



INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,

Greetings from Goa where the weather is very hot and the occasional rain brings with it disruption in the power.

The Easter week gave one the opportunity to silently reflect on the tragic events of what is happening in our world today such as the Ukraine war and the famine conditions in Sri Lanka where the greed of politicians can bring disaster to millions of people.

One is also aware of the risen Lord in our presence through the noble actions of several people who are helping the poor and disadvantaged.

A notable example is that of the European Province who have handed over the Emmaus campus for the Ukrainian refugees to stay. Included in this Newsletter is an article by Br. Declan Power who describes vividly the joy experienced by the refugees when they become aware of the various utilities available in the campus.

John Ledgidge adds, "Things continue to go well in Emmaus Centre, now the Refugee Centre - but some of the traumatised have still not spoken. Declan is doing general liaison with the refugees and teaching them English. A government-funded company is looking after the cooking, and the refugees' other needs. I was surprised at the number of men among them, since the Ukrainian authorities were not allowing men of military age to leave. But those who have three or more children were allowed to leave, and older men."

Here in Goa a group of socially committed Christian distributed Easter hampers to people who are going through straitened circumstances.

One is distressed by the many violent incidents in various cities that have taken place in India during the recent Ram Navani Festival. We pray that this violence may become a thing of the past and that peace and goodwill exist between different communities in our country.

Jayanti left Goa on the 27th. He will be attending the Province Chapter and then joining the Bow Bazaar Community. We wish him all God's Blessings in his new Ministry.

Yours fraternally

Mark



FACING OUR TOUGH HOURS

When we find ourselves in a situation that's causing us deep interior anguish, do we walk away, assuming that the presence of such pain is an indication that this isn't the right place for us, that something's terminally wrong here?

Or, like Jesus, do we accept to stay, saying to ourselves, our loved ones, and our God: "What shall I say, save me from this hour?"

At the very moment that Jesus was facing a humiliating death by crucifixion, the Gospel of John hints that he was offered an opportunity to escape. A delegation of Greeks, through the apostle Philip, offer Jesus an invitation to leave with them, to go to a group that would receive him and his message. So, Jesus has a choice: Endure anguish, humiliation, and death inside his own community or abandon that community for one that will accept him. What does he do? He asks himself this question: "*What shall I say, save me from this hour?*"

Although this is phrased as a question, it's an answer. Jesus is choosing to stay, to face the anguish, humiliation, and pain because he sees it as the precise fidelity, he is called to within the very dynamic of the love he is preaching. He came to earth to incarnate and teach what real love is and now, when the cost of that is humiliation and interior anguish, he knows and accepts that this is what's now being asked of him. The pain is not telling him that he's doing something wrong, is at the wrong place, or that this community is not worth this suffering. To the contrary: The pain is understood to be calling him to a deeper fidelity at the very heart of his mission and vocation. Until this moment, only words were asked of him, now he is being asked to back them up in reality; he needs to swallow hard to do it.

What shall I say, save me from this hour? Do we have the wisdom and the generosity to say those words when, inside our own commitments, we are challenged to endure searing interior anguish in situations that we will all find ourselves in?

Ron Rolheiser, OMI

**Welcome Back Gabes Thomas after
your tenure in Ireland**



**THE MYSTERY WE CALL GOD IS THE
GRACE OF OUR EXISTENCE**

KARL RAHNER





OUR UKRAINIAN VISITORS

Friday lunchtime, our first influx of Ukrainian visitors arrived at Emmaus. They looked tired and frightened. The visitors were taken to the large dining room and offered tea and biscuits. The light refreshments gave the management, volunteers, and community a chance to welcome our visitors and put them at their ease.

After the refreshments, we invited the visitors back to reception to register and receive the key to their room. Some spoke very broken English, just enough to be understood. Those I accompanied to their rooms did their best to express how happy they were to be in Emmaus and how beautiful the place looked.

A boy of eleven or twelve with good English was surprised when he opened the door to his room and saw three freshly dressed beds with white linen and a clean room awaiting him. He gave off a "Wow" reaction with 'how lovely the room is.' He was delighted when I showed him the en-suite, and he saw that he had a shower. The smile on his face said it all. Straight away, I could see the whole family relax. They had arrived at a place where they can relax and have a sense of security, peace and safety. Two sisters told me that they were looking forward to going to sleep on Friday night. For the previous three nights they could not sleep in the place they had come from because of the noise of people moving around.

Some staff members sat with the visitors and listened to their stories. Soon tears were flowing as people related their experiences of the previous six to eight weeks. One fifteen-year-old girl, and I'll call her Maria, told how she was in her hometown last Monday. They had to run because bombs were dropping close to their home. Within five days, she and her family had to uproot and escape. Now she was in Emmaus with her mum and aunt and with a big smile. Her other siblings are in Italy. Maria will be 15 years of age on April 15th.

The husband of one elderly couple who went for a walk in the grounds could not stop taking photos of their new surroundings. I would hazard a guess that this gentleman has photographed every tree on the property. Another visitor, a mother of four children, could not stop talking about how beautiful the trees and shrubs were. What a change it must be from a place of war, death, and destruction?

A little boy of seven or eight just loved walking in and out of the building. He would leave the building, walk around the circle of shrubs in front of Emmaus, and come back in again. He would go to his family room and half an hour later would repeat the process. Any time he saw me, he gave me a 'high-five'. He is just enjoying being free to move in and out without disruption.

Saturday was a time of meeting more and more visitors and slowly trying to get to know names and





help them ask their questions. So many are anxious to know how long they will be allowed to remain in Emmaus? They fear they will be moved elsewhere. They don't want to lose the little comfort that they have found. Also, they are anxious to start learning English, get their children into school, and start finding employment for themselves.

Hopefully, Ireland will be able to absorb many of these friendly people in our labour force. In this way, many will find a home with security among us. Pope Francis says that 'the stranger is made welcomed when we make room for them at our table.' That's the invitation/challenge to all of us. It is not enough to leave it to others to look after refugees. It is a responsibility that we all share. So let us not be found wanting. We have 42 refugees in Emmaus, and soon, another 42 will follow in the coming week.

Now that our Ukrainian friends are settling in they have a number of needs that will be addressed by well-wishers. A playroom has been set up for the children and already a number of donations of toys have arrived. Likewise, good second hand clothes for the adults and teenagers have arrived with more promised. The group is now looking for Xboxes and consoles for the teenagers to play games, a table tennis table, pool table and some a few guitars. Donal Leaders donation of a Keyboard has been greatly appreciated. So spread the word. This is truly a good news story where people who have come through a terrible crucifixion are experiencing new life.

Declan Power

INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF THE PLATINUM JUBILEE YEAR CELEBRATIONS OF ST. MARY'S ORPHANAGE AND DAY SCHOOL, KOLKATA

St. Mary's Orphanage and Day School embarked on its 75th jubilee year with the inaugural ceremony held on 8th April, 2022 in the school auditorium. The occasion was graced by the Province Leader, Br. Steve Fernandez, Brothers from St. Joseph's College and St. George's School, bowbazar and other esteemed guests (ex - boarders' alumni, ex- faculty members, ex -teachers and ex-students.)

The planning and execution was undertaken by the Core Committee which included the Principal, Mrs. Nandita



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Bhattacharya ,the Community Leader Br. Charles , the Bursar Br. Ruvan and the staff members, Mrs. Surupa Mukherjee, Mrs. Amrita Mukherjee, Mr. Ivan Saldanha and Mr. Himaghna Maitra.

The programme started at 10:00 AM with the Welcome Speech given by Br. Charles. It was followed by the unveiling of the logo for the Jubilee year and the banner by Br. Charles and Br. Ruvan. The Principal , Mrs. N. Bhattacharyya spoke about the history of the school. The staff members entertained the audience with a song and a dance presentation . The Jubilee Flag was hoisted by the Province Leader, Br. Steve Fernandez , who also shared his valuable thoughts on the occasion with the members of the audience . The programme came to an end at 11:00 AM with a vote of thanks and singing of the School Anthem.

The program was followed by light refreshments for the special guests and snacks for the students. The program was meant to be a surprise for the students. Each item of the program was chalked out in a way that might carry across the significance of the occasion to the audience, especially the students school Anthem.





The Origins of St. Mary's Orphanage & Day School

St. Mary's Orphanage traces its origin to the Catholic Male Orphanage (C.M.O.) which was established in 1848 at Murghihatta by the Calcutta Brothers. The Calcutta Brothers later amalgamated with the Irish Christian Brothers in 1890.

The first suggestion to close down the C.M.O. and move elsewhere came in 1916 when the Calcutta Improvement Trust announced that it was taking over the compound. Br. Gilbert Cooney, Provincial's idea was to transfer the Orphanage to Asansol and build it where St. Vincent's Technical and High School now stands. This plan did not work out.



The original Villa in Dum Dum

In 1941 things began to move once more, the original plans were changed and this time the C.M.O. was to be moved to Dum Dum. Under Br. J. B. Culhane, then Provincial, the Villa was pulled down and the foundations for a two storied building were laid. The tanks were filled and construction work began. In the year 1943, the work was decided to stop due to financial reasons and the building work had reached the first floor and the wall-construction for the roof. About this time a Redemptorist, Father Greene preached a Retreat to the students of St. Joseph's College, Calcutta. He heard of the problem and suggested that a Mass be offered in honour of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour with a promise to name the school after our Lady. From the day the Mass was offered everything worked out smoothly. The United States Army, then newly arrived in Calcutta, was approached, and the Engineer section agreed to start the work at once and finish the building according to the plan, provided the premises would be available for the use during the period of the war and for six months after the cessation of hostilities. Work began in 1943 finished satisfactorily in July and the

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Troops moved in August 1943.

The property was handed back to the Brothers in 1946. In June, 1947, the Calcutta riots began. The Brothers and the Orphans at the C.M.O. had to move to Dum Dum in a matter of days. The transport was supplied free by a Mr. Hildreth and the coolies were all local -- two Brothers and about ten or twelve of the bigger and stronger orphans. The small boys also did their bit by removing whatever they could carry. Br. D. E. Hayes with his mechanical bent made short work of all heavy furniture by means of the lever and pulley system. By about the 12th June the transfer was complete and the old C.M.O. was just a shell, stripped of everything from school equipment and beds etc. down to the piping and fittings in the bathing room. The old C.M.O. was gone and so was the Cathedral School and from their roots sprang St. Mary's Orphanage, Dum Dum.

At the end of June of that year, St. Mary's opened her doors to 200 boarders and a handful of day scholars from the locality. In 1953 the school opened with 210 boarders and 50 day pupils. With 7 Brothers on the staff and 7 lay staff. By 1965 there were 335 boarders and 336 day scholars. The need was now felt for additional classroom as St. Mary's was originally meant to accommodate only 500 boys.



SCHOOL FRONT SANS THE NEW BUILDING—1955



THE ORCHESTRA—1955



Christian Brothers XI vs Germany (Shipscrew) St. Mary's, Dum Dum- 1956

(Kneeling): L to R: Br. Ben Dewsbury (2) – Br. Richard Cox (4)
– Br. Ollie Slattery (6)- Br. Bernard White (8)

(Standing): L to R: Br. Johnny Walshe (2) – Br. Regis Potts (4)- Br. Larry Kelly (6)
– Br. Mel McCann (8) – Br. Cos Donnelly (10)- Br. Stan Burke (12)

Foundations were laid for the new Building in 1963 under the Superiorship of Bro. C. A. O'Shea. At this stage the student strength was about 1000 as it is today.





POETRY SECTION

FLIGHT

Ever notice animals have refuges –
 Spots or holes or joints, some place to flee to –
 When the going gets scary?
 Ideally us humans have one another –
 It's called marriage,
 Or else community.
 Well guess what: it's from them folks need refuge.
 Birds and animals, they just fly. Flee.
 Us? Oh boy!

Papers documents witnesses certificates lawyers meetings interrogations hours days weeks months...

Each a synonym for (i)money(ii)embarrassment(iii)humiliation(iv)fear³

Second stanza: Solution to dilemma.

There isn't one.

Well, there's prayer.

Which at least isn't expensive.

I'd recommend it, only I know of a bloke who did it.

They had to unnailed him from a cross.

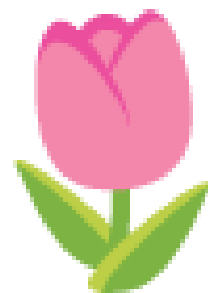
Them's my options.

Brendan April 2002

UNFOLDING THE ROSE

It is only a tiny rosebud,
 A flower of God's design;
 But I cannot unfold the petals
 With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers
 Is not known to such as I.
 GOD opens this flower so sweetly,
 When in my hands they fade and die.



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If I cannot unfold a rosebud,
This flower of God's design,
Then how can I think I have wisdom
To unfold this life of mine?

So I'll trust in Him for His leading
Each moment of every day.
I will look to Him for His guidance
Each step of the pilgrim way.

The pathway that lies before me,
Only my Heavenly Father knows.
I'll trust Him to unfold the moments,
Just as He unfolds the rose.

~ *Rumi*

(sent by a class mate of mine)



"It Can't Be Carried Alone"

Father Richard wrote the following poem in response to the collective suffering of the people of Ukraine.

How can we not feel shock or rage at what is happening
to the people of Ukraine—
As we watch their suffering unfold in real time
from an unfair distance?
Who of us does not feel inept or powerless
before such manifest evil? In this, at least, we are united.
Our partisan divisions now appear small and trivial.

Remember what we teach: both evil and goodness are,
first of all, social phenomena.
The Body of Christ is crucified and resurrected
at the same time. May we stand faithfully
Inside both these mysteries (contemplation).

In loving solidarity, we each bear what is ours to carry,
the unjust weight of crucifixion,
in expectant hope for God's transformation.
May we be led to do what we can on any level (action)
to create resurrection!

The people of Ukraine have much to teach the world.

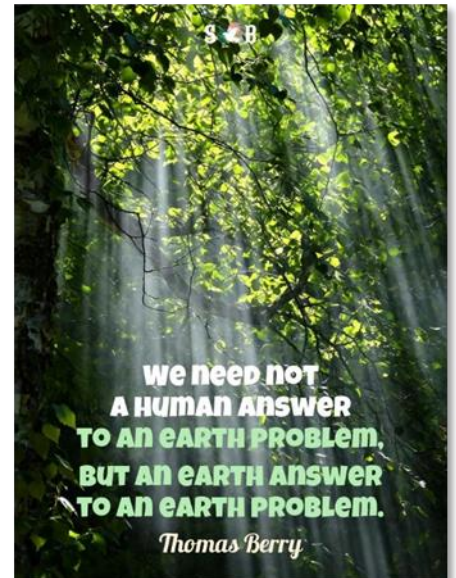




**JTI CLUSTER BULLETIN
MAY 2022**

A Prayer for Holding and Being Held By the Earth

If you are feeling far away from God,
Go outside and sink your fingers into the dirt.
Whether it's red clay or glacial till,
It was all brought forth by the great mystery of love,
Which set millions of unseen processes into motion—
Wind sweeping volcanic ash across the land,
Time and water compressing tiny bits of rock
Into the symphony of soil you hold in your hands.
Nudge it gently with your finger
Until you can see each individual grain,
Varying ever so slightly in color and size,
For the song of sacred creativity rings out in every place.
Remember: it was just such dust into which God breathed.
Remember: it is the very same God who breathes into you.
Amen.



Cameron Bellm

LAUDATO SI' WEEK 2022, MAY 22-29, WILL MARK THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL LAUDATO SI'

UMTYRKHANG

Last month during the Holy Week, the brothers attended the services in different places. Besides the presence, this was also a good opportunity to interact with the people of different villages belonging to the same parish. During this time Edwin visited home to be with his family and to attend his niece's wedding. The Brothers were happy to have Sunil visit the community and spend a few days during Edwin's absence.

The Village celebrated the Divine Mercy Sunday in a gusto, as people from many places gathered to pray in the Divine Mercy Church of Umtyrkhang.

On the work front, the teaching ministry has taken off with all three Brothers teaching in the local schools of the three villages.

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On 9th of April, the Brothers conducted a skilling program for the children in Mawlaho through various activities with a focus on listening and cleanliness. Many such activities are planned for the upcoming months in the 3 villages.

The Community Hall Project is nearing its end with the painting now completed. Planning is on at the moment for the inauguration of the same on the 5th of May.

In the piggery project the Brothers distributed piglets to two poor families and to the SHG members working in this project. Since the timeframe of this project is 3 years the Brothers hope to cover a reasonable number of families in assisting with their livelihood.

In order to encourage diversity of crops in the village, brothers have planted turmeric this month and hope the positive results in terms of yield and profit would enable people to cultivate it in addition to the ginger cultivation.



Men and women, Young and old all working for the ER Community Hall



A family becomes the beneficiary of our Pig breeding Project

PATHARLYNDAN

The students in the RCLP school are preparing for the School Sports day. The tin roof of the school which was struck again by severe winds while it was being repaired. The roof was damaged previously by a heavy hailstorm last month. The Brothers are working with the headmaster and the Manager on speedy repair of the roof.

The Dairy Cooperative Society members had their meeting in Brothers' house to fill up documents to register the society. The headman has been very supportive in this venture. They are in the process of submitting the papers to the Cooperative Society Officer. In the meantime the Multi- purpose Cooperative society members too have received their No objection certificate from the Headman to move forward with the registration.





Wanlambok Mawlong was welcomed in our community. He is discerning his vocation to be a brother and could be entering the pre-novitiate this June. He gets involved in the community activities and helps out in the school as well.

Our village invited the Brothers to the Dorbar Shnong meeting where the agenda of the meeting was to choose the headman and the executive members. The plan for the whole year was also discussed. The Dorbar reelected Bah Andreas as the headman.

The Brothers attended the inauguration of the Vocational Training Centre at Zero point run by the MSMHC sisters. It is started by Sr. Merlin who has been a supportive partner in the Livelihood programs initiated by the Brothers in Patharlyndan.

Lynne Moten visited our community for a day. She was happy to see Brothers' involvement in the rural areas. She is a teacher from Australia and has organized numerous student immersion programs in India.



The students of Patharlyndan Primary School in their first ever parade



Joachim explaining about the Brothers in during a Vocation talk

ERPAKON

As the Class 10 and Class 12 Board exams were finishing last month, we decided to see what we as a community could do to encourage young men to join us. Together with Willie, we decided to have a one-day Vocation camp on the 16th of May. We visited some schools to distribute posters and give vocation talks. We also visited the Parish priests of our district and the Church leaders of the nearby villages to request if an announcement about our Vocation Camp could be made after Mass. An advertisement was put in the vernacular Church magazine, Ka Ing Kristan.

The Brothers joined the people of the nearby villages where the Holy week masses were held. On the afternoon of Maundy Thursday, a cyclonic storm hit the closeby

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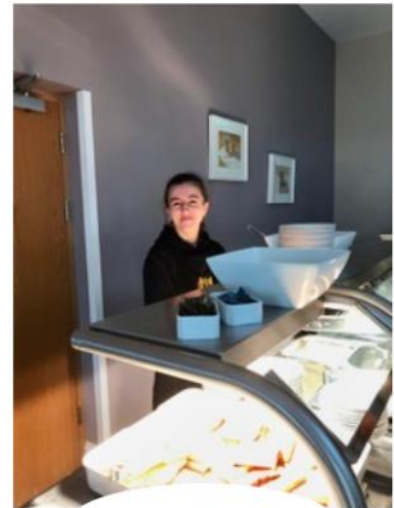
town of Umsning. Our entire district was under a power outage for almost a week as numerous electric poles and trees were uprooted.

Samuel Nonglait, Our Project Coordinator visits Patharlyndan and Umtyrkhang for a week every month. His insightful perspectives on the social and economical reality in the villages are extremely helpful in how to modify our current ministry interventions and plan necessary ones in the future. Sunil was in Umtyrkhang for a week, interacting with the Brothers, teachers in the school. He also sat in the classes of the Brothers in the primary school and offered some constructive feedback to the Brothers on their teaching.

Sunil Britto



Ukraine Refugees in Emmaus



April 2022

