



SANDESH

Indian Montfortian Communication

VOL. 1 NO. 4 2019



From the Desk of the Provincial

As we come closer to the Christmas days, we await the message of Salvation to incarnate: "Today a saviour has been born" (Lk 2: 11). This salvation is possible for the whole human race. We rejoice at the birth of not just a vulnerable defenceless baby in swaddling clothes but in the child that is "a Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." (Is 9:6).

This vulnerable child lying in a manger has a lot to speak to the world. 'Here is a God, who appears as a defenceless child, is not the angry, arrogant and judgmental God that we might have been taught about in our younger days. A God who appears as a defenceless child breaks out from the categories of those who think only in cold rationality. We may be able rationally to come to accept the existence of God, but human rationality will not lead us to the God who appears in the birth of Jesus Christ'. A God who appears as a defenceless child is not a useless fairy tale: A God who appears as a defenceless child is a powerful advocate for us: not a God who above all claims personal prerogatives. It is not just that we can identify this God as one like us in all our challenges, but a God who identifies himself with us and brings us into his own life of grace and truth and salvation.

We have to ask ourselves how a God who appears as a defenceless child challenges us about how we live our lives. The God who rejects conventional defences challenges us also to be there for all those who are wounded and alone and burdened and troubled. We are called to be with them unconditionally, not building up within us defence mechanisms based on prestige or security or self-centeredness.

Christmas calls us to change our lives. It is not about pointing to others. We know well how much self-centeredness remains in each of our hearts. We know how much we are infected with the same sense of superficiality which can easily be proliferated in our world. We celebrate the birth of Jesus and we regain at this celebration something of the wonder we experienced as children. But wonder is not something for children alone. We all have to rediscover that sense of wonder in the face of what goodness and honesty, justice and integrity can attain.

We pray during this Christmas for our communities, for our Church and our society, that these may be a space where we learn selflessness after the example of Jesus who came to give Himself for our salvation without any pretentiousness. Pretentiousness divides: mercy and compassion heal and reconcile. We need the courage to dream and not be imprisoned in our conventional world of idealism but be pragmatic in being as true Montfortians. Let the message of the birth of Jesus in simplicity and defenselessness helps us to understand that such dreaming is possible. Simplicity and defenselessness helps us to understand that such dreaming is possible.

Vice-Province of India
Fr J Joseph SMM
Vice-Province of India

Annual Retreat in the Vice-Province



After many years the annual retreat for Montfort Fathers was organized between 28th October to 8th

November. It was organized in two different batches. Fr. Jason CSSR from Kerala Province preached for the first group. The retreat basically was scripture-based and very lively experiences of Fr. Jason inspired all the priests who participated in the retreat.

Fr. Tommy CMF from Bangalore Province

preached for the second group who also spoke

on priesthood and vocation from biblical perspective. He created more love towards one's own priesthood and it's a dedication to the church at large. He humbled us with the symbolic gesture of washing each other's feet, passing of our powerful priestly blessing to one another, overcoming each other's differences with the sharing of peace. He also led from the front by animating a lot of spiritual activities such as Night Vigil, Adoration, Rosary processions, etc. All the more it was an enriching experience.



Children's day celebration at Scholasticate:

Maria Bhavan Community celebrated the Children's Day program on the 17th of November 2019. These children are mainly from the orphanages run by the religious and also by



the laypeople. This year the total number of the children was 106 and we were immensely happy to organize the program for them. The cultural program was excellent and outstanding, we all enjoyed their program. The purpose of this cultural program was to give chances to exhibit their talents, to empower and to encourage them moreover to love them. After that, the program was concluded with the prize distribution by the guests of Honor Provincial Fr J Joseph SMM, Fr. Deepak SMM, President of the Lay Associates, and by the Police Inspector, Mrs. Lakshmi. For the success of this program many were instrumental starting from Fr. Provincial, Montfort Lay Associates, Montfort Fathers from different communities, the sponsors and the volunteers, we are grateful to them. I also thank Maria Bhavan community for their hard work, dedication.

Vocation Promoters Meeting: The meeting was held in Sneha Bhavan, Kanathi soon after the second batch retreat on 8th November 2019. The team who were present along with the Vocation Promoter (Fr. John Marie SMM) for the meeting were Fr J Joseph SMM, Fr. Reni Joseph SMM, Fr. Lawrence SMM, Fr. Prakash SMM, Fr. Nashwin SMM. It was the first meeting, planning and discussing for the year ahead. There were a lot of points discussed in the agenda mainly focusing on the challenges in the vocation promotion and the vocation promoter urged all the team members to make the first round of travel and contact the candidates and come prepared for the next meeting scheduled in the month of January. It was a fruitful meeting and was concluded by the Vote of Thanks by the Vocation Promoter.



Assembly Preparation Committee: The committee headed by Fr Reni Joseph met in Mysore for the second time on 26/11/2019 and

confirmed the theme for the Assembly: **"Fraternal Communion for Effective Mission"**. The planning was done to its minute details in the first meeting and now this meeting stressed on the timetable and organized the points for discussion. It was also suggested to ask Fr Arnold to be the Moderator for the Assembly. The main points for discussion were suggested like: Spirituality, Formation, Mission, Finances. At the same time, the Committee also suggested allocating time for evaluation and to seek suggestions for future plans. We look forward to this event in the presence of Superior General and the team.

Committee for Liturgy in the Vice-Province:

Committee for Liturgy under the guidance of Fr Selvakumar was held on Monday 25th at 4:30 pm in Maria Bhavan. The Liturgy is the source and summit of the life and the mission of the church (SC no. 10). The members of the "Committee for Liturgy" namely Fr. Peter Swamy, Fr. Peter M, Fr. Deepak, Fr. Madhivanan, Fr. Nashwin and Fr. Selva Kumar had the first meeting together with Fr. Provincial, J Joseph. It was a fruitful meeting and an enriching one for our Vice-Province.

The main purpose of our gathering was to plan all the liturgical celebrations of the Vice-Province so that they could be made more meaningful. In the meeting, it was discussed how we could prepare a short commentary in English and be translated into different languages keeping in mind the candidate's mother tongue.

Apart from this, it was also discussed about the upcoming Ordination which will take place on 9th January 2020 in Bangalore. In connection with this Ordination, we also have discussed the Theme for the Ordination, Readings, Master of Ceremony, etc. May St. Montfort lead us to witness and to bear fruits for humanity.

Indians Missionaries Far out in the American world: Pramod & Jesu

Dn. Jesu Doss SMM:

Mission in Peru-Brazil Province

What am I asking for? Liberos: free men. Men always available...always with the words of Samuel on their lips: Here am I; always ready



to be on the move and to suffer with you and for you (Prayer for Missionaries). Inspired by these words of Our Founder

Fr. De Montfort and by his missionary life, all through these years, I have learned to be available for the mission and to the necessity of the congregation. Now at this new phase of my life, I am excited to venture into a new mission in Brazil as a missionary. I know it would be a great experience which also includes a great challenge in this new mission. But I know that it is part of every Montfort Missionary. As he himself said that "If we do not risk anything for God, we will do nothing".

Dn. Philip Pramod SMM

Mission in Nicaragua, America Central

The Nicaraguan mission founded on October 4, 1974 by the province of the United States, today has five missionaries: two Nicaraguans, two from Indonesia and one from India (myself) and we also accompany a candidate in the pre-novitiate formation process. Our mission is in the central part of the country (Chontales), where we serve two parishes, namely, Apóstol Santiago (Apostle saint James) in the village called Santo Tomás and María Reina de todos los corazones (Mary Queen of all Hearts) in the village called La Gateada with 21 rural communities (substations).



Nicaragua, very far from India in terms of distance but very close to my country in terms of

customs and traditions because people are very much committed to the Church and I always admire their enthusiasm and missionary spirit. God fearing people and very respectful towards priests and religious. Their collaboration in the rural mission is splendid. I am glad to be the part of the mission here, joyfully express my freedom and availability and ready to take risk for the God's mission walking through the footsteps of Father de Montfort.

Confreres Visit the Vice-Province

Bishop Rozario SMM: Msgr Rozario Menezes visited the community of Adarsh Bhavan and also some of the communities while he was in India for Holidays. Bishop's concern with his presence for the Vice-Province is encouraging and helpful. The contact and association with the SMM are very much useful to the administration.

Bishop Rajarao SMM: While Bishop Rozario was at Adarsh Bhavan, Bishop Raja also joined with him to visit the confreres at Adarsh Bhavan and Maria Bhavan. Bishop's encouraging attitude and presence bring more Montfortian affiliation.

Fr Maria Cletus: Fr Cletus was here in India for his Holidays in the month of October. He also paid a visit to the Provincial House along with his brother priest and visited Fr. Anthony Pereira. He also had his niece's wedding on the 22nd of October.

Fr Jesu Manickam SMM: Fr Jesu Manickam who came for holidays visited Mysore, and Bangalore communities and also some of the mission stations in Tamil Nadu. He shared his

experience in Germany as an SMM priest for 14 years. He continues to be interested in the upbringing of Vice-Province.

Frs Prashant SMM & Robert SMM: The fathers from PNG mission have come down after long three years of mission work. They will be in the country for three months visiting their families and SMM communities. They also will participate in Assembly and in the Ordination ceremony. Many of the young Seminarians and young priests are excited to see them. Their challenging lifestyle is a great inspiration to all the young Montfortians. We wish them a pleasant stay in India.



Upcoming programs

Assembly in the Vice-Province: After a year of the present administration, the council felt the need for an evaluation and so, it is planned for a day of evaluation in the presence of Superior General and his other two councillors, namely, Fr Felix and Fr Arnold and the General Bursar, Fr Balaswamy. The main purpose of this assembly is to evaluate the past year and how the administration has to proceed towards its upkeep and enhancement. We hope to have a lively discussion and fruitful suggestions for the future of the Vice-Province.

Ordination of Deacons Philip Pramod and Jesu Doss: Rev. Msgr. Francis Serrao SJ, Bishop of Shimoga diocese will ordain the two deacons on Thursday 9th January 2020 in the presence of Fr Luiz Augusto Stefani SMM, Superior General, and his team. The ceremony is planned to be held in St Thomas Forane Church close to Maria Bhavan, Scholasticate, Bangalore. The event will be

more solemnized by the presence of great dignitaries from Europe and America.

Highlights from the Council Meeting (Nov 27th):

- ❖ Planning for the Ordination was discussed and partial arrangements are already made: Number of people to be invited, the place for celebration, the Bishop to preside over and to ordain were all discussed.
- ❖ Assembly for 8th January is fixed and the matter of organizing it was entrusted to the Assembly committee.
- ❖ Maria Bhavan Terrace needs attention and better use of the place. Therefore, a project is being prepared.
- ❖ Coming academic year college studies and its venue is still on discernment until the assembly time.
- ❖ Montfort Farm House is expected to be renovated and therefore, estimation and plan is sought.
- ❖ Guru Mandir's land valuation and estimation for the registration is being worked out.
- ❖ Montfort Nivas: Pre-novitiate building needs renovation and a project is prepared for the same.
- ❖ Shantinagar Mission: Telugu medium school needs re-planning in its structure, staff, and medium of language.

Health Updates

Bro. Shaiju: Bro Shaiju has undergone a second surgery in Aster Med City Hospital in Kerala. He is now discharged from the hospital and at home with his mother and brother. Fr Provincial, Fr Reni and Fr Jason met the Doctor with an appointment at Ernakulam on 28th of November.

As per the doctor's advice, Bro

Shaiju has to get back to his normal life, his study, and other routine matters. That will help him to be getting healed faster. At the moment, he doesn't need any radiation treatment. Yet, he will be under observation and after three months Doctor will meet him. We thank God for the healing touch and we acknowledge and thank all who took trouble, especially, Frs Shibi and Reni and the family members to care for Bro Shaiju without forgetting Fr Selvam and Maria Bhavan community. We indebted to all your prayers.

Fr. Norbert: Recently he was not keeping well and was asked for coming down to Bangalore for the treatment if necessary, but he preferred to stay with his sister and he is recovering of his ill-health.

Fr. Alphonse: We need to wait for Doctor's advice. The care-taker of Fr. Alphonse, Mr. Patrick's term ends by December. Presently someone else is already appointed.

Fr. K J Michael: He is still in tablets for TB. He is presently placed in Gurumandir and gradually he will be shifted to the place where we identify for the elderly/sick confreres.

Fr. Anthony: (Dialysis) is going on twice a week at St. John's Medical College. He has recovered from facial paralysis and now waiting for a small surgery on his hand to set the veins to help for Dialysis.

Fr. Varaprasad: Provincial visited him to encourage him on his mission. He is on medication for his health issues. He is also having Hernia which needs to be treated. Recently he was admitted to the hospital for Typhoid. He is back to the parish. Bro Allan is with him to help.

The accidental death of a Student of St. Montfort School, Kurupam

With deep sentiments of sadness, I would like to inform you about the School bus accident, occurred on 22.11.2019. The incident happened while the children were going back home after



school. The accident took place at the village by name, Thalladumma, near Chinnamerangi at 4:00 pm.

On the bus, along with the driver, there were two teachers to escort the children. The child Abhiram (LKG) got down at his stop (right in front of the house). The grandmother of the child was waiting to receive him on the other side of the road. The child, at first went back to the bus, but upon hearing the horn of the speeding car from behind, he was frightened and ran to the front of the bus which started moving. Since the boy is too small, the driver could not see the



child from his seat. The child was hit not with a heavy force, since he was running, with the mild hit of the bus he fell down on the road and hit his head against the road. According to the doctors, due to blood clots, he died on the spot. The whole accident took place, while many people were watching.

The child was taken to the hospital immediately but declared dead by the doctor. The driver also went to the hospital but upon seeing the commotion he went and surrendered in the Chinamerangi Police station. On the same day, the body was sent to the postmortem.

Since Fr Francis was not present as he was out on schoolwork along with Fr Balashowri when the accident occurred, Frs. Kiran, Ravi, Bro. Abhilash and other laypeople took the initiative to do the formalities. The Postmortem was done and the body was buried. May the soul of Abhiram rest in peace. Fr Francis was present

for the burial and also blessed the body at the cemetery. In the evening at 4.30 pm – we were called for the settlement with the mediation of Ex-MLA Mr. Chandra Shekar Raju. Mr. Chandra Shekar Raju – former MLA, comes from the kingly family, whose word is respected by all the surrounding people

Though the incident was an unfortunate one, it did not have too much impact on the institution. The MLA and other elders of the locality have high respect and expectation from us. The MLA said it is a blessing that such a missionary school is established in this locality.

The parents of the other children were very sympathetic towards us. The incident happened on 22.11.2019 – Friday, the school was opened on 24.11.2019 – Monday, and now the functioning is normal. The School staff and Management thanks everyone for their prayerful support.

Birthdays

December		December	
Fr. Peter M	06	Fr. Balashowri	25
Fr. Michael KJ	06	Fr. Premkumar	28
Fr. Johnson	13	Fr. Michael M.	30
Fr. Balaraju	23	Fr. Deepak	30

January	
Fr. Peter Swamy	06
Fr. Rayappa	20
Fr. John Marie	31

