

# Calcutta Jesuit Newsletter

কলকাতা যীশুসংঘের বার্তা



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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Image of Durga in "Ei Shomoy"  
by Krishnendu Chaki

\*Subhash Anand,  
"Major Hindu Festivals :  
A Christian Appreciation"

Recently, a Bangla Daily, "Ei Shomoy", had its full front page displaying a colourful image of Durga with an editorial titled "Bhitor Hote Bahir Hoye", meaning "Come Out of Yourself". The image, however, showed, not the traditional Durga slaying the buffalo demon, but one in which she is giving peace with all ten hands. The editorial takes the first line of a Tagore song, which says, "Come out of yourself and stand outside and the world will respond to you" and goes on to develop the theme that the coming festival season is for all and therefore an effort is to be made to make the joyous occasion a time of happiness for all. The paper then announces what it will do along these lines.

For us, who live in a multi-religious and multi-cultural land, the documents of Vatican 2 encourage us to understand that "in Hinduism men explore the divine mystery and express it both in the limitless riches of myth and the accurately defined insights of philosophy" and that "the Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions." (Nostra Aetate, No.2). Vatican 2 encourages us further to vibrate with sentiments similar to the above editorial by stating that "the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time ... are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well". (Gaudium et Spes, No.1).

Fr. Subhash Anand, a scholar in Hinduism and a former professor at the Pontifical Athanaeum in Pune, writing on the Durga Puja\* states, "The Durga festival 'is observed all over India in some form or another'... It brings together for a joint celebration all the Hindus – the high castes, the low castes, as well as the outcasts. It has also certain tribal elements." Fr. Anand then narrates the story of Durga slaying the demon Mahisha, does a "sort of exegetical and hermeneutical reflection" and hopes that "by understanding the story of the Goddess and the Demon we will be able to understand and appreciate not only the feast, but also the profound longings of the human heart expressed in this celebration."

Openness to and dialogue with other cultures and religions is part of our Jesuit four-fold mission. The Durga festival can be an occasion for us, especially in Bengal, to enter more deeply into one very popular expression of the culture and religiosity of our people.

**-Fr. Aelred Gomes**



*On this festive and auspicious occasion,  
we extend our heartfelt wishes  
to all our Hindu Brothers and Sisters.*



**PROVINCIAL'S PROGRAMME****October 2013**

01	: Return from Chamrusai
03	: CONSULT (whole day)
04	: Indian Theolog. Assoc. Seminar
11 - 19	: JCSA Meet & Visitation, VJ & ISI
20	: Fr. Anton Gabric, SJ - 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Mariapally
23	: CRI Reg Ex Council Meet, Xavier Sadan.
26	: Vocation Camp ( Puja vacation camp )
30	: Province JESA commission meet

**November 2013**

02	: Baruipur Diocese -Youth Camp
04 - 08	: CBCI CRI Annual Meet, Raiganj
16	: PDDs meet
20 - 21	: CONSULT
21	: Jubilarians Day
24	: Closing of Year of Faith

**APPOINTMENTS BY FR. GENERAL**

Fr. Cristián Simonetti Field (43) Provincial, Chilean Province (CHL).  
 Fr. Brian G. Paulson (53), Provincial of Chicago-Detroit Province (CDT).  
 Fr. Zaoro Hyacinthe Loua (47), Provincial of the Western Africa Province (AOC).  
 Fr. Chiedza Chimhanda (41), Provincial of Zimbabwe Province (ZIM).  
 Fr. David Rowan (61), Regional Superior of the South African Region (SAF).

**CALCUTTA JESUITS :: NEWS & VIEWS****VIDYAJYOTI, DELHI**

When someone comes back home, he brings joy and happiness. On 19 August, **Fr. Valan** returned to Delhi after completing his doctoral studies in Berkley, USA, with flying colors. On 30 August we, the third years, celebrated "Janmashtami", the feast of the birth of Lord Krishna. On this occasion we had a theological programme on Janmashtami to show our solidarity with our Hindu brethren. **Jeyakumar**

was the coordinator of the programme. **Alphonse** took part in the group dance ( Kolattam ). The programme was much appreciated by all the students.

On 1 October we welcomed the first years, the newcomers, and Fr. Valan. **Fr. T.V. George** came to share our joy. On 9 October we had a talk by a resource person on "Kandhamal: Early Christians in 20<sup>th</sup> Century". On 11 October Alphonse and I presented a paper on the

"History of Christianity in West Bengal" as part of a course: in the process we learned much about our own history. We had first semester exams from 16 to 20 October. From 21 to 26 October we, Calcutta Province members, went for our cultural tour to Chandigarh, Kullu, Manali and Amritsar including the Wagha border. It was an enriching experience for all of us.

- **Sch. S. Jeyakumar**

**SATYA NILAYAM, CHENNAI**

We, the Calcutta Scholastics, **Fuljames, Anmol, Felix and Robert** are fine and keeping well with a life of studious contemplation of "Sophia" in Satya Nilayam. Having done well in the first internals, we are now busy preparing for the second internals which commence on 5 October. The semester exams will follow on 22 October. The second years have begun their preparation on their dissertation

topics.

Our parish feast of Our Lady of Velankanni, Besant Nagar, was celebrated with great devotion and we took part in the celebration by blessing thousands of devotees, whose faith challenged us in our faith journey.

We also celebrated the much awaited Karam festival on 14 September with all gaiety, in which our three Calcutta scholastics took active part. It was well organized by the Chotanagpur Association of Satya Nilayam.

We had many sessions on different topics by men of profound erudition, like 'Philosophizing Today' by our own province man, **Fr. Cyril Desbruslais**, 'Cyber Ethics' and 'Discerning the Will of God in the Spiritual Exercises and in the Bhagavad Gita'. All these helped us to face difficult and abstruse questions, and to come out of erroneous assumptions and sophistries.

- **Sch. Antony Robert**

**DHYAN ASHRAM, KONCHOWKI**

The month of September was a tough time for the members of Dhyan Ashram wider community (including the ducks, dogs and pigs!). Due to heavy rain, our campus was almost completely under water, starting with the entrance to the refectory, basket ball court and many of the roads. All the ponds became one by the overflowing water, and fishes were swimming all around. Since the drinking water pond was contaminated, we had to get water from

outside to drink. Water has started receding.

We had a colourful celebration of the teachers' day. We greeted our fathers and other teachers. **Fr Jerome** attended the annual meeting of the Novice masters in Sri Lanka and came back with more ideas and experiences. In the absence of Fr. Jerome, **Fr. Peter Samikkannu** gave the novices a course on the Formula of the Institute. At the end of the month, the novices have assumed new offices and are enthusiastically learning new skills.

September was an engaging month also for the Juniors. On the 7<sup>th</sup> they got a guided tour of our media centre 'Chitrabani' and then they went to pray at blessed Mother Teresa's tomb. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, **Fr. Maria Joseph**, the Dean, left for Belgaum for the Juniorate staff meeting. In the meantime **Fr. Jothi** and his team conducted a social analysis course, which was very much appreciated by everyone. This was followed by a course by **Fr. T.J.Thomas** on the cultural history of West Bengal. The

juniors are all nervously preparing for the first term examination scheduled for the first week of October.

On the 4 September Mr. Fred Schwartz, an American volunteer and licensed social worker, gave an awareness talk on AIDS to the novices and juniors. It was very informative and enlightening.

September was a lean month for the retreat house. With most of the roads under water, and the ponds

overflowing, it would have been a harrowing time for all of us if more groups came. Some individuals made guided retreats directed by Fr. Jerome and Fr. Sajejev. October is going to be a heavy month. The three first year novices will begin their thirty day spiritual exercises on 28 Oct. Please keep Amit Tigga, Manish Tigga, Vinay Bage and the retreat director, Fr Sajejev, in your prayers.

To read more on life in the

novitiate, do visit our novitiate blog and read an excellent article by first year novice Amit Tigga on why Dhyan Ashram is such a cool place: <http://danovitiate.blogspot.in/2013/09/dhyan-ashram-our-home.html>. To see a list of programmes coming up in the retreat house, do visit our website:

<http://saje20.wix.com/dhyanashram#!programmes/ctmx>

- Novice Rintu Mondal  
and Sch, Rakesh Mondal

### LEADERSHIP TRAINING SERVICE ( LTS )

The LTSers celebrated the World Forest Week in July, by planting saplings in Allen Park for three consecutive days. In the afternoon hours around 400 members joined the venture to add more 'oxygen factories' in the planet.

The Movement also organized a number of one-day Leadership Training Camps [ LTC ] on Saturdays in the past three months in various states of the country. These one-day camps equipped the members to know more

about the LTS and acquire other needed skills to become effective leaders.

The LTS Centre also organized a number of workdays where students from various schools gathered at the LTS Centre and made blankets with old saris, dhotis and bed sheets. These blankets will be distributed among the needy. The joy of the LTSers, for being part of such a noble task, is long lasting as the blankets they made will help the people to fight winter at least for 5 years.

The LTS observed the IXth chapter of its annual family get-together, the LTS Sangam 2013, on Sunday, 1 September in Calcutta Girl's High

School. During the first part of the day the participants enjoyed an informal gathering with a number of entertaining games. The second part of the day offered them a colorful cultural fiesta.

Currently the LTSers are getting ready for a National Leadership Training Camp to be held at St Lawrence High School, where LTSers from a number of states will be attending. We are also preparing for Ignite III, the LTS winter carnival, to be held on 22 and 23 December at St Xavier's Primary school grounds.

- Fr. John Rogers

### PRABHU JISUR GIRJA

Prabhu Jisur Girja played host to two Maltese fathers for three weeks, while they were visiting Missionaries of Charity houses as volunteers. The house also welcomed Br. Jose, the 'oeconomus' of the Marist Brothers from Bangkok, who stayed with us for two days. Marist Br. Malangmei joined our community from 1 August, while doing B. Ed. at St Xavier's.

Fr. Julian S. Das offered the first two installments of his workshop on 'creative writing' for the Juniors in Dhyan Ashram. Fr. John Rogers is in and out of the house offering training programs and meeting different units.

He has been organizing week-end sessions for the city LTSers for the past two months.

Our minister, Br. Christhuraj, is back with us after spending three weeks in Kerala to get his back in shape. Fr. Peter Dorairaj, the newest member of the community, is certainly finding out all about running a house besides his priestly ministries in the neighboring parishes. Fr. Mark Robson goes about carefully, caring for his balance and keeping his health in check. He writes the house history, while looking after the library.

It was a busy month in the parish, with two novenas, one to Our Lady of Good Health of Vailankanni and

another to Our Lady of Sorrows, both successfully concluded.

Several engineers and architects put their heads together to assess the condition of the Church, which is in need of renovation. Headed by Fr. Thomas Pullenkav, the team of experts studied the building and at the end a report was presented to a team with Fr. Provincial, Fr. Irudaya Jothi, Fr. Pullenkav, Fr. Aelred Gomes, Fr. Raphael Hyde, Fr. Peter Samikannu and from PJJ, Fr. Julian S Das and Fr. Timir Singha. Plans are on anvil to start the renovation work after Diwali.

- Fr. Mark Robson

### CHITRABANI

The three month workshop on Initiation to Filmmaking is coming to a close in the first week of October. Nine students would be completing the

course with their project films.

Chitrabani - Nandan collaborative annual event, Kolkata Short Film Festival, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, will be held from December 2 to 7, and from last year the entire process of registration

has been moved to online. Chitrabani also has a newly designed responsive website, which is also accessible on Android mobile phones.

- Fr. Julian S. Das

### RAGHABPUR PARISH AND SCHOOL

Raghampur was hit by floods in September, the worst in his twelve-year stay here, according to Fr. Thomas,

our Superior. Some families had to be given shelter in our old boarding house.

The Novena to 'Arogyadayini Mata' ( Our Lady of Velankanni ) began with the flag hoisting ceremony on 30 August and it concluded with the

Birthday Celebration of Our Lady on 8 September evening. Fr. Jayanth Mathew had meticulously planned with the members of the Parish Council for a smooth conduct of the Novena.

Many of the faithful braved the floods to attend the Novena Prayers and the Holy Eucharist. Gostomath and Hogalkuria also had the Novena prayers.

On 12 September we had the Guardian Meeting for class XI. Many guardians attended the meeting with enthusiasm and raised several issues for the growth and development of their children. Some new teachers were recruited in school for Bengali, Political

Science, Computer Applications, Geography, Commerce and Science posts.

Teachers' Day is a golden opportunity for the senior students to showcase their organizational skills. The function began with welcoming the teachers to the School Auditorium and felicitating them with bouquets. The colourful cultural programme lasted for one hour. The celebration ended with

'feeding the teachers' and distribution of sweets to the students.

Our former Political Science teacher, Ms. Rita Nath ( 46 ) expired on 19 September. On the following day we had the condolence meeting in our School Auditorium. The teachers and students expressed their gratitude to God for sending Ms. Nath into their lives.

- Fr. Roshan Tirkey

**JISU ASHRAM, PANDUA**

Teachers' day was celebrated very grandly in the School and the Boarding. The Students expressed their joy and gratitude to their teachers through a cultural programme.

An initiative has been taken to cater to the spiritual needs of the parishioners. There are six sub-centres ( Amonmouri, Batna, Belun, Dhamasin, Kannur and Kolorarh Punui) under Pandua Parish in thickly populated Christian villages, where the people gather for Mass on Sundays once a month and on weekdays also. These sub-centres have been provided with tarpaulins from the Parish to make temporary sheds with bamboo structures. Our priests visit these centres regularly.

Fr. Alexander has prepared a

prayer booklet for the Novena to Our Lady of Velankanni in Santali. He accompanied the catechists to various villages to help people to pray through the intercession of Our Mother.

On 7 September there was a formal welcoming of the Catechumens, 'Atan taran', to the Church. Catechism Courses for Catechumens were held for a period of one week each for two batches from 8 to 15 and 15 to 22 September respectively. The marriage preparation course was held from 22 - 29 September. There were two day-long 'Small Christian Community' ( SCC ) trainings held on 12 and on 26 September respectively. We are grateful to Sr. Rita Kullu and Ms. Selvina Pinto for imparting training to SCC members. Fr. Mahananda, Fr. Alexander, Sr. Mary Josephine, Dn. Masillamani and

catechists are taking classes for these courses.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross was celebrated with a solemn Mass at Jisu Ashram. The Sisters of the Holy Cross Community had organized the day. Their school staff, guests and Jesuits from Burdwan and Gurap communities joined the celebration.

Fr. Mahananda attended the cultural centre planning committee meeting at 'Kia Jharna', Gurap on 17 September. Fr. Chandan Gupta went to Sajnerberia for preaching at a novena to Our Lady on 1 September and to Dhyana Ashram to address a group of students on 'Environment and Ecology' on 21 September. At present he is at St. Xavier's infirmary undergoing a knee treatment. Kindly keep him in your prayers.

- Dn. T. Masillamani

**CHRISTO SEVA ASHRAM, KALNA**

The Parish of the Virgin of the Poor in Kalna celebrated teachers' day on 8 September instead of 5 September together with the feast day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was a double joy for all the faithful of the parish. There are thirteen Catholic teachers from the parish teaching in different primary and higher secondary government schools in Bengal. The Holy Mass was offered in their names to thank God for their dedicated service to different communities, societies and contributing to nation building in this

vast changing world. There was a colorful cultural program immediately after the Mass to felicitate the teachers. A rose flower and a pen were offered to the teachers to signify that they should always be an example, spreading fragrance and sweetness, justice and peace. The teachers shared their experiences, struggles and offered prayers for the students. Some of them shared how the value of real education is deteriorating in this materialistic world today.

16 September was a significant day for the Kalna parishioners, when

they planted 400 mahogany saplings in the grave-yard in Rahatpur under the guidance of the Parish Priest. The saplings cost Rs.4500/-, and this was contributed by the faithful. Fifteen parishioners, both men and women, offered a day's labour in planting the saplings in honour of their departed dear and near ones. It was a nice and important gesture, keeping in mind the environmental changes around. This was one of the activities to mark the Golden Jubilee year, 2013, of Kalna Mission.

- Fr. Sebastian Xalxo

The next issue of the Calcutta Jesuit Newsletter will come out in the first week of December.

**GONE TO THEIR REST**

Mr. S. Arul ( 65 ), father of Fr. Peter Arockiasamy, SJ on 04.09.13

**NOTICE**

For the Province Retreat at Dhyana Ashram from 11 to 19 October, participants will please bring along with them their copies of the Bible, the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and the GC-35 Documents.

