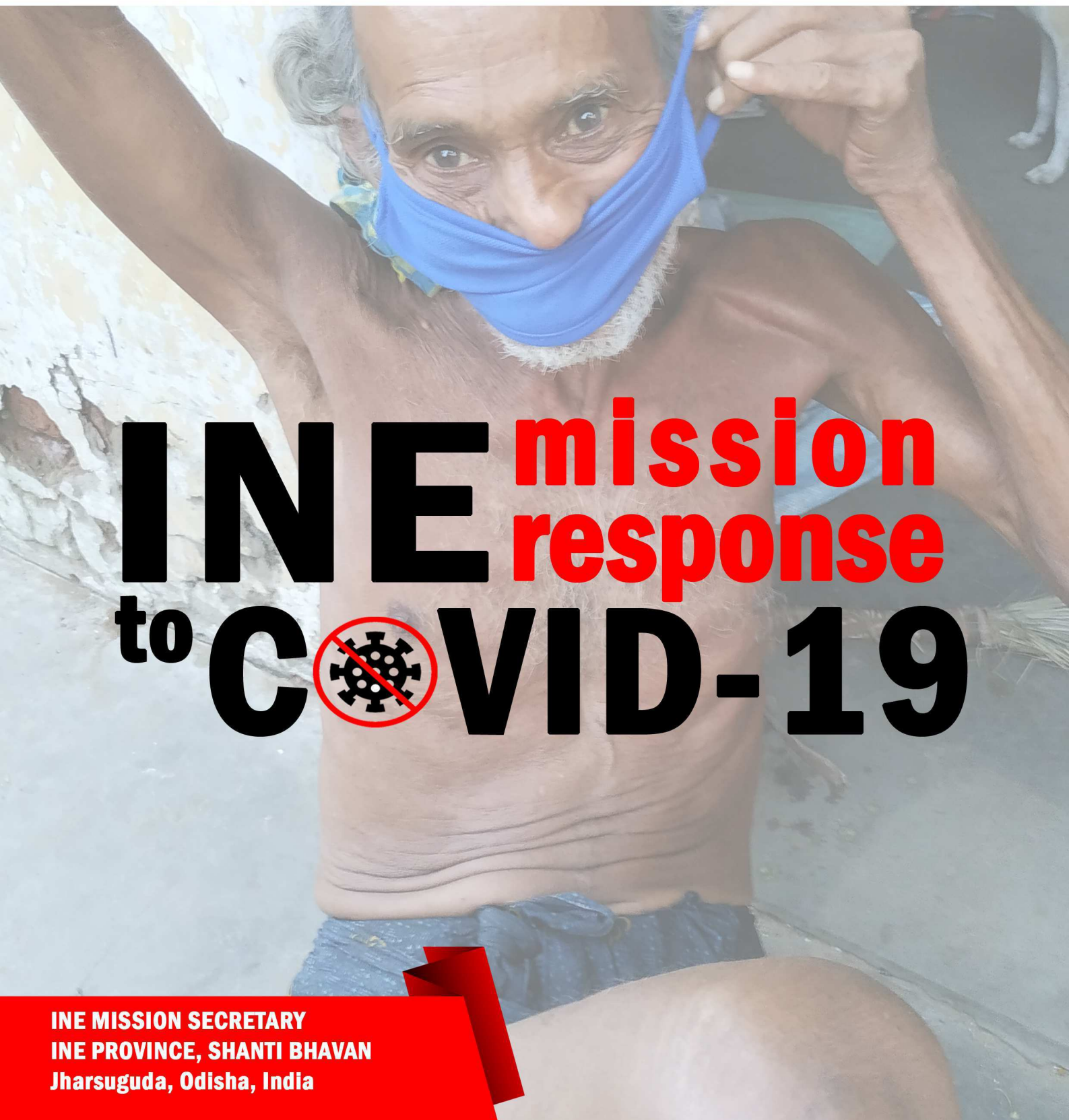
in touch with **MISSION** **INE**

INE e-magazine

OCTOBER 2020

FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION ONLY

VOL. 1 NO. 1



INE mission response to **C** **VID-19**

**INE MISSION SECRETARY
INE PROVINCE, SHANTI BHAVAN
Jharsuguda, Odisha, India**



in touch with MISSION

INE e-magazine

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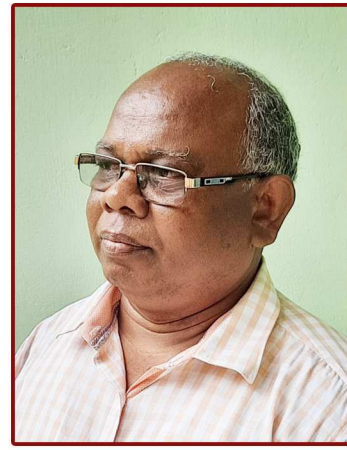
In the prologue of SVD constitutions it is written: “In response to the call of the Holy Spirit and the needs of peoples, St. Arnold Janssen founded our Society as a missionary community. We see our special dedication to the Divine Word and his mission expressed in our name. His life is our life, his mission our mission..... Missionary work is, therefore, the end and aim of our Society. All our activities, diverse though they be, are ultimately intended to help the church fulfil its missionary task.”

The members of SVD India East (INE) Province are involved in various missionary works like: pastoral, educational, social, formation, administration and specialized apostolates (vocational training, health care, slum ministry, leprosy ministry, rehabilitation of disabled children, retreat preaching, protection and promotion of local cultures etc.) The characteristic dimensions of our congregation are; Mission animation, Biblical ministry, Communication and Justice Peace and Integration of Creation (JPIC).

INE province carries out lot of missionary tasks, but seldom it is made known to the people. We thought of publishing our mission news in an e-magazine. Hence, we are happy to present the first issue of “INTOUCH WITH MISSION” an INE e-magazine to share with you some of our mission concerns. The first issue of INTOUCH WITH MISSION highlights INE response to COVID 19 pandemic.

I thank sincerely all INE confreres who have contributed their articles and photos for this magazine. I am grateful to Shilanand Kamath and Donald Lobo for their timely help in correcting the language. I am indebted immensely to Dixson D’Souza for his creativity and designing this e-magazine. I also appreciate the support of Provincial Superior, Petrus Kullu and his province administration team. I hope that this small initiative would help all of you in creating greater mission awareness and inspire you to become missionaries in your place.

Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, SVD, INE Mission Secretary



It gives immense joy to me to put down a few lines for the first issue of INE Province “E-Magazine”. I am confident that it will help all of us to exchange our news and views on our mission and ministry. At this juncture, I implore God’s blessings upon Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, the Mission Secretary and all who will be closely associating with him to bring out this news letter to reach out to our confreres and well wishers. I also wish them all the best and good success for this novel venture.

The time of pandemic has taught us how to make use of the technology to keep connected to our near and dear ones as well as carry on our regular commitments in a new way, with fewer expenses, limited movements, lesser time, etc. Digital working, learning and information sharing are increasingly a day-to-day part of the lives of the people with care and support needs. Digital information sharing can be the collaboration of different partners in order to be able to share data or information safely via technology. For most people, digital technology is a part of our daily lives. In this regard the Provincial Administration would like to appreciate and encourage Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, National and Province Mission Secretary for putting his efforts to make use of the digital media to share the information from the missions with the confreres and all people of good will.

Often the hard work and dedicated service of our confreres and mission collaborators are not recognised or recorded. This goes unheard and ignored amidst the noisy and overloaded information in the internet and social media. We believe, it is worth spending time and energy in order to put together the stories from the missions and make a single story of the Province so as to keep the present generation as well of the future well informed about the happenings in the missions. In the past we happen to take things for granted because either we were ignorant or we had lack of facilities to record them but today all of us have access to media and quicker communication. Therefore I request the confreres to cooperate with the Mission Secretary to share the mission stories through this e-magazine. Every event in the parish or institution, in other words every mission story has something to tell us for present day as well as future. It not only keeps us informed but also it makes us aware of the various aspects of mission life. This sharing of information on a regular basis also keeps our missionary life active, alive, joyful and enthusiastic. Therefore we respect and value everything that is shared with us.

Yours in the Divine Word

Fr. Petrus Kullu, SVD
Provincial Superior, INE

CONCEPT OF INE MISSION E-MAGAZINE

-Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, SVD



Novel initiative: Publishing of INE Mission E-Magazine

Format of Circulation: PDF format circulated via mail

Purpose: Promotion of a heightened Mission Awareness, to assist INE Mission documentation, and to avail an opportunity for confreres to foster the art of writing

Target Audience: INE Confreres, Lay Partners & Associates, Benefactors, Well-wishes, and People of Good Will.

Focus on the SVD Characteristic Dimensions:

1. **SVD Characteristic Dimensions-**
Mission Animation, Biblical Ministry, Communication, and JPIC
2. **Mission Concerns-**
Education, Formation, Social Work, Vocational Training, Retreat Preaching, Preservation and Promotion of Culture, and Health Care
3. **Specialised Apostolates-**
Leprosy Care, Ministry among the Differently-Abled, Slum Ministry, Youth, Family, De-addiction
4. **Mission Priorities Sharing Intercultural Life *ad intra*-**
Spirituality, Community, Leadership, Finance, Formation
5. **Mission Priorities Sharing Intercultural Mission *ad extra*-**
Primary and New Evangelization, Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue, Promotion of the Culture of Life, Family and Youth, Education and Research, Indigenous and Ethnic communities, Migration, Reconciliation and Peace Building, Social Justice and Poverty Eradication, Integrity of Creation.
6. **Special Focus on *ad intra* and *ad extra* priorities taken up by INE Chapter and Assembly:**
 - a. **Sharing Intercultural Life *ad intra*:**
Spirituality, Community, Leadership, Finance, Formation
 - b. **Sharing Intercultural Mission *ad extra*:**
Primary and New Evangelization, Education and Research, Family and Youth, Social Justice and Poverty Eradication, Migration, Integrity of Creation

FOCUS OF THE FIRST ISSUE : INE MISSION RESPONSE TO COVID-19

WHY focus on INE Mission Response to COVID-19? While the INE Provincial Circular as well as Arnoldus Nota have already presented the INE Mission Response, a question may arise on whether this would be a mere repetition. Reading through the articles presented regarding INE mission response to COVID-19 a clear consensus is that INE Mission Response has been measured only from the view point of JPIC.

Failure from our part to locate the INE mission response to COVID-19 taking into consideration the SVD Characteristic dimensions becomes the main reason for the first issue of INE Mission E-Magazine to focus on the same.



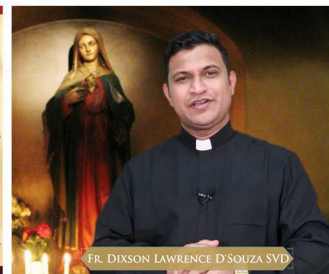
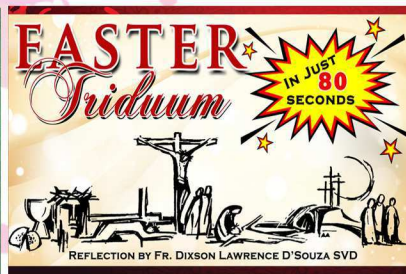
‘ONLINE-WORD-ENCOUNTER’: A NEW PARADIGM OF MISSION DURING COVID-19

- Fr. Dixon Lawrence D’Souza SVD

BIBLICAL

“*New Wine in New Wineskins*” serves as the perfect biblical foundation which demands that re-orientation and renewal of the missionary enterprise be grounded on acceptance, flexibility, humility, and openness to embark on a newer paradigm in the context of Corona pandemic. Covid-19 emerged as a wake-up call for few SVDs of INE Province to prophetically move out of the comfort zones into zones of vulnerability: a move from hunting for sustainable resources to the establishment of sustainable ministry of the Word, a move from physical connectedness to the world-wide-web, a move from an encounter with a selected lot to an encounter beyond boundaries, a move from the comfortable traditional methods of breaking the Word to exposure to the vulnerabilities and demands of a world driven by technology; all of which to depict the faithfulness to the Word and the relevance of an SVD amidst a crisis situation.

The online dissemination of the Word served as the new wineskin not only to spiritually nourish Christ’s faithful but as a new medium of encounter, a new form of accompaniment, and a new pathway of sharing the hospitality of the Word. The online forum, expressing the spirit of belongingness of a confrere to the ‘other’, aimed at combating the antagonistic environment created in the name of social distancing so as to unify and console, to enrich and empower, to give answer and uproot confusion, and to spread hope. Online Sunday and weekday reflections, online retreats and workshops, with an affective maturity, proved that as SVDs our medium may change, but our mission of ‘being rooted in the Word and committed to His Mission’ will never change. For the recipient, ‘Online-Word-Encounter’ provided insulation amidst isolation. For the SVD confrere, venturing on ‘Online-Word-Encounter’ served as an opportune time for hermeneutical investigation so as to present Christ- “God with us” suffering with the victims of Corona virus. It goes without saying that ‘Online-Word-Encounter’ as a new Paradigm of creative WORD mission has attracted a sizeable amount of Christ’s faith to the fount of love. Thus, what Pope Francis said comes true, “It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but by attraction.” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 15).



BIBLICAL MINISTRY DURING COVID-19

-Fr. Sunil Damor, SVD



“In the beginning was the Word..; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made” (Jn 1:1-3). And we know “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth...” (Jn 1:14). It was this Word in human flesh (Jesus) that transformed the World within a short span of time (only three years). This Word is active and alive today in various forms in a variety of situations. This is the Word that came to give us the fullness of life or life in abundance. By our vocation as Christians we are all empowered to proclaim this Word to the World today even in all the adversities too.

St. Arnold who was burning with the inner fire of this Word thought of founding a Society which would carry on announcing this Word to all the generations, through all the ages. Burning with the same inner fire of the Word we the Divine Word Missionaries carry on proclaiming the Word in every corner of the world as St. Paul says, “Proclaim the (Message)Word; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching” (2 Tim 4:2).



Following this mandate of proclamation and feeling the inner impulse inspired by our loving founder St. Arnold, the SVD Biblical Ministry Office (*Amarvani*) of India East Province took up various initiatives and programs to make the Word alive and active even in the adverse situation like that of Covid-19 pandemic too. “Our name is our Mission” stresses our SVD 18th General Chapter. Keeping this and the vision of our beloved founder in mind the Biblical Ministry of SVD-INE tried to make the Word alive in the World today to bring light and ‘life in abundance’ even during the pandemic of Covid-19. During the

past decades the biblical ministry was carried on mainly through preaching and teaching the Word by our confreres in traditional ways in the parish set up. But today reading the signs of the times especially during this era of technological boom and e-generation, various innovative initiatives were undertaken to proclaim the life-giving Word. Biblical coordinator, in collaboration with the Biblical experts and Parish Priests, ventured into various programs and activities to spread the Word in our Province.

A MONTH-LONG BIBLICAL PREACHING AND DANCE DRAMA PROGRAMS: Just before the pandemic Covid-19 and lockdown in India, a month-long program of Biblical Preaching and Dance Drama was executed in 8 Parishes of the dioceses of Rourkela, Sambalpur and Gumla. The program was executed in February 2020 along with 40 artists under the leadership of the Province Biblical Coordinator Fr. Sunil Damor. The dance dramas were prepared and directed by Fr. Ignatius Soreng. Fr. Christopher Kerketta, Fr. Marianus Ekka, Fr. Remejius Soreng and Fr. Sanjib Dungdung played a major role for the success of the program. Thousands of faithful got a chance of Spiritual renewal during these Programs. This was a unique joint venture of different coordinators which had a very good overall impact and response.



THE WORD OF GOD IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

INE Biblical Ministry has created a YouTube channel called “Amarvani 4U” to reach out to the faithful with the daily Gospel readings and reflections. This year during the pandemic and the lockdown when the ministers of the Word could not break the Word of God in the physical presence of the faithful, digital media became blessing in disguise to proclaim the Word to all through the Social Media. Sensing the need of the spiritual thirst of our faithful the SVD INE Biblical Coordinator along with a few other confreres as well as diocesan clergy tried to make available the daily Word of God in three languages, i.e. Hindi, Sadri, and Odia in the YouTube channel. The Holy Week Ceremonies and Liturgy was provided online for the benefit of the faithful. Biblical Reflections based on Sunday and Feast days were made available in the YouTube Channel and Facebook etc., for the spiritual nourishment of the faithful as well as the common public. Hundreds of the faithful could participate virtually in the Holy Week and Sunday Liturgies.

We also started Biblical Education series made available in three languages imparting simple knowledge of the Bible for the Faithful and the common public. Biblical professors and scholars including two SVD confreres and three Diocesan Priests, who teach at the Theologate (Khristo Jyoti Mohavidyaloyo, Sason, Sambalpur) contribute for this Bible Education program series. This has been a very good opportunity as well as an enriching experience for the Professors too, who could first time come to Social Media platforms, to impart to the faithful, their knowledge and spiritual nourishment.



ONLINE CHRISTIAN DEVOTIONAL SINGING COMPETITION:

To keep the interest and zeal of our faithful, especially of the youth, alive in the Word of God, Liturgy and Singing, an online Christian Devotional Singing competition was conducted in three languages through our YouTube channel. Many participants responded to this online program. The winners in the competition were given prizes as an encouragement to be active in the parish choir and other programs in our parishes. Thus, the time of pandemic Covid-19 has been a blessing in disguise for our Biblical Ministry to venture into the virtual world of Social Media where the majority of the faithful as well as the common people are immersed today.

Stay Home Safe & Glorify God

Amarvani 4U

Online Christian Devotional Singing Competition 2020

Results

Odia Winners		Hindi /Sadri	
First Place: Arati Montry Kattigala, CTK BSR	First Place: Sachin Kumar Hemanta Sugremunda, Rourkela	Second Place: Elio Sabar Alada, Berhampur	Second Place: Subham Mishal Ganapur, Rayagada
Third Place: Amosh Kumar Nayak Bhawanipatna, Rayagada	Third Place: Madhumsita Samad Panderpathi, Rourkela	Encouragement Prizes	
1. Abhigyan Montry Phulbani, CTK BSR	2. Roshni Minj Sundargarh, Rourkela	2. Lipi Uthamsingh Pukari, CTK BSR	3. Shilpa Ekka Keeramai, Rourkela
3. Debasis Nayak Berhampur			

For more details contact Fr. Smiti Danor STD +91 9937529718
Website: www.amarvani.org YouTube: Amarvani 4U

NEW WEBSITE FOR ONLINE PROGRAMS: The Office has opened a new Website www.amarvani.org during the time of Pandemic Covid-19 for the online programs and info sharing.

We had already the online Christian Devotional Singing Competition through the website and shared various information with regard to our biblical ministry and SVD Society. We also have planned online Bible Quiz Competition which will be conducted soon through the medium of our website. We took this initiative to share our biblical programs, information as well as the identity of SVD Society and its specialized ministry for the Word of God.

INE-MEDIA-COMMUNICATIONS' RESPONSE TO COVID-19

-Fr. Christopher Kerketta, SVD



COMMUNICATION

Right from the conception of the Missionary Congregation our founder Father St. Arnold Janssen clearly conceived the importance of “Media and Communications” in relation with the “Mission-Mandate” given by the risen Christ. Initially the “Little Herald of the Sacred Heart”, as the editor himself in 1874, the founder father might have been deeply inspired by it towards founding the missionary congregation. Later he did hand it over to his Divine Word missionaries worldwide as one of the SVD Congregational Heritage which remained ever relevant and important means for evangelization. Thus, we commit ourselves even today worldwide to take it forward using the available means of media and communications in our missionary endeavours. St. Arnold Vikas Sanchar, the INE province and Regional Communication Center, Jharsuguda, takes forward with the same commitment and spirit as one of the four-fold dimensions of the Society.

The advent of the year 2020 was cruelly accompanied by the global pandemic Covid-19 claiming numerous lives across the world. Sensing the seriousness of it the Indian government imposed its first phase of nation-wide lock-down in the third week of March 2020. The abrupt and unplanned consecutive lock-downs imposed in the following months created hue and cry among people and more so among the poor migrant laborers from various unorganized sectors faced the maximum blow of it. The heart-breaking visuals of those migrants walking back homes along the isolated highways and byways, covering hundreds of miles carrying their belongings and little kids and old parents on their backs and shoulders will ever haunt the human minds. The pregnant women having given birth on the roadside and still continuing their journey risking their life would never be forgotten. These are some of the hard realities caused by the Covid-19 and sudden lockdown imposed by the government.

One of the positive rays of hope during the nation-wide lock-down was seen and felt that Covid-19 and the follow up lockdown did awaken the sympathy and generosity in certain degree in the hearts of the ordinary people who helped generously the returnee poor migrant laborers. The Church communities, religious congregations and social organizations came forward spontaneously to help the fellow citizens. The communication department of the province also took it as an opportunity to fight the pandemic crisis using its available facilities at the center. Some of the activities initiated during the global pandemic lock down are as follows:

AUDIO-VISUAL PRODUCTION ON COVID-19 AWARENESS: In collaboration with the local police and civil administration the Province Communication department has come up with an audio-visual awareness program on Covid-19 to appeal to the civil society to cooperate with the government’s lockdown protocol.



It was a generous contribution from our part and we took it as an opportunity to join hands with the local civil administration for this noble cause. The audio-visual production was taken to every corner of the district and it was published in the local channel and YouTube social network as well. The Vikas Sanchar community and the lay staff could also reach out some of the returnee migrant laborers along the highways with basic needs like, water-bottles, snacks, biscuits and some monetary help.

SPIRITUAL REACH OUT TO CATHOLIC FAITHFUL THROUGH LIVE-TELECAST:

The Holy Week and the Easter Celebration of 2020 was observed with unusual lock down nation-wide. St. Arnold Vikas Sanchar Jharsuguda (Regional Communication Center) took it as an opportunity and came forward with its YouTube-Live-Telecast of the Holy Mass and Eucharistic Adorations started with the Psalm Sunday 2020. We continued with it reaching out the catholic faithful on a daily basis till the feast of the Pentecost. Later we focused only on Sunday's liturgy and adoration on Fridays. Thousands of faithful still follow the Online-Liturgical-Celebrations and Adorations live telecasted. Many come forward regularly through phone calls and WhatsApp messages and share their spiritual experiences of healing and inner strength received while participating in the Holy Mass on Sundays and adorations of the blessed sacrament Live Telecast from Vikas Sanchar, Jharsuguda. Hundreds of catholic families, religious communities and the people gather together regularly in their village chapels and participate in the Live-Streaming. The focus of our Live-Streaming slightly differs from others as we give more importance on proclamation of the Word and catechism. Our effort has always been to encourage the catholic faithful to read and pray with the Holy Bible on a daily basis and strengthen the family ecclesia.

Together with the spiritual services rendered to our faithful on a regular basis, the people also get to know worldwide the presence and the work of the Divine Word Missionaries actively involved in various pastoral, social, educational and spiritual activities in this province. It also helps promoting our society's spirituality and charism among the people and the catholic youth for vocation promotion.



PRODUCTIONS ON LIFE ORIENTATION & MOTIVATION PROGRAM: During this prolonged lock-down periods the center could venture into some productions for youth. In collaboration with the commission for youth and vocation promotion of the province the communication department has come up with youth awareness, career guidance and life orientation programs which were well appreciated. Many more video productions are awaited. We also commit to continue our YouTube Live telecast and audio-video productions addressing various social and spiritual needs of our people.

JPIC MISSION DURING COVID-19

-Fr. Rasal Xess, SVD



The mission of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) is directed towards the justice and “shalom” (just relationships leading to peace) of God’s Kingdom. The people in India East Province are multicultural, multi-racial, multi-linguistic, and multi religious. The poorest and the marginalized in this region are the tribals and dalits and therefore INE Province makes a preferential missionary option for them. India East Province (INE) is at work in four states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal. The major area of commitment of Divine Word Society in India East Province is bringing transformation through education, pastoral animation, formation, and socio-developmental works.

The work of the JPIC Wing of the Province is to read the signs of the times and to coordinate different ministries and apostolates of the Province, in collaboration with the Provincial Council. The Province is blessed with committed confreres for pastoral care; Educationists, Formators, Social workers, Counsellors, Team leaders, Animators and other confreres specialized who are engaged in various ministries to respond to JPIC concerns. The JPIC office of the Province functions as a team. Following are the JPIC activities carried out in the Province.



- Justice and Peace promotion through Education Animation
- Justice and Peace formation through Pastoral Animation
- Justice and Peace promotion through Formation
- Working for the Integrity of Creation
- Working for the promotion of Peace
- Promotion of Safe Migration
- Coordinating skill training and empowerment programmes
- Coordinating Care, Services and Charitable Programmes
- Establishes Advocacy and promotes Networking
- Coordinates during emergency and disasters Response
- Works in collaboration with VIVAT India
- Promotes documentation and dissemination of Information

We continue to discern where the Spirit is directing us. To live our life as missionaries, we need to look at both: The project of God for the world (based on the Bible, the tradition of the Church, the Social Teaching of the Church, the charism of our Congregation, the vision of the world God wants to build with us and the reality of today’s world and of the context where we live and work. This “double vision” needs to shape our commitment. When we compare the reality of our world with God’s plan for the world, the establishment of His Kingdom, our response can only be a commitment to work for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, that is, for the transformation of society. Today, the society has the capacity to eliminate poverty, hunger, establish peace and to heal the ecology, yet millions of people still live in poverty, die of hunger, experience injustice and nature is exploited to the maximum. Therefore, call of JPIC is Personal, Communitarian, Congregational, and Societal.



JPIC Office- India East Province was actively involved in its capacities to reach-out to the poor and the needy during this period of lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic. Both the urban poor and rural poor were deeply affected by the lockdown in India. We sincerely thank all our confreres who directly and indirectly contributed to face the challenges brought forth by pandemic. We worked in collaboration with the local NGOs and with civil administration. At the very outset we sincerely express our gratitude to the SVD Generalate, the donor agencies for extending the resources to support the needs of people affected.

The visible concerns of early lockdown were home coming of interstate migrants on foot, by bicycle, motor bikes, auto rickshaws and trucks etc. The poor and the migrants needed food, drinking water, stay, medicine, safety and security. INE-JPIC Office along with SVD confreres and animators has reached out to places such as Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Gaibira, Kiralaga, Phalsa, Saunamara, Kahupani, Bondomunda, Kusumbeda, Turbhunga, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Titlagarh, Gopinathpur, Pallahara, Tamda, Gurundia, Rajgangpur, Dubri and Bezda Mission. COVID-19 pandemic has brought to halt the lives of all, yet, the worst sufferers were and are the inter-state labour migrants, pavement dwellers, daily wage earners, street vendors, rickshaw pullers, rag pickers, transgenders and the marginalized section of our country.



The type of activities SVD-INE involved were distribution of cooked food and dry ration, distribution of masks and sanitizers, conducted awareness programmes on COVID-19, collaborated with local NGOs and Civil administration, provided digital facilitation and counselling. Apart from natural disasters, there are various forms of injustice towards humanity and common home, the mother earth, we call for the solidarity of all the people of good will.



DSS RESPONSE TO COVID-19

-Fr. Cherian Joseph, SVD

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DSS (Divya Seva Sangh) is the platform for social interventions of the INE Province. It is active in the villages through its right based approach in social development, not completely overlooking the merits of other approaches. To concentrate on right based approach, we have formed a team of animators from the various Parishes and given training on various Govt. Schemes and Programmes available for the ordinary people in the villages. These animators also make the people aware of the various forms of injustice taking place in the name of development like illegal mining, land grabbing, environmental pollution, deforestation, rampant use of natural resources and its ill effects, migration and human trafficking. It is gladdening to note that our involvement has made a qualitative change in the lives of the people and are becoming aware of their own rights and have started demanding their entitlements due to them. Divya Seva Sangh achieves this objective through women empowerment through (Self Help Groups) SHGs and animation programs. We have at present 77 animators and coordinators working in different villages for this purpose.

The present pandemic, really caught us unaware, with the strict implementation of lockdown, we could notice a sense of desperation among the people. The sudden declaration drastically affected the poor people very badly. Many labourers lost their source for daily bread. Many were worried about the lack of stored provisions during the prolonged lockdown. There was utter confusion and desperation. It was at this moment that the government chalked out ways to address the situation and called for the active collaboration from the NGOs. This was a wakeup call for all of us and an opportunity to be of some solace for the suffering people of the area we are working with. Our generous benefactors together with our mission houses and the Generalate were quick enough to respond with financial assistance. This financial assistance was effectively utilised in the villages for the needy through our animators and coordinators. Our staff identified the beneficiaries, prepared budget for them and reported to the head office that, we could transfer the amount to the shopkeepers directly and that they could collect the material to distribute them door to door or in the villages, maintaining SOP. They were also willing to cook food and give to those elderly and differently abled who were not able to cook their own food. This gave great relief to the harassed people. Our animators were also involved in distributing government relief-money or materials to the actual beneficiaries, going from door to door risking their own lives.

Another area of intervention of our animators during this pandemic was to intervene to assist the migrants who were very badly caught up due to the pandemic. The fear for losing life, the desire to be with the beloved ones, hunger staring at them for lack of daily income and the longing for their homeland drove them out on to the street to reach their own home. Some travelled on foot, some by cycles, some on hired vehicles spending all the savings they had.



Many of them hungry and thirsty and sleeping on the roadside as the journey was long. It was a very painful scene and we at DSS responded to the situation providing them with dry food and water at different places and borders. It was a time when the migrants were suspected as carriers of the virus and the situation was very critical and fearful as the disease was spreading rapidly. Our staff risked their lives to be of some help for the migrants.

The awareness programs initiated by our animators in the villages, effectively blunted the spread of the disease in the villages compared to the urban areas. The animators made the people aware of the seriousness of the problems and suggested possible measures to contain further spread like- personal hygiene, social distancing and use of masks. DSS was able to prepare and freely distribute masks for the needy in the villages.



The pandemic danced its destructive spell during the peak season for agricultural activities for the most people in the villages as they depend mostly on rain fed crops. Failing this season would mean doom for the rest of the year for them, as they will not have anything to eat for the rest of the year. Sensing this urgency, our animators acted swiftly making the people aware of the various government schemes like NREGS and other agricultural schemes which benefit the people and were able prepare and cultivate the land and now people are getting ready to reap the harvest. Some of my personal reflections in the face of this pandemic are:

1. However severe may be the tragic situation if we all are willing to lend our hands, we can overcome any situation to a great extent.
2. To serve the society, we need not be fully equipped with financial security- assistance will come if we have willingness to serve.
3. It was those, who were badly affected initially, were the ones willing to help financially in spite of their financial difficulties- help from western countries.
4. If there is a good will to collaborate, with other NGOs, Government machineries, volunteers and village leaders, we can surely make a difference in the lives of the people especially the marginalised.
5. The pandemic affected the whole world- It affected the rich, poor, employed, unemployed, young, old and infants. It showed no partiality on the basis of sex or social status, educational qualifications, caste, creed, language or region. The whole world came to assist each other irrespective of any divisions.
6. If concern for one another is nurtured, we can overcome any tragic situations and the world will be a better place to live in.



UPAYA RESPONDS TO COVID-19 AND RETURNING MIGRANT WORKERS

-Fr. Marianayagam, SVD

To deal with the corona virus pandemic, UPAYA (United Progressive Agricultural Youth Association) has been taking a number of measures to contain and manage the situation in our project area along with the empowered officer of Covid-19 pandemic at the block level. Due to the unprecedented call of lockdown, many daily wage laborers lost their jobs and many families did not even get their full day meal. The first phase of nationwide lockdown was called from March 25 to April 14, 2020 and by then no central or state government had launched any relief or social security schemes. Henceforth, UPAYA decided to reach out the most urgent needy persons and help them in a small way. In this process we had identified about 100 families and given them the food kit consisting of edible oil, onion, salt, spices, masks, and toilet soap. The main objective of this relief food kit was to supplement the public ration distribution of rice given for next 3 months, in one stretch. Secondly, people developed the habit of personal hygiene, i.e. washing of hands frequently and use of masks in the crowded places for personal safety.



Proposal of Skill trainings for the Migrants: UPAYA along with the Migration in charge of INE Province have proposed the following courses for the migrant worker: As per the need and the priorities of the time we have been designing the curriculum and courses under UPAYA Science and Technology Community College (U SAT CC). The following courses are proposed for three to four months:

Diploma in Computer Software, Diploma in Nursing Assistant, Diploma in Social Engineering, Diploma in Pre-School Teacher's Training, Diploma in Welding and Fabrication, Certificate Course in Electricals, Certificate Course in Tailoring and Fashion Design, Certificate Course in Hospitality, and Certificate Course in Marketing.

We hope that the skill training will bring the message of optimism among the desperate youth in the village. Alcoholism, theft, cheating, illicit love relationship among young boys and girls and other unsocial behaviours are curtailed in the villages. It may stop people migrating to cities and metro-cities for undignified petty work. The families of migrant workers and most vulnerable groups will benefit from it.



MIGRANTS' CRISIS DURING LOCK-DOWN AND OUR RESPONSE

-Fr. Ashok Minj, SVD

When the whole world was in panic due to the spread of COVID-19, the migrants were the most affected group of people. They had only one thing in mind i.e. by all means going back home and so nothing stopped them from returning to their home town. The reality on the road, by end of nationwide lockdown phase-II, i.e. 15th April to May 3, 2020, a large number of migrant workers had started coming back home by bicycle, on foot, trucks etc. It was found that thousands of them from every Gram Panchayat had registered and when they came, they were kept in the quarantine centre for 21 days. Thus, some of the government buildings and institutions were identified as quarantine centres. In this disturbing situation, there was a resistance from the surrounding villages that they would not allow to make quarantine centre in their village. Hence, we began to create awareness among the people about the disease and its spread. We had visited four Gram Panchayat quarantine centres and the surrounding villages interacting and giving exact information and the facts. As a result, people did not get in panic about the situation and accepted migrant workers to be quarantined in their own village and move on to their homes.



We also gave them direction by networking with other interested group, NGOs to facilitate their safe return from different states. Together with the tribal cell of Rourkela Diocese, we counselled them for their safe return. Looking at the distressed migrants who came back walking, we began to distribute flattened rice, water pouches, etc. With some selfless men and women volunteers, we started to give cooked food packets to the returning distressed migrants. We distributed Food from 16th May 2020 onwards; about 350 food packets were distributed at the Toll Gate Plaza, Barpali, and Laing every day till end of May.



COMMUNITY WELFARE SOCIETY (CWS-ROURKELA) RESPONDS TO COVID

-Fr. Bennyhen K. Peter, SVD

The Government of India declared a three-week nationwide lockdown starting from midnight 24th March 2020 hoping that it would break the COVID-19 infection cycle. People everywhere confined themselves to their homes due to the fear of getting infected with the virus. When the said lock down became a reality, it created a lot of difficulty for the workers engaged in unorganized sector as well as the leprosy patients. To alleviate their pain and distress we designed the following relief activities in the slums of Rourkela.

1. DRY FOOD TO THE DESERVING FAMILIES WITHOUT RATION CARD: We identified 275 families and gave the supplementary food of 2kg rice, 250gm pulses once in three days and once in alternative week we gave 500ml cooking oil. Distribution of this food provision was continued from 24th March to 3rd May 2020. During the third lockdown from 4th to 17th May, we continued the distribution in a more selective manner focusing on those families struggled for food. From 4th phase of the lockdown many people started to go for work so, we reduced the number of beneficiaries to 80 which is continued even now. In collaboration with NSPCL on 19th April and 23rd May we carried out two large scale distribution of 550 and 670 nutrition kits which contained 8 kg of Rice, 1.5 kg of pulses, 1 litre cooking oil, 1 kg sugar, 1 mask, 4 pieces of each bathing and washing soaps respectively to the neediest ones in the society.

2. FEEDING THE PAVEMENT DWELLERS: There were a good number of people living in the pavements of Rourkela city. In good times they had been fed by a group of Youth with the food that they get from different restaurants in the city. As the restaurants were closed, this group came to us for support and we supported them for a period of 11 days to cook food and distribute the same. Later as we found many other voluntary groups are also interested to feed these group of beneficiaries, we withdrew the support to them.

3. FEEDING THE SLUM DWELLERS: On 5th April, the Municipal Corporation of Rourkela invited CWS to collaborate to feed the poor people living in the slums. So, we responded positively till 15th May and we cooked food for 500 persons (500 packets of food for lunch and same amount of food for supper) in our house and as the days passed by, the number of beneficiaries increased to 700 both for the afternoon and evening. We continued with this programme till the 15th of May. When we closed the community kitchen, volunteers from various slums requested us to continue with the programme as there were so many people who were depending on the food distributed for survival; especially beggars, and contract labourers from various parts of the country who are stuck here. So, from 16th May to 7th June about 300 packets of food each in the afternoon and in the evening were distributed.



FOLLOW-UP MEASURES: As the pandemic is continuing still, slum dwellers are facing the worst of their fears; so, responding to this plight, we continue our help to 80 families. Besides this we make multigrain flour, fortified with protein rich pulses, and distribute to 200 children who have been attending our crèches and for the bedridden patients. We give half kilogram of it once in ten days.



COVID-19 PREVENTIVE MEASURES: CWS has three tailoring training centres. During these pandemic days, we have been utilising their service for stitching masks with cloth for the people and distributed 7000 masks. We also distributed sufficient soaps for hand washing and to keep our beneficiaries free from the virus. Our Community Organizers have been going around the slums giving education on preventive measures to safeguard oneself from the pandemic. They are going for home visits to slums wearing three-layer surgical masks and sanitizers to protect themselves from any infection of the virus.

FINALLY, it is very encouraging to state here that people from different walks of life have generously volunteered to support the above-mentioned programmes. We started this programme without much plan, believing in the Providence of God. And God provided us sufficiently to carry out the work very comfortably. The support of the SVD Generalate was very substantial in nature to alleviate the suffering of the poor.



COMMUNITY WELFARE SOCIETY HOSPITAL (CWSH) RESPONDS TO COVID-19

-Fr. Bennychen K. Peter, SVD

The World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11 declared COVID-19 a pandemic, pointing to the over 118,000 cases of the coronavirus illness in over 110 countries and territories around the world and the sustained risk of further global spread. In India and specifically in Odisha people started getting terrified about the sickness. As a result, on the 22nd March when the Prime Minister called for a Janata Curfew, most of the general population supported the idea and the Lockdown was a grand success. It also created huge amount of awareness about the impending danger associated with the illness.

Further, two universal measures that was advised to check COVID-19 then and even today are: strict use of face mask and social distancing. In CWS Hospital we ensured that all the staff and patients entering the hospital wear facemask and adhere to the norms of social distancing. Then as the threat of the sickness was looming over the city, first we produced a video of twelve minutes to create general awareness about the pandemic taking input from doctors in CWS Hospital. We screened it in the hospital, railway station, slums and circulated through social media. As the news of COVID-19 spread was becoming a regular happening, we prepared ourselves to have sufficient PPE for the staff working in CWS Hospital.



COVID-19 is a challenge to every person. It is a greater challenge to health care workers. We have lost one of the most efficient and committed doctors owing to corona virus infection- Dr. Mary Bara. Many of our doctors and members in the staff were infected with Corona Virus. Most of them are now free of

the sickness and some of them are still under treatment. But we never suspended our services in the hospital. Cooperation and commitment of our doctors were phenomenal. To enhance the quality of services in CWS hospital we adhered to the guidelines of the Government faithfully and continued to serve the needy ones who came to the hospital.



Following are our tangible measures we adopted to fight COVID-19 in CWS Hospital:

- Practicing of social distancing from the beginning
- Ensuring the use of face mask by the patients and their attendants
- Providing sanitizer and hand washing facility to the all the patients at the entrance
- Making PPE available (Personal Protective Equipment) to all members in the staff
- Opening of COVID-19 corner to screen patients
- Opening fever ward to treat non-COVID patients
- Obtaining permission to do COVID 19 Antigen test
- Entering into an agreement with IGH (Ispat General Hospital) to do RT- PCR tests for the patients who are symptomatic and COVID 19 Antigen test Negative
- Started a facility to treat COVID 19 positive patients who are mildly and moderately infected

So, in conclusion I would like to quote, *“If you have health, you probably will be happy, and if you have health and happiness, you have all the wealth you need, even if it is not all you want”* (Elbert Hubbard).





COVID-19 RELIEF SERVICE FOR CHILDREN AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

-Fr. Anuranjan Ddung, SVD

MINISTRY AMONG THE DIFFERENTLY - ABLED

Vikas Deepti is very much involved in the education, empowerment and rehabilitation of children with disabilities and persons with disabilities. Even during the time of Shutdown and Lockdown Vikas Deepti was and is still actively involved in reaching out to these less privileged sections of the society. So far, we were able to reach out to 100 children with disabilities and their families with food provisions and medicines for those disabled children who are under regular medication. Moreover, most of these families also belong to BPL category. We provided them with a bag of rice (25 kg), Dal 3 kg, oil 1 kg and soap to 100 children with disabilities and their families. Most of the parents of these children are daily labourers and so we had to help them urgently. Moreover, we also helped a couple of poor differently abled persons with food provisions.



Secondly, we also reached out to all those people and families who have almost nothing to eat; especially the families of widows and migrants' families. On 9th May I came to know about two widows from our locality were finding it hard to feed their families. One of them has two adult sons and another with 3 young children were really struggling and so we gave them a bag of rice (25 kg) and 3 kg dal. They were so emotional when we gave them these provisions and they are very grateful to Vikas Deepti.

As part of the Mission Sunday celebration Vikas Deepti is soon going to provide provisions to 400 poor migrant families including 173 leprosy affected families and other disabled children with one bag of rice (25 kg) Dal-5 kg, Potatoes-10 kg, Onion-5 kg, Oil-1 kg, salt-1 kg, soap and masks for all the family members.

Thanks to the Superior General and Society of the Divine Word for providing us with the funds for the same.



VIKAS DEEPTI AT THE SERVICE OF THE LEPROSY AFFECTED FAMILIES

-Fr. Anuranjan Ddungung, SVD

Vikas Deepti has been involved actively in providing the relief service to the neediest persons and families, especially the leprosy affected families in and around Bargarh. We provided them with provisions that included Rice, Dal and soap for 173 families of leprosy patients in 5 leprosy colonies (Jamurda Colony, Bargaon Leprosy Colony, Ruhunia Colony) in and around Bargarh. They are altogether 435 persons in all. An adult person was given 5 kg of rice and a child received 2 kg of rice. We also made them aware about using masks, washing hands and maintaining social distance and also the need to keep oneself and one's surrounding clean.

LEPROSY
CARE



We also provided Masks, Notebooks, other education materials and provisions to 45 children of leprosy patients. We also made them aware of the importance of washing hands, maintaining social distance and using masks. As part of the Mission Sunday celebration all 173 families will be given 1 bag of rice (25kg), Dal- 5 kg, Oil- 2 kg, potatoes-10 kg, onions-5 kg, salt-1 kg, soap and masks for all the family members.

OCTOBER 2020



KARUNALAYA'S COVID RESPONSE

-Fr. Baptist D'Souza, SVD

Battling against lepra virus all their life, and exposed to the vagaries of nature, the 150 leprosy victims living in the Jeebaramjee leprosy colony in Puri are easily among the most vulnerable persons to Corona virus. Most of them carry on their normal life supported by the medical care provided by Karunalaya Leprosy Care Centre. They all live with their families in the colony in the houses provided for them by Karunalaya and other donors. Those who are single with no one to support or look after them are provided free nutrition at the 'Mercy Kitchen' by Karunalaya.



With the spread of Corona virus, we undertook extensive awareness drive within the community on cleanliness, hygiene and on prescribed precautions to stay safe from COVID-19. The women's groups in each sector of the colony undertook cleaning of the street within the colony. People were advised to use the dustbins provided at the street corners. Regular personal visits and often a casual walk through the colony sent positive messages to the victims that they are cared for during this time of

the pandemic when all others stayed away from the colony. Food Relief they got in plenty from various sources and money from the old age and disability pension from the District social welfare department. Though they did not express it in so many words, what they looked for during this uncertain period was the reassurance that they are considered and cared for. We continued with our bi-weekly medical clinic and normal services at the hospital and mercy kitchen undisturbed. We also shared our concern through the distribution of masks and dry food items both in the colony and at the lepers' settlement near the Puri Railway station.



In our little service to them in this time of crisis & uncertain times, we are remembering our Servant of God Fr. Marian Zelazek and are drawing inspiration from him. His long association of 31 years with the leprosy patients is our motivation. Praying through his intercession for protection of the leprosy victims in our care from COVID 19, has become part of our community prayer. The victims in turn have been sharing their love and concern by advising us caution from infection of the virus by restricting our movements in the colony.

During this time when the employees are either laid off or are given a pay cut, Karunalaya and Ishopanathi Ashram have continued to pay their employees, school & hostel staff their monthly dues without any cut. This is one way, the SVD in Puri has positively responded by affirming our collaborators, in this time of uncertainty.



Confreres engaged in the Pastoral activity at the Parish Church in Puri too have found novel ways of reaching out to the faithful with creative digital services to animate and keep the community connected by passing on useful information on faith practices and various devotions. Their efforts are not limited just to the religious realm - food relief and counselling of families being other ways of reaching out and affirming the people during the time of the pandemic.



COVID RESPONSE FROM A PASTORAL FIELD: A RESPONSE FROM KAHUPANI PARISH

-Fr. Joseph Pais, SVD

In a pastoral oriented sacramental church, COVID times brought in turmoil and uncertainty. It has taken a long time to accept and get adjusted. However slowly we have moved forward and have responded in the following way

SACRAMENTAL LIFE DURING COVID TIMES: when churches are closed and restrictions on sacraments, we encouraged our people:

- To pray in their own homes stressing that it's only God who is capable of a turnover of the situation. God saved his people from utter hopelessness hence believe and He will take care of us was the key word
- Gradually encouraged prayers in small groups of 3- 4 families as Adivasis live in smaller settlement areas
- Eucharistic participation through the media (links from the diocese, other dioceses with similar language, adorations, novena etc were shared specially to the youth and leaders with digital gadgets)
- Sacraments like Baptism in small numbers with protective gears like masks, sanitizers and maintaining distance as much as possible.



AWARENESS OF COVID WAS DONE DURING THE FOLLOWING EVENTS:

- whenever the people came to the parish for consultation, documents, discussions etc constantly they were reminded to follow the rules and regulations in their villages.
- How to deal with migrants in the villages with quarantine issues was discussed whenever we met the village leaders, catechists, teachers nearby etc.
- The catechists in our smaller monthly meetings were reminded to spread awareness in their areas for health and hygiene, masks, refrain from handshake (very common practice) etc., till the pandemic goes away.

We also accompanied some of our poor people with ration and medical help in a small way. We too contributed some financial help for the Chief Minister's fund from the parish.



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DIVYA JYOTI SVD SEMINARY

-Fr. Victor Rodrigues, SVD

The global pandemic Covid-19 has a tremendous impact on the formation programme at Divya Jyoti Community. It has forced us to rethink the ways we live life and the manner we do things in our seminary. Initially, although we were filled with fear and anxiety, it did not take long time to accept the new situation as the man-made calamity and re-establish our faith in God who entrusts us with the new vision and mission of care for the creation and the human beings.

The new strategy we applied in the community was – work more, pray more, sacrifice more and give more. In spite of extreme summer heat every member of the community was involved in the manual labour for two hours daily. The purpose was to save little amount for contributing towards the cause of migrant workers. Instead of employing workers we did it by ourselves. As a community we too decided to increase the hours of praying together. It was a wonderful experience to spend more time in prayer and pray for the migrants and the victims of corona virus. As a sign of solidarity with the migrants we saved money from our ordinary budget and reached out to many poor families by distributing rice, dal and masks. We do have a JPIC wing in our community who involve in the tuition ministry for the dropout and poor children in three villages but due to lockdown rules they were not allowed to enter the villages. But now our community has decided to cancel all the JPIC activities indefinitely due the surge in Covid-19 cases in the villages.



The lockdown period has also enabled us to have formative and transformative impacts on each one of us. It was a time to realise how vulnerable, fragile and dependent beings we are. Some of the webinars helped us to update ourselves and learn new things for life. During the free hours, the scholastics were encouraged to read books. Some of them made use of the time in a creative manner, learning many new skills. Some of them made video clips and through them were involved in proclaiming the Word of God. The new way of doing things have added lot meaning to our life and also made our life more productive. Our scholastics have already begun their classes at KJM (Regional Theologate). This year our community consists of 17 members. There are three fratres in first year, three in second year, four in third year, four in fourth year and three members on the staff. In spite of uncertain and gloomy situation all around, we do have an alternative planned programme for the whole academic year.



SVD COVID RESPONSE IN OUR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

-Fr. Thomas K.C., SVD

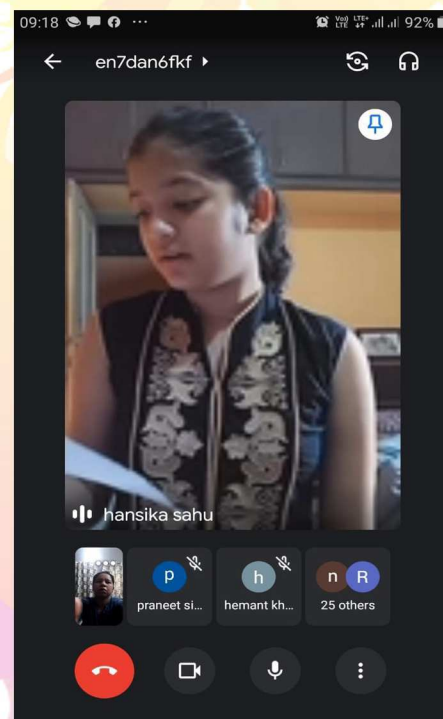
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The Corona virus pandemic is an unprecedented event in the modern history. Corona Virus, though very tiny, is incredibly powerful and all are terrified of it. It has been successful in “locking down” the world. It has also managed to shut down the global economy. As of 13th Oct., it has infected more than 375 million people in 235 countries and snuffed out the lives of 1.2 million. Besides, it has halted the livelihoods of millions; in India alone more than 120 million people lost their jobs in last 6 months.

Someone scientifically calculated the weight of active corona viruses in the world today, and, you will be surprised, its total weight is mere 1 gram! Such a tiny, little “*Mr Corona*” has brought the whole world, with immense military and technological power, virtually on its knees. It even attacked unabashedly Mr. Donald Trump, the most powerful man on the earth. Isn’t it strange that the humans are all now locked up in their homes adorning a face mask, washing their hands repeatedly and looking through the door keyhole when “*Mr Corona*” would visit them!

The COVID-19 pandemic has gravely affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities and colleges. Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As of 30 September 2020, approximately 1.077 billion learners are affected due to school closures in response to the pandemic.

Hence, online learning has become a critical lifeline for education, as institutions seek to minimize the potential for community transmission. Technology can enable teachers and students to access specialized materials well beyond textbooks, in multiple formats and in ways that can bridge time and space. Our schools began online classes as soon as the lockdown started. In the beginning we used WhatsApp to conduct classes and to communicate with students. Soon we began to use other more efficient apps with more features and which are user friendly, like Google Classroom. Today most of the schools are using Google Classroom and Google Meet for conducting classes. Class Dojo app is also used for conducting classes for preparatory classes.



The first hurdle we faced was how to train and prepare our technophobic and tech-illiterate teachers for this new task of teaching students who are sitting at home. So, initially we called teachers to school and trained them:



- i. How to conduct classes using Google Classroom
- ii. Online examination with Google Form
- iii. Creating and editing videos with sound and voice
- iv. Power point with voice-over
- v. For preparatory: Class Dojo App
- vi. Google Meet for live classes.

One of the positive outcomes of this online classes is that the teachers who were technophobic have become highly proficient in the use of laptops, computers, smartphones, and other modern gadgets. It has enhanced their confidence and self-image. Another challenge we faced was how to motivate teachers and students who do not come to school, do not go anywhere else and who do not meet their friends. Continuous and too much familiarity of home atmosphere and home people were making them frustrated and bored. Online classes were prickling their nerves. We thought the best we could do was keeping them occupied. So, we celebrated occasions and conducted competitions involving teachers and students:

1. Independence Day celebrations – live streaming for parents and students
2. Teachers day Celebrations – live streaming for parents and students
3. Gandhi Jayanti celebration – class-wise
4. Competitions: Singing, Dance, & Speech competition (using Flip-Grid App)
5. Drawing competition
6. Science Demo using Google Meet



To give emotional support to students, teachers personally talk to students. The School Councillor is available 24x7 to provide personal help. A Councillor's corner is also created in the Google Classroom. Virtual parent-teacher meetings are also held at regular intervals, where teachers speak to parents and students to guide and give support.

Podcast guidance on parenting was also given to parents with experts speaking to them. Frequent virtual staff meetings are also held to give teachers emotional support, technical help and guidance in their teaching work. Another area of challenge is how to take care of students from disadvantaged families, especially those who are living far away from schools with lack of access to technology or good internet connectivity. This is a group we are still trying to reach out and help. Poor always suffer whenever there is a calamity. Some very poor students we provided with smart phones. We have a technical cell in the school that can be approached and got help for any technical difficulties. We gave poor students fee concession also. The school fee is drastically reduced. Most of the schools are collecting only tuition fees. I should frankly admit here there are still many students who are not attending online classes and assessments. Some due to technical problems, others due to lack of motivation. Parents express their helplessness.



Collection of fees is another difficulty. Initially very few were giving fees. After repeated requests, persuasion and pressure, now good number of parents are paying, especially of students from lower classes. We had been paying half salary to teachers. Recent months teachers of several schools had been paid full salary.

I have described above some of the immediate and urgent responses we undertook to get the teaching-learning process going. But the real response should be when the students and teachers come back to school in the 'normal' or 'new normal' situation. That will be an inescapable responsibility we need to undertake to transform the attitude and behaviours of students to avoid future pandemics. We know one thing for certain that this Corona pandemic is *Anthropogenic*, a result of human activity. When we overrun forest ecosystems, destroy the habitat of species and manipulate plants and animals for profits, we create conducive setting for new diseases. Insatiable human greed, with scant respect for the rights of other species or even for one's own fellow human beings, is at the root of this pandemic and future pandemics. As people with intelligence we need to comprehend that this health emergency is connected to the emergency of extinction and disappearance of other species.

Scientists predict that if we do not stop this conceited human war against the earth and her species, in a hundred years we will have destroyed the very conditions that allowed humans to evolve and survive. Our extinction will follow that of the 200 other species that are being pressed to extinction every day. We will become one more of the one million species threatened today with extinction because of human greed, pride, and irresponsibility.

It is at these human greed, pride and irresponsibility that we will have to respond concertedly when schools will become regular. It will require a common effort with networking of our institutions. As frontier missionaries, SVDs should be at the forefront in caring for the earth and its species. Our life and lifestyle should exemplify this caring attitude. God bless our efforts and may we glorify Him through our endeavours!





BEZDA MISSION AND COVID-19

“When you go through deep waters, I will be with you.”

- Isaiah 43:2

-Fr. Saroj Kumar Hess, SVD

Everything came to a standstill. In trying to lockdown, the government in fact threw everything and everyone into chaos and disorder. Nevertheless, a few days into the lockdown, we saw great distress all around, especially among the labourers and other working-class people around our area and in fact all over the country. People lost their jobs. Daily labourers were most affected for they were not able to afford their daily bread. Many didn't even have any government document for receiving rations as they were from other districts of West Bengal. They were somehow hounded by the local authorities and sent home in bus by the night. There were many of our own people from villages who were badly stranded in the cities in Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and elsewhere too. Their desperation to come home in the face of uncertainty and the anxiety of home people for their coming was very much palpable.

In such a situation, the activities in our mission was affected substantially. Not doing anything about the situation around was not the solution. Realising the need of intervention, the confreres of Bezda mission carried out some relief work for people reducing the pain caused due to the pandemic. We also focussed on reaching out to people in newer ways in our ministries.

RESPONSE TO COVID 19 PANDEMIC IN BEZDA MISSION:

1. Community awareness programmes for prevention against COVID-19 at regular intervals.
2. Providing food & water to migrant labourers returning home on the National Highway.
3. Provided essential commodities such as 10kg rice, 2kg dal, potatoes, onions, cooking oil & salt to the 48 families of nearby brick fields i.e; Angua Sita Bhata, Malapara Puja Bhata & Laxmi Bhata on 21st May 2020.
4. Provided needy families of Bamanpukur and nearby places with dry rations.
5. Distributed dry rations to the needy families of Bezda, Gonpada and others.
6. Distributed dry rations such as Rice, dal, cooking oil, sugar, biscuits & salt in collaboration with Charity sisters to as many as 150 very needy families.
7. Making of masks in our tailoring centre & distribution of the same to general public.
8. Promoting income generation activities among women through Gonpada Navjeevan Welfare Trust's tailoring centre. Production of masks, nighty, petticoat and kurtis to generate some income for the unemployed women.
9. Initiating of special income generation programmes such as goat rearing, pig rearing, poultry farm and fishery, preparation of bamboo products & phenyl making etc... to alleviate unemployment & related effects of Covid-19.



S O C I A L W O R K

10. As the un-lockdown began, we attended to the spiritual needs of the people with mass and other sacraments following all required safety protocols of Covid-19.
11. The classes for our English Medium school moved online as soon as the lockdown was imposed. We were able to attend to the educational needs of our children.
12. We kept in touch with the families of our hostel children enquiring about their studies & well-being. Few needy families helped out.
13. Distributed masks during marriage ceremony following COVID protocols.
14. Felicitated the nursing students on duty call.



Truly, these days of pandemic have been very humbling experience. The pride of humanity has had a great fall. It's time to fall back on God and he will raise us from the ashes. The mission here at Bezda is slowly limping back to normalcy. We hope soon time will come when the mission will be bubbling with life, singing glory to God.



FRATELLI TUTTI :

A CALL TO RESTORE HUMAN DIGNITY & FRATERNITY

-Fr. Lancy Rodrigues, SVD

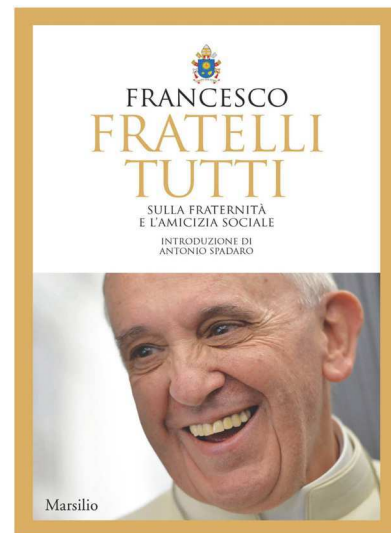
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1. THE TITLE, CONTEXT:

Fratelli Tutti is the third encyclical of Pope Francis, given in Assisi at the tomb of St. Francis, on the vigil of the feast of St. Francis, and on the occasion of 8th anniversary of his pontificate. It is addressed to all persons who will accept an invitation to dialogue. *Fratelli Tutti* is an expression of St. Francis of Assisi (*Admonitions 6,1*). St. Francis used this expression to propose a way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel. Pope Francis reveals that the global health emergency “Covid-19 pandemic” unexpectedly erupted on the face of the earth and “no one can face life in isolation”. He invites all men & women to a life of love that transcends all the barriers of geography, caste, creed, and religion to reach-out all sections of the people.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ENCYCLICAL:

It is a social encyclical dedicated to fraternity and social friendship. It treats the universal dimension of the doctrine of fraternal love. It proposes to dream as a single human family and to encourage everyone as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh. Maria Antoinette of the Huffington post observed that “*Fratelli Tutti*” is a social & economic encyclical for the post-Covid world, a text of reason and heart with which the Pontiff speaks to the world about the necessary changes in social and productive organization, the need to safeguard Creation, the need to take responsibility for one another, and of the increasing need for human fraternity.



3. THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENCYCLICAL:

The Encyclical consists of a general introduction and 8 chapters which reflect the following approaches to usher in a new vision for humanity.

i) **Dark clouds over a closed World:** The encyclical reflects many distortions and deformation of concepts such as democracy, freedom, justice; the prevalence of the culture of waste, unemployment, racism, poverty, trafficking etc. (Sec. 10 -28).

ii) **A stranger on the Road:** Pope radiates hope amidst gloom by citing a luminous example such as the “Good Samaritan” to care for the frail and vulnerable and to become a neighbor to others. Love builds bridges (Sec. 64-88).

iii) **Envisaging and Engendering an open World:** Pope Francis exhorts us to go “outside of our self” in order to find fuller existence in another. The right to live with dignity cannot be denied to everyone since rights have no borders, no one can remain excluded regardless where they are born. (Sec. 89-126)



iv) **A Heart open to the Whole World:** Migrants with their lives at stake are to be welcomed, protected, supported, and integrated. Pope points out several indispensable steps- global governance, an international collaboration for migration (Sec.38-132).

v) **A Better kind of Politics is the need of the hour:** The task of politics is to find a solution to all that attacks fundamental human rights, the marketing of human organs, weapons, drugs, sexual exploitation, slave labour, terrorism, organized crime etc. (Sec.159-189).

vi) **Promotion of Dialogue and friendship in Society:** From dialogue and friendship emerges the concept of life as the art of encounter with everyone particularly those living in the peripheries. (Sec. no 215-224).

vii). **Paths of Renewed Encounter:** The value and promotion of peace is reflected as it is peace which is interconnected to truth, Justice, mercy by thinking and acting in terms of common good of the community. In combating the structural causes of poverty and inequality, the State has the responsibility to aid the poor. Pope Francis insists that the lasting peace is based on “global ethic of Solidarity and service”. He calls for positive action to remove the “Constant threat of wars, to eliminate threat of chemical and biological weapons”. What we need today is total elimination of nuclear arms and a constant threat of war. Pope emphasizes the “Sacredness of life” and the abolition of “Death penalty” (Sec. 255-265).

viii) **Religion and Fraternity:** Pope Francis emphasizes that Religion is at the service of fraternity in the world. He makes it clear that the terrorism is not due to religion but due to the fact of erroneous interpretations of religious texts as well as policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, and oppression (Sec. 283-284).

4. POPE FRANCIS ON PANDEMIC COVID-19:

Pope Francis highlights the impact of the pandemic COVID-19 on humanity by noting that “how vulnerable and interconnected we are and how painful if we do not take care of one another, starting with least with those who are impacted, including creation, we cannot heal the world”. He continues to challenge people who live as “individuals”



who are “indifferent to the needs of others”. Pope Francis explains that the pandemic is a crisis, and we do not emerge from a crisis the same as before, either we came out of it better or we come out of it worse. The harmony created by God asks that we look at others, the needs of others, the problems of others in communion, recognizing the human dignity in every person, whatever his or her race, language or condition might be. Pope Francis also speaks of the “Universal Destination of goods” including fairer distribution of wealth and the principle of solidarity. He laments the situation of inequality in the world as we see only a few wealthy people possess more than all the rest of humanity.



5. MIGRANT'S CRISIS AND THE PROMPT RESPONSE OF THE SOCIETY OF THE DIVINE WORD, INDIA-EAST (INE) PROVINCE:

We have seen many painful visual images of those “Migrants” during the initial days of the lockdown where the migrants with their families, and belongings walking in the hot sun for miles, waiting in hordes for a railway or bus ticket, migrants in open shelter homes with no proper facilities, migrants begging for food etc. It is important to note that the recent pandemic – induced lockdown has shattered the trust the migrants had with the employers and the trust migrants had with the governments. They felt deeply hurt, as they were not treated as “contributors to the Indian economy”.

As we have been facing the great challenges of this pandemic, we have realized that overcoming this crisis is possible only if we come together and work for the common good. We have received news and information from our missionaries, sharing their pastoral programs and initiatives to attend to the needy, the abandoned, the sick and the migrants, among others. Our missionaries are not alone in this endeavor. We are happy to know that they serve the least in our society in collaboration with our lay partners in our schools, institutions, parishes, and universities.

We do not know how long this pandemic will last. It is too early now to think of and to present new ways and strategies for realizing our mission. Yet one thing is clear: we need each other; our sense of unity as a family has to be strengthened and lived out consequently. We have learned that to face the pandemic, everybody counts. We can foresee that to enter the new situation after the pandemic requires from each one of us a renewed commitment as a member of the Society. Solidarity and responsibility from every member, community and province is our strength. We pray for that holy light to illumine our path and steps. This light is the Lord's light, which is the same light we share with our confreres, our families, and our lay partners. May the Lord bless us and keep us as we walk together on our journey.



As Divine Word Missionaries in INE Province, JPIC has tried to reach-out thousands of poor, marginalized and migrant workers with food, water, face masks, sanitizers and have offered help to people in collaboration with the government and non-government organizations including “Caritas India”. The beneficiaries of our outreach hail from the districts of Jharsuguda, Rourkela, Sambalpur, Bargarh, and Puri.



MISSION ANIMATION PROTOCOL

-Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, SVD

Mission animation is an important task of the Provincial Mission Secretary. The following programmes have been scheduled for the year June 2020 to May 2021.

1. Confreres in pastoral ministry: renewal and updating programmes for confreres involved in pastoral/missionary work for 2 days. It is open to all confreres.
2. Ongoing formation for the young confreres of first 5 years in ministry and the deacons, in order to share their experiences and to motivate them by input sessions on relevant topics for 3 days.
3. SVD week/weekend Celebration in our parishes/schools/institutions during the week of Founder's Feast (around 15th January).
4. Animation of lay associates: This could be done in 2 centres in Rourkela and Jharsuguda for one day 50 persons.
5. Gathering of parents of SVDs in one place for a day for 50 persons.
6. Seminars for couples
7. Workshops for families

COVID-19 pandemic has created a unique situation where we cannot gather together to conduct programmes. Hence ongoing formation for the young confreres was conducted through a zoom online meeting on 13th October 2020. If situation does not improve, many of the animation programmes would be conducted online.

MISSION ANIMATION PROPELLING YOUNG CONFRERES TOWARDS SERVICE

-Fr. Silvaraj Duddu, SVD

Life is a combination of numerous opportunities with multiple experiences. Although everyone wishes to grab its happy moments at first instance, the challenging ones too have their own amazing contribution. For us, the young confreres, the period of COVID-19 falls under the latter group although it seemed to make our active and enthusiastic ministries more passive. We, who are trained with a mission-oriented formation long to be on our heels in reaching out to people in our ministries to assist them in their pastoral, educational, and social requirements towards building up a dignified community. We try our best to coordinate quite actively with our respective directors sharing our modern and technical proposals in planning out new strategies towards seeking better results in our assigned ministries.

As life marched ahead quite busily with new initiatives and programs in our responsibilities, the gradual dawn of pandemic has had shocked us shattering our zeal and enthusiasm. The life ahead had seemed to be quite passive and dull as the lockdown was announced. It was then that we put on our thinking caps to plan out as to how to utilize the time during the lockdown.



As sensitive Divine Word missionaries, we were concerned about the wellbeing of the people who lacked a proper daily livelihood. We began to enquire about those families who struggled to meet their minimum needs.

Thanks to all the benefactors of our Society because of whose great generosity, we could distribute to the needy rations like Rice, Dal, Oil, and also COVID precautions like sanitizers, soaps, and face-masks. On a special note, reaching out to the migrants on the highways who traveled for thousands of kilometers with congested transport facilities and on foot was another unforgettable experience. It is not exaggerating to say that all those experiences helped us to feel solidarity and gave us a lot of internal joy and immeasurable satisfaction for being able to share the struggle of the people in a small way.



On the other hand, we were glad to find more time for ourselves to spend in prayer, read the Word of God, get in touch with some inspiring books, to improve our health by regular manual work, exercise, yoga, and meditation. However, we knew it was all not enough as the thoughts of reaching out to people kept on bothering us and we began to reflect more. In fact, as we were free from active ministries, we had enough time to think more creatively. One of the best ways to get in touch with people was in virtual platforms. Unfortunately, we were not experts in it but we didn't give up. We learned through YouTube tutorials and guidance from our own companions to creating individual channels and WhatsApp groups. We explored the possibilities for online Eucharistic celebrations, preaching retreats and recollections to religious and small groups of people, sharing of reflections on daily mass readings, spreading awareness on COVID 19 pre-cautions, and motivation for a better life. We took initiative to organize sessions for the youth on the virtual model of ZOOM to accompany them even during the pandemic. We got into improving our technical as well as writing skills. We posted interesting and inspiring write-ups through online mode creating virtual groups for all those who had the technical facilities.

Gradually, as the period of unlocking began, our hopes to meet people physically began to sprout up. We were glad and quickly visited our mission places with a longing to help out with whatever is best possible. Of course, we took sufficient care to take enough of pre-cautions in actualizing our ministries for people. We could see the new joy on the faces of people when they participated in the physical holy mass after many days.



In spite of the prevalent virus, we are concerned about the spiritual needs of people and hence reached out to even interior missions to administer sacraments. We visited a good number of families and listened to their difficulties in the pandemic and counseled them to the best of our capacity.

We are convinced that challenges can't limit the missionary explorations. When we look at our life during COVID19, surely it has been a time of learning to keep up our dedication and enthusiasm in spite of surrounded limitations. We do believe that everything that happens in and around us has its own unique contribution to life although it might seem to be challenging. Overall, it has been a positive season that helped us to improve our reading, reflecting, writing, counseling, and technical skills. We do hope that with the intervention of God's mercy, life would come back to the normal system.

MISSION ANIMATION FOR ONGOING-FORMATION

-Fr. Donald Carel Lobo, SVD

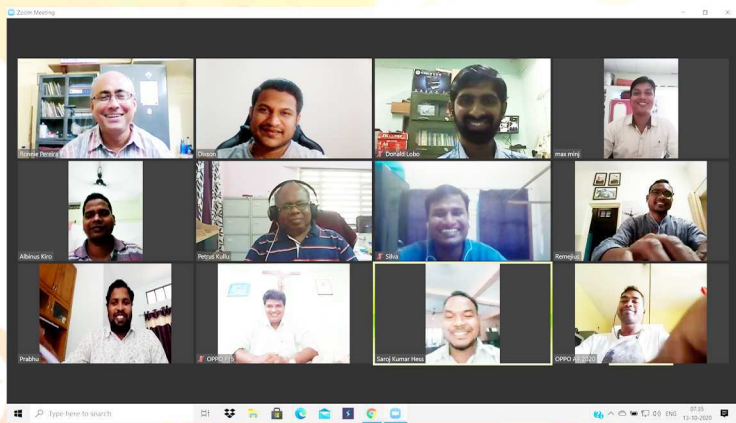
As a part of the Ongoing Formation Programme for the young confreres in INE Province, an Online Animation Programme was organised for a half a day on 13 October 2020 using zoom platform by Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, Mission Secretary of INE who is also in-charge of the young confreres in the Province. Two deacons and eleven young Priests ordained in last five years came online to attend this animation programme. A few of them were not able to attend all the sessions due to their classes, weak internet signals and other technical issues. After the words of welcome by Fr. Ronald Pereira and an opening prayer by the young confreres, Fr. Petrus Kullu, the Provincial Superior gave the orientation talk for the young confreres. He focused his sharing on his personal experience of priestly life. He said priesthood is a God's precious gift not everyone is privileged to have it. It is a blessed life. It brings blessings to the people of God. He emphasised that they need to have this realisation only then they can take care of the Priesthood. He urged them to maintain the holiness and purity of life by practising the vows, celebration of the Eucharist, administering the sacrament, reading of the scripture, faithfulness to the religious life, healthy relationship with all, becoming a good human, taking care of our human feelings, emotions, body, mind and soul.

Fr. Petrus also presented to the confreres the driving force for one's Priesthood. They are: Passion for Christ, compassionate love for people, and passion for the work and ministry. While sharing about the first few years of Priesthood which is a time of learning the things in the field, he said about the various challenges the young confreres need to face in the missions. They are: adjusting oneself in the new community where there are senior and experienced confreres, the new culture, language, etc.; the modern world with gadgets and internet which may yet take away one's interest for the poor and common people; the relationship with the complementary sex; our attitude and responsibility towards the money and wealth of the Society and common people, etc.



He then motivated the confreres to make good impression during these initial stages of Priesthood, choose a particular type of ministry in the Province and if needed go for qualifying oneself with the higher studies. Finally, he said that the people always expect from a young religious God experience, prayer, hard work, availability and the human qualities like love, care, concern and understanding.

Fr. Luis Ronald Pereira with the power point presentation and interactions made the session more interesting and mind capturing. He began his sharing saying, “We become what we aspire to become”. He said that we are human beings with limitations and not the angels with wings and therefore he explained to them, how important for one to have a vision and mission for life. How the positive and negative aspects of life can impact one’s vision and mission for life. As the young confreres are in the initial stage of the missionary life and just beginning to base their life, he asked them to become aware of the foundation of life on which one’s life is based upon. This foundation of life will determine one’s strength to face the storms of life. He also helped them to introspect and check different aspects of life which governs them. He inspired them to appreciate the preciousness of one’s own life, because neither they nor their parents have paid anything for their life. Life is a free gift one needs to radiate the joy and happiness to others. Like mirror others must be able to see their complete image and not the distorted image which is seen in the broken mirror. He then invited the young confreres to share their experiences of priestly life keeping the focus on: joy of being SVD missionary, challenges in living one’s own missionary commitment and their response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.



All the confreres present for the online animation programme got the chance to share their life experiences. All were grateful to the Society for the encouragement, appreciation and support they receive from the administration, community members and from the mission partners. The aspects of

interculturality, diversity, hospitality, etc., are the ones which make them different from others and this brings great joy for many of the confreres. It is joy to learn many new things in the missions, especially the happiness of the people when they meet them or attend to them in their needs helped the confreres to be a joyful missionary.

Young confreres also shared some of their struggles or challenges in the missions. Those who were in the interior places in the missions yet time feel lonely and difficult to find someone to share the struggles of life. Those confreres who are from other states struggle with the broken language to communicate with the people. Those who are appointed as the treasurers struggle to learn the new job, as it is a demanding responsibility. Keeping up-to-date with



the fast changing technology to reach out to the people is also another challenge in the missions faced by the young confreres. Yet the young confreres in INE have been positively responding to these challenges and growing in the spirit of religious life.

COVID-19 pandemic, though a crisis, yet has given opportunities to serve joyfully the needy people as well as helped us to learn things for life. Many of the confreres shared that the time of lock-down, isolation, uncertainty, anxiousness, sad news, struggles of people, etc., have made them to pray and reflect more. Joyfully the confreres came forward to distribute the ration, give awareness programme wherever possible, contacted, and counselled people over phone. Some of the confreres with their own interest learnt the modern ways of reaching out to the people through YouTube, zoom, google meet and other social media platforms, especially to spread the daily gospel messages. In a way, though it is painful to see and hear what was happening during the pandemic, yet it was a joy to respond to the situation. The crisis and the response to the crisis has given them a different outlook altogether.

The online animation and sharing lasted for four and half hours. At the end the young confreres were grateful to God for keeping them hale and hearty during this pandemic. They also expressed their gratitude to Fr. Petrus Kullu, the Provincial Superior for being present all through the programme and thanked Fr. Luvis Ronald Pereira, the Mission Secretary, for contacting all the young confreres and animating the group through zoom video conferencing. They acknowledged their own companions for making themselves available for the online programme and sharing their missionary experiences despite their classes and other commitments.





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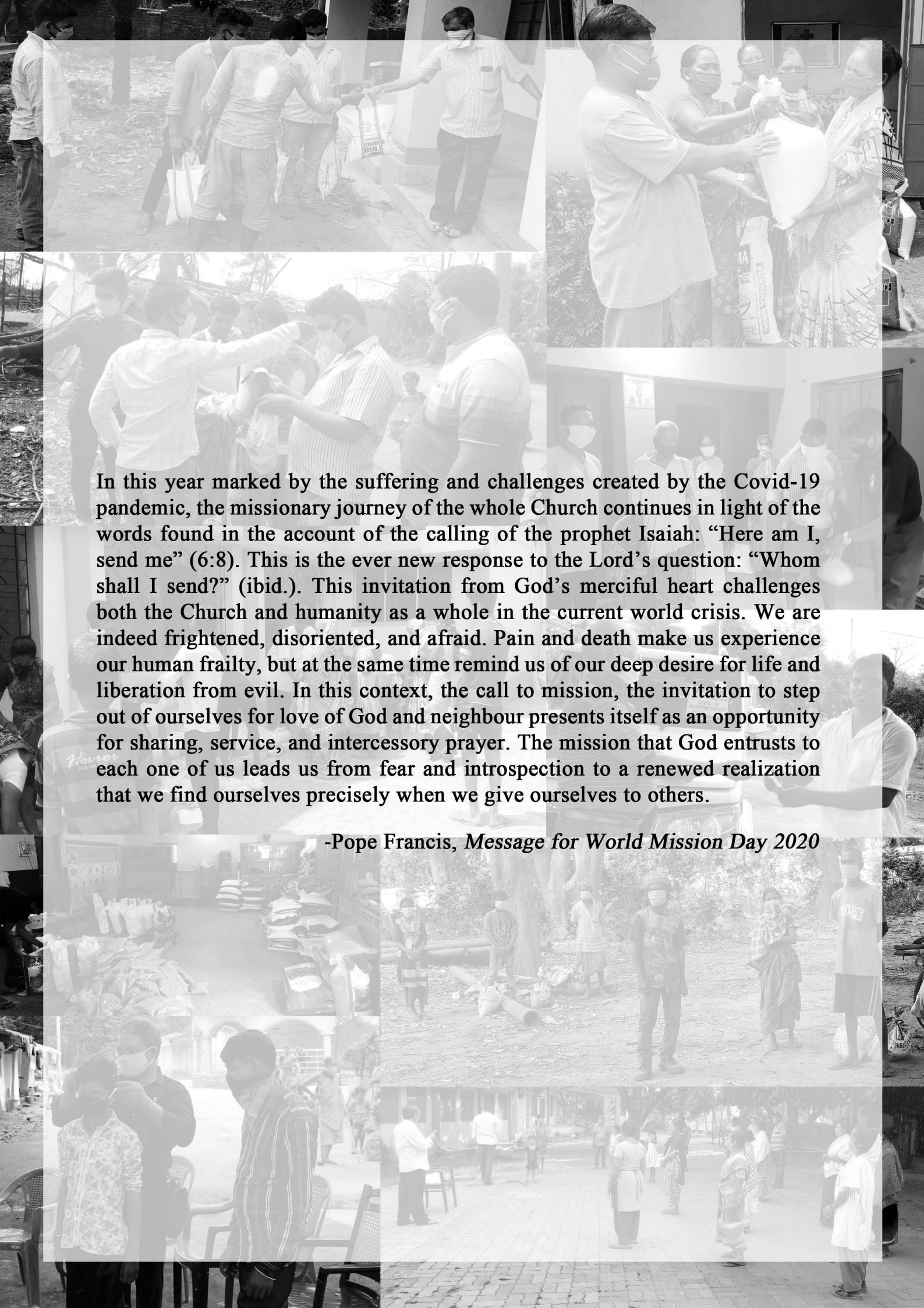
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In this year marked by the suffering and challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the missionary journey of the whole Church continues in light of the words found in the account of the calling of the prophet Isaiah: “Here am I, send me” (6:8). This is the ever new response to the Lord’s question: “Whom shall I send?” (ibid.). This invitation from God’s merciful heart challenges both the Church and humanity as a whole in the current world crisis. We are indeed frightened, disoriented, and afraid. Pain and death make us experience our human frailty, but at the same time remind us of our deep desire for life and liberation from evil. In this context, the call to mission, the invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and neighbour presents itself as an opportunity for sharing, service, and intercessory prayer. The mission that God entrusts to each one of us leads us from fear and introspection to a renewed realization that we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others.

-Pope Francis, Message for World Mission Day 2020