



*Come Back to Me...
with your whole heart."*

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2

INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,

Greetings from Goa. The weather is getting warmer day by day and we could have an early summer. .

As the days pass the situation in Ukraine has become very perilous. Kiev the capital of Ukraine is being shelled by heavy artillery and Russia is threatening the various major cities with carpet bombing. People have to live in underground shelters and can only risk coming out to get food. The other day an Indian student came out to get some food and he was killed. Everyone seems to be helpless. The Dy. Prime Minister of Ukraine has appealed to Pope Francis to use his good offices to intervene in the war. The Russians call the war a "security operation"! What makes it even more tragic is that families have relatives on both sides of the border.

Alfie Lambe, whose cause for canonisation has been introduced recently, was at one time in the Formation House of the Christian Brothers but had to leave because of bad health. Bap Finn has shared his memories of Alfie in this Newsletter.

After a long time, we have had a large number of Brothers and others in our 2 residences in RMS. Steve D'Souza has recently joined our community. Along with him came Len Noronha and Karan(from St. John's School) who helped him settle in Shanti Niwas. Varina from Providence was also here. Since Sebastian had taken a short break we also had Joe and David to help keep us afloat.

The people of Goa voted on Valentine's Day. The results will be declared in the first week of March and following the elections there will most probably be defections of the victorious candidates from one party to another. This is called the "Pull of money power"

We received news recently that Lawrence Colaco's Dad has had a stroke and is in the I.C.U. He has recovered to a good extent and we continue to pray for him.

Yours fraternally.

Mark



FAILURE AND THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

Richard Rohr once said “During the second-half of life, success no longer teaches us anything. It still feels good, but we don’t learn from it. Now we learn more from failure.” What does he mean?

There’s a time in life when doing things is mandated, even by the Gospels. That time is the first half of life (all those years when we’re active in the workforce, caring for family, paying a mortgage, giving ourselves over to the service of others, and trying to build up the world and find meaning for ourselves). That isn’t our time then to simply sit at the feet of Jesus.

But during the second half of life, success loses its importance. To rely on success to feel good about ourselves becomes, at a point, a cancer: If we only feel important when we’ve achieved something of importance then we need to continue, repeatedly, to achieve something of importance, an impossible task.

More importantly, while success builds self-image it doesn’t necessarily build character or soul. Bluntly put, too often success inflates rather than mellows the soul. Failure, while always containing the danger of hardening the soul, is more naturally suited to deflate the ego and mellow the heart. The major task of aging is that of mellowing – grieving, forgiving, letting go, accepting vulnerability, and moving beyond the greed, ambition, competitiveness, and perpetual disappointment of youth. Like a good wine, the soul needs to be mellowed in cracked old barrels (an apt image for aging bodies) to bring out its warm, rich character. After a certain age, failure more than success is more likely to help us do that.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, when we’re young and success still teaches us something, too often even our best work is motivated more by our need to prove something (ourselves, our talents, our goodness) than by any genuine altruism and concern for others. Our successes may actually be helping others and doing a lot of good, but, in the end, we’re trying to prove ourselves.

The task now is to become selfless, beyond proving anything, least of all our own worth.

Ron Rolheiser, OMI

THE MYSTERY WE CALL GOD IS THE
GRACE OF OUR EXISTENCE

KARL RAHNER





THE SPIRIT OF UBUNTU

We are in a perilous time, and the answer to the question “Who are we to be?” will have implications for generations to come.

We have a choice to make. We can answer this question with diminished imagination, by closing ranks with our tribe and hiding from our human responsibility to heal the world. Or we can answer the question of who we are to be another way: We can answer it in the spirit of *ubuntu*. The concept comes from the Zulu phrase *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, which literally means that a person is a person through other people. Another translation is, “I am who I am because we are who we are.” . . . With this in mind, *who I will be* is deeply related to *who you are*. In other words, we are each impacted by the circumstances that impact those around us. What hurts you hurts me. What heals you heals me. What causes you joy causes me to rejoice, and what makes you sad also causes me to weep.

By channelling the ancient wisdom of ubuntu, we can engineer a badly needed love revolution to rise up out of the ashes of our current reality. . . . The empathy that grows from listening to others, from connecting with our neighbours, and from loving our neighbors as we love ourselves can define the courses of action we take.

from a reflection by *Richard Rohr*

Alfie Lambe

Alfie Lambe was born on 24th June 1932, the feast of St. John, the Baptist who pointed out *The Lamb of God*. Alfie died on 21st January 1959, the feast of St. Agnes (the Lamb). The people of Buenos Aires introduced his cause to Rome. I wonder if Pope Francis is aware of it.



In July 1948 I entered our novitiate, St. Helen's, Booterstown, with about 50 other lads from Colaiste Ciaran, Bray. We had all completed the Leaving Cert. that year. A dozen other candidates joined us from St. Joseph's Missionary College, Marino. This was a departure from normal procedure where the St. Joseph's candidates would have made their novitiate in England. The General Chapter of 1947 voted in favour of the amalgamation. Henceforth St. Joseph's was to accommodate the Brothers doing their Second Year Teacher's Training. The would-be novices from St. Joseph's had just completed the Inter Cert. Among them you would have known - Alec Ashe, Larry Kelly, Tony Keane, Stan Burke, Tommy O'Brien. Alphonsus Lambe was another and it's about him I'd like to speak.





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On 8th September 1948, 63 of us were clothed with the habit and our formal novitiate started under the guidance of Brother DL O'Donnell. We were also given religious names by which we would be known from then on. Alfie (Alphonsus) was named Brother Ignatius as he had requested to be called by the Founder's religious name. In time each one was given a duty or charge to perform every morning. Manual work was a big item on our schedule. We could talk for the first hour or so and then we worked in silence. There were extensive grounds to maintain, paths to be scuffed, farm work to undertake. There was a big enclosed orchard and an equally big garden. Much of the garden was dedicated to the cultivation of chrysanthemums and tomatoes which were sold to maintain the establishment. Alfie was assigned to the garden and I was his helper. We had a full run of the place apart from Brother ED Young, who was Superior of the house and not attached to the novitiate.

Alfie was a gentle soul. I thought him to be a goodie-goodie but he had a good sense of humour and would break into a bar of a Judy Garland song now and again. He used to tell me about playing tennis in his native Tullamore, and I discovered he was quite adept at handball. If a point was questioned, Alfie would take up his place and never argued the point. Field contact games didn't appeal to him whereas handball and tennis did. He spoke lovingly of his time in Marino and referred to St. Joseph's as "home". He was full of Brothers' lore and was exceptionally devoted to Mother Mary. He had an unhealthy pallor. I didn't know that he suffered from *petit mal* - minor epilepsy. Sometimes he fainted in the chapel. He described it to me as a white cloud descending which was not unpleasant. I asked him what set it off. He said that the sight of blood upset him. I was 15 and couldn't quite grasp this. One day during the silence period, I passed him some loam cupped in my hands, There was a little blood on my right thumb. Alfie's reaction was immediate. He whipped off his specs, tightly closed his eyes and turned his head. Early next morning I went to the priest before Mass to confess my sin!

Cultivating chrysanthemums was very exacting. Special soil was prepared in boxes. Individual leaves were cut carefully from the flowers and planted in rows in the boxes. Eventually, they sprung roots. I think it is called vegetative reproduction. The boxes were kept in the greenhouse until they were strong enough to be planted outside. They had to be watered daily. Liquid manure played a large part in their growth. The outside flowers had to have the lateral buds removed and we were always on the alert for greenfly. Then there were the greenhouse tomatoes to attend. Dominic Young did a spot of gardening too. Alfie would chuckle as he told me how the old Brother used to come looking for "that fella" (Alfie himself) when he came looking for a trowel or a spade. If he misplaced a tool he would blame Alfie. I think





Dominic looked after the beehives. One day Alfie whipped off his specs and turned to me with tightly closed eyes. A bee, which I whooshed off, had got behind a lens, The sting was hanging in Alfie's eyelashes. I marvelled at his quick action - all in silence!

Alfie was a very saintly novice. Apart from the odd fainting spells I can remember nothing very remarkable about him at the time. Our year's novitiate over, we were sent to St. Mary's Training College, Marino. Most of the novices went into 1st Year Training. I was too young to join this course so I joined Alfie and about 15 others in the Leaving Cert class. After a month four of us were taken out to study for the Senior in Northern Ireland. We still joined Alfie and companions for the Sunday evening Bible lesson. Each novice was obliged to speak on a bible topic when his turn came. Brother Leonard Brady would offer his critique afterwards. I remember how strained and nervous Alfie was when his turn came. Leonard, also nervously, gave Alfie great praise. He had hardly finished when Alfie collapsed on his desk with another fainting spell.

Alfie founded a Praesidium of the Legion of Mary. Joining it was optional. He also put written notes on the notice board about Edmund Rice. On one occasion Frank Duff came to address us. Both he and Alfie, along with Edel Quinn, are now Venerables. We were to make our First Profession on 31st July 1950. I had gone to Belfast in June to sit for the Senior. On the way back to Dublin Brother Columba Kelly told me that Alfie would not be permitted to make vows because of the *petit mal*. It wasn't pleasant news.

Alfie wrote to me in Belfast, telling me how he felt like a fish out of water. The only thing which stimulated him was the weekly Legion of Mary meeting. I was on holiday in Greystones in July 1953 when Alfie came to see me and to inform me that he had been chosen as Legion of Mary Envoy to South America. That was the last time I met him. He never returned to Ireland. I followed his career in S. America from the monthly accounts in the *Legionis Mariae* publication. He had a great facility for learning languages and songs and he travelled extensively setting up Praesidia. Early in January 1959 he took ill and was hospitalised in Buenos Aires. He died on 21st January (feast of St. Agnes) and was buried in the Christian Brothers' plot. He was born on 24th June, 1932, feast of John the Baptist. He was 26. Ar dheis De go raibh se.

Bap Finn





The Solution is in the Problem



It isn't that they cannot find the solution. It is that they cannot see the problem.
--G.K. Chesterton

Dear Principals, Teachers, Parents and Students,

In response to Mohona Sukumari's request to provide some possible solutions to the problems faced by our children due to the ongoing pandemic, I would like to suggest a few practical solutions.

1. Have some form of Physical Classes:

Open schools for children ensuring safety protocols, maintaining social distance, using masks wherever needed, encouraging children to wash their hands frequently and teach them to take care of their cleanliness habits. Physical attendance is a must even if it means half the class comes one day and the other half on another day. It calls for meticulous planning by the school management and staff and greater cooperation from the parents and students.

2. Call on Counsellors & Play Games:

Get the Counsellors to train the Teachers and Parents to read the signs among children which indicate that children are under duress and struggling mentally. Watch out for signs like loss of appetite, disinterestedness in engaging in conversation, lack of sleep, getting irritated quickly, showing aggressive signs of behaviour, lack of communication, spending too much time on the phone, procrastination, and lack of physical activity.

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Take the children out for outdoor activities, engage them in physical games, play family games like carroms, scrabble, ludo, monopoly, snakes and ladders, etc.

High Fives & Low Fives: At the end of the day, get your children to tell you the High Fives they had during the day and some of the low moments they had and listen to them. They may not have Five lows to share but even one or two would do.

3. Establishing routines at home

Children need structures in their lives – rising time, sleeping time, working time, meals time, recreation time, prayer time, and of course, study time. It is the duty of parents to establish and set up a daily time table for their children. The time table that you set must be practical and realistic and must be followed by everyone at home except the babies! And with the time table one needs to be consistent and ruthless too.

4. Control of screen time – how?

- ◆ Model healthy electronic use – Parents, Teachers and Care-givers need to be models for our children by setting examples.
- ◆ Educate Yourself on Electronics & Technology
- ◆ Create Technology-free zones in your homes (like the No-Smoking Zones)
- ◆ Set aside times to unplug as a family
- ◆ Use parental Controls – to filter and save your children from accessing damaging contents on the net.
- ◆ Explain and educate your children as to why you are controlling their Screen time
- ◆ Ask your children to share their passwords with you.
- ◆ Encourage your children to participate in outdoor activities that don't require screens.
- ◆ Try not to reward your children with extra screen time. Have a fixed time for screen viewing.
- ◆ Talk to your children daily about things happening around your immediate locality, city, State, Country & the World. There is a lot you can talk about!

5. Family Time

- ◆ Have your meals together as a family. Insist that all are present for the meals at least for dinner





when everyone is at home.

- ◆ Pray together at a particular time when all are at home. Insist all are present for this important period. A family that prays together, stays together!
- ◆ Occasionally, probably twice a month at least, try to get out as a family and recharge your batteries!
- ◆ Get your children to handle household responsibilities – washing dishes, watering the plants, tidying up the house, helping in the kitchen, laying the table. Make sure the roles are defined for the children and hold them accountable if they dodge or miss their duties.

6. Talk with your children

- ◆ At the end of the day, ask your children about their day – how did they spend the day etc.
- ◆ Take interest in their studies – ask them about what they learned that day; ask about their difficult subjects; ask about their friends; ask about what they are struggling with. If they don't answer, it is fine but at least you showed them that they matter to you.
- ◆ Check on their work and encourage them to sit with their books daily and consistently. They need to learn to sit still.

7. Physical Rest

Sleep is so important. Get the children to sleep early. There should be a time when lights are turned off in the house especially when it comes to managing teens. Parents just have to be very strict when it comes to this point about sleep. Children require at least 8 hours of sleep.

8. Be firm, be fair and be patient with your children.

They need to know that you care for them even if you are strict with them. They like it when you discipline them and especially when you are fair to them. Challenge their behaviour but do not hurt their person.

Dear Parents, I hope these simple solutions are practical. They are easier said than done, but certainly not impossible to attain. All the best and let us work together to help our children enjoy and embrace their childhood and adolescence.

Solomon Morris

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REPORT ON VOCATION WEEK

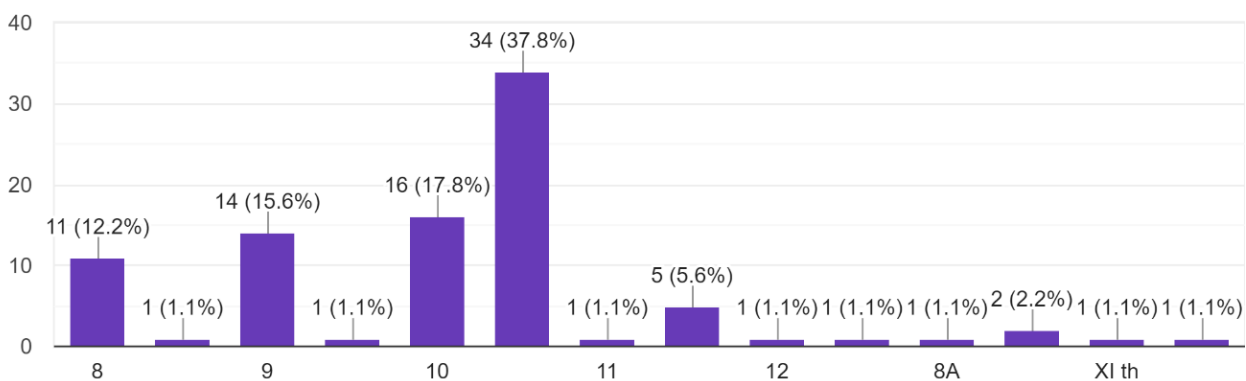
‘Look to the Future’ – Five sessions on Vocation Promotion were conducted online from 28th January to 3rd February 2022 for all Catholic students of five classes (Middle Section for classes 8 to 10 and classes 11 and 12 of the Senior Section) by Bro. William D’Souza. One week prior to the launch of these sessions, Catechism teachers of these classes had also conducted special sessions during their regular catechism classes that were based on the lesson plans provided by Ms. Grace David on the topic of Call and Mission. This was to prepare them to for the Vocation Week ahead. Even the Value Education classes were given customised lesson plans to enable them to look at what vocation, commitment and mission means in the larger context of the world and society.

The five sessions that were conducted daily from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on the assigned dates by Bro. William were attend by around 120 Catholic boys and by the Catechism teachers of the concerned sections. The topics covered were – *What is a call?; Call Stories of the Bible (cf. Samuel); What is Vocation?; The four types of Vocations in the Catholic Church; How to know what is your vocation?; etc.* The students were also encouraged to ask questions and to contact Brother or their catechism teachers if they needed help in discerning their vocation. A google form was also circulated at the end of each session that reveals that boys are grappling to understand their vocations and are open to receive further guidance. Many have showed interest in receiving more information on the Christian Brothers.

The charts given below give a detailed analysis.

CLASS

90 responses

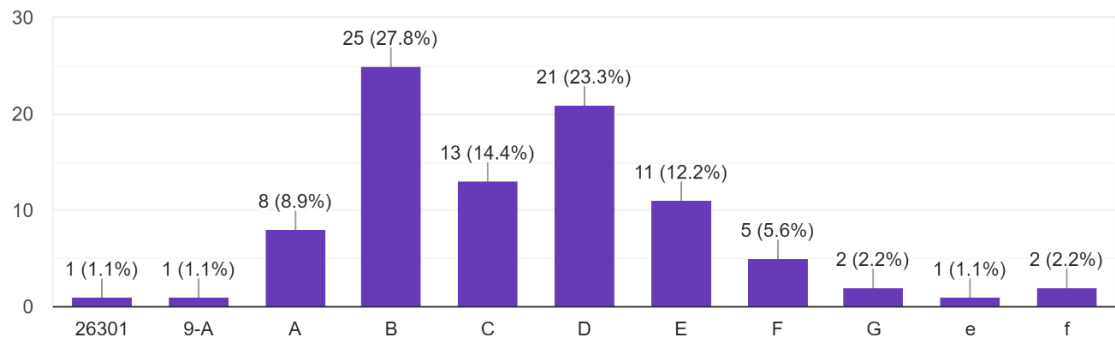




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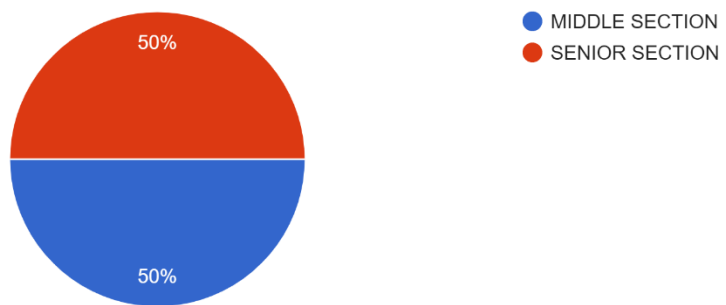
SECTION

90 responses



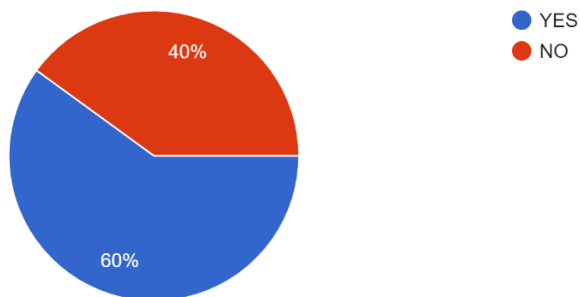
I AM FROM(CHOOSE ONE)

90 responses



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE IN TOUCH WITH US AS YOU CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR YOUR VOCATION

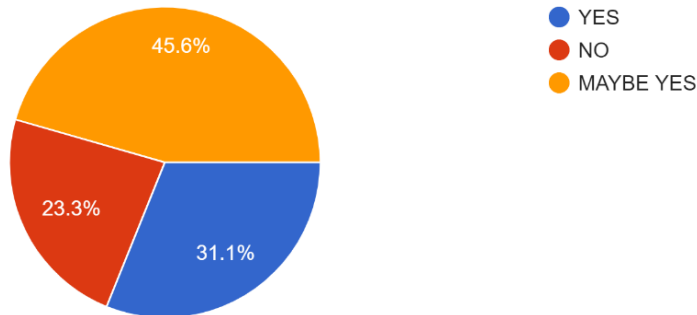
90 responses





I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHRISITAN BROTHERS, THEIR LIFE AND MISSION?

90 responses



Ms Grace David

Simran news for February

At the beginning of the month, Br Cedly returned to his community, and our senior novice, Ranjeet, left for a ministry experience to Itarsi. That left four of us in the Bhopal community.

During this month, the topics done in class dealt with some effective teaching skills in the classroom. These were useful for the two of us novices, as we are involved in teaching 3 students from the primary classes. We also had some classes on Values and Motivation, as we try to discover the mind of Jesus, and our own minds.

On February 10th, our community sang in the church choir for the parish priest's 28th Ordination Anniversary. Elton trained us, and played the guitar, and we received a lot of praise for our efforts from the concelebrants and the people. The mass was followed by cake cutting and breakfast.

On 19th Feb, we celebrated Br. Elton's and Br. Conrad's birthdays. We had cakes cut, and in the evening, we invited our helpers to join us for the dinner in a restaurant. An enjoyable evening it was.

On the 23rd we went for a day's outing to Itarsi, to meet Ranjeet, who is placed in a Children's Home run by the Chambrey Sisters. We interacted with the sisters, the child welfare cooperation desk at the railway station, staff and children in the Home. We were amazed at the way the Home functions, with the happiness of the children, and the protocols in place. Also, we went to the Tawa Dam along with the sisters. We had our meal there and a boat ride too. We enjoyed the unity of brotherliness and sisterliness of the two communities.





(From Left: Con, Dilip, Sanjoy, Elton, Ranjeet, Clara, Mary and Jyoti, The sisters belong to the Sisters of St. Joseph's of Chamberry)

Sunday the 27th, was a big day in our Kolar Parish. It was a day when the Archbishop of Bhopal, Most Rev Sebastian Durairaj, SVD, confirmed and gave First Holy Communion to about 20 children.

It was a busy day, as we lined up at 8:30 am to welcome His Grace. Sanjoy and I got the children organized, and we were very involved during the service in getting the ceremony running smoothly. We were part of the celebrations from the beginning to the end, even taking part in the singing during the cultural program. The lunch was a fitting end to the whole function.

We are grateful to God for all the blessings we have received during this month of February. And we are looking forward to the season of Lent with devotion.

Dilip Kerketta

POETRY SECTION

“Sip your Tea
Nice and Slow
No one Ever knows
when it's Time to Go,
There'll be no Time
to enjoy the Glow,
So sip your Tea
Nice and Slow.

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Life is too Short but
feels pretty Long,
There's too Much to do, so much going Wrong,
And Most of the Time You Struggle to be Strong,
Before it's too Late
and it's time to Go,
Sip your Tea
Nice and Slow.

Some Friends stay,
others Go away,
Loved ones are Cherished but not all will Stay.
Kids will Grow up
and Fly away.
There's really no Saying how Things will Go,
So sip your Tea
Nice and Slow.

In the End it's really
all about understanding Love
For this World
and in the Stars above,
Appreciate and Value who truly Cares,
Smile and Breathe
and let your Worries go,
So Just Sip your Tea
Nice and Slow."

When I'm dead.
Your tears will flow
But I won't know
Cry with me now instead.

You will send flowers,
But I won't see
Send them now instead

You'll say words of praise
But I won't hear.
Praise me now instead

You'll forget my faults,
But I won't know.....
Forget them now instead.

You'll miss me then,
But I won't feel.





Miss me now, instead.

You'll wish You could have spent more time with me,
Spend it now instead

When you hear I'm gone, you'll find your way to my house to pay condolence but we haven't even spoken in years.
Look for me now.

"Spend time with every person around you, and help them with whatever you have to make them happy, your families, friends and acquaintances.

Make them feel Special because you never know when time will take them away from you forever.

Alone I can 'Say' but together we can 'Talk'.
Alone I can 'Enjoy' but together we can 'Celebrate'
Alone I can 'Smile' but together we can 'Laugh'

That's the BEAUTY of Human Relations.
We are nothing without each other.

Prof Lee Tzu Pheng

(Sent by a class mate of Br Mark from XLRI)



**JTI CLUSTER BULLETIN
FEBRUARY 2022**

**THE MYSTERY WE CALL GOD IS THE
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PRAYER FOR PEACE

How do we pray for peace from half a world away?

*How can words salve and soothe real wounds,
Assuage real fears, wipe tears from real eyes?*

*God of endless compassion, transform our prayers
From words into bridges that span the distances
Between us, uniting our hearts in yours.*

*Every time we turn our keys in a lock,
May we remember all who are losing their homes.*

*Every time we step into our cars,
May we remember all who are having to flee.*

*Every time we embrace our children,
May we remember all who are trying to shield theirs
from war.*





*May our besieged brothers and sisters
Be drawn into the arms of the suffering Christ,
And may our cry be heard as one voice,
Ringing out from every corner of the earth:
God of endless mercy, grant us peace. Amen.*

Cameron Bellm

PATHARLYNDAN

The thrashing of paddy continued into the month of December and the Brothers were invited by people to join the paddy thrashing and celebratory meal after the work was done. As the brothers got involved with the people, the Brothers experienced the hard slog that goes into what farmers go through.

Ajay and Vinod who teach in the Lower Primary School were busy with conducting the Final Examination in December. On the day of the results, a farewell program was organised to offer best wishes to the class five students for further studies in other schools. It was a satisfying conclusion of the academic year 2021.

Before Christmas, the youth of Patharlyndan gathered at Brothers residence to discuss the idea of setting up a youth group in the village. The office bearers were selected, and the group decided to call themselves 'Iatreilang Edmund Rice Youth Action'. Iatreilang means Let's work together.



Gambhir thrashing paddy with the people in the village



The newly formed 'Iatreilang Edmund Rice Youth Action'

The Brothers with the help of the people including the Sordar (village headman) listed names of interested members for the formation of the Multipurpose Cooperative Society, the registration of





which will happen in the coming year. The Multipurpose Cooperative Society will be able to access livelihood schemes available for people.

In January, the Brothers also held tuition classes for students who study outside the village and were having their winter break. The Brothers took classes in Maths and English mainly for students of Classes 8 and 9.

UMTYRKHANG

In the month of December, the children of the three local primary schools had their exams and then the holidays. The Brothers have been taking classes for the children of Umyrkhang during the holidays now. The schools are expected to reopen after the mid Feb. In between before Christmas Edwin did a retreat directed by Con at the Franciscan spirituality Center, Orlangada. Jerry joined the gathering of the young Brothers in Shillong.

We don't have Visitors too often and so we were delighted to have the company of Rolling post-Christmas and then Stel and Shawn in the first week of Jan.

The progress of the Edmund Rice Community Hall is good and if all goes well we should see the completion of it by the first week of March if not earlier.

The piggery project is progressing well too and hopefully in the next month we would have the addition of few more piglets with the sow now more than two months pregnant. A day's training on piggery was held on the 11th of Jan for the members of SHG group working with the Brothers.

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The Edmund Rice Hall getting constructed in collaboration with people



One day training program on piggery conducted for SHG members





ERPAKON

On the 3rd of December, we celebrated Cedly's birthday in the Hub. It was also delightful to welcome our Brothers, friends and other religious who visited us around Christmas time. Jockey, Sunil and Cedly took their home holidays in turns. Meghalaya was colder this winter with unusually cloudy days and intermittent rain, possibly another effect of climate change.

The new Project Coordinator, Samuel Nonglait visited the Hub prior to his joining which will happen on the first of March. This gave us a chance to talk about his Job description and other terms of the contract.

We devotedly joined all the Congregation zooms, of the Scenario building process and the reconvened Chapter. Connecting with our Brothers all over the world and having conversations on where our future could be was certainly energising.

Who all can you recognise in the photo below along with our recently elected Congregation Leader?

