



Listen to the Voice of creation

SEASON OF CREATION 2022

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 8

INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,

Greetings from Goa.

August has been an important and eventful month. India celebrated 75 years of Independence. The country has achieved a good deal during these years. It is one of the leaders in the high tech world, one of the largest democracies in the world, its constitution still says that it is a secular republic and one can list out many other achievements.

But there are a number of disturbing trends in the country. Many of the institutions that should be looking after the rights of the common people have been compromised. Elections are becoming a farce because elected representatives change their party affiliation for ulterior motives. The plight of minorities in the country has reached a new low.

Pope Francis in his "Fratelli Tuti" specially wrote about refugees who are having a very difficult existence. The Urban Development Minister recently announced a special housing scheme for the Rohingya Refugees. Within hours the decision was reversed.

On the 7th of August, we received the sad news that Br. Arthur's Brother-Francisco Xavierito had passed on. He was 69 years old and did much good work for the Port workers and others in need. We pray for Arthur and the members of his family.

On the 12th of August, Br. Brendan MaCarthaigh completed 70 years in the Brothers. We pray that he gets well soon so that his Jubilee can be celebrated appropriately.

Included in this newsletter is a contribution from Gerry Crouch who recalls his memories of life in the Brothers and his subsequent life after he left the Brothers.

We were very happy to meet Gerry Menezes who visited us on the 13th of August. Gerry had come to Goa to sort out property matters. His Mum was also making a very short visit to Goa for the same purpose.

The Regina Mundi community commemorated our Founder's death anniversary with an Eucharistic celebration on the 26th, a lunch for the teachers on the 27th, a lunch for the local religious on the 28th, and an evening celebration for the two Brothers communities on the 29th.

Yours fraternally

Mark



REFLECTIVE LISTENING

Kay Lindahl, an author and founder of The Listening Center, writes of the inherently sacred nature of reflective listening:

Perhaps one of the most precious and powerful gifts we can give another person is to really listen to them, to listen with quiet, fascinated attention, with our whole being, fully present. This sounds simple, but if we are honest with ourselves, we do not often listen to each other so completely.

Listening is a creative force. Something quite wonderful occurs when we are listened to fully. We expand, ideas come to life and grow, we remember who we are. Some speak of this force as a creative fountain within us that springs forth; others call it the inner spirit, intelligence, true self. Whatever this force is called, it shrivels up when we are not listened to and it thrives when we are.

The way we listen can actually allow the other person to bring forth what is true and alive to them. Sometimes we have to do a lot of listening before the fountain is replenished. . . . Patience is required to listen to such a person long enough for them to get to their center point of tranquility and peace. The results of such listening are extraordinary. Some would call them miracles.

Listening well takes time, skill, and a readiness to slow down, to let go of expectations, judgments, boredom, self-assertiveness, defensiveness. I've noticed that when people experience the depth of being listened to like this, they also begin to listen to others in the same way.

Lindahl believes that the skills for deep listening share the same foundation as contemplative practice:

Over the years I have discovered that there is a basic context that nurtures and develops the practice of listening as a sacred art. Three qualities that are essential to this deep listening context are silence, reflection, and presence.

- **Silence** creates the space for listening to God. It provides time to explore our relationship to Source. The practice of being in this silence nurtures our capacity to listen to others.
- **Reflection** gives us access to listening for our inner voice. The practice of taking a few breaths before responding to a situation, question, or comment gives time for your true wisdom to reveal itself. It's a slowing down, waiting, practicing



OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE
GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.
RUMI





patience.

- **Presence** is the awareness of listening to another, of connecting at the heart level. The practice of taking a mundane, ordinary activity and giving it your full attention, for example, washing your hands or brushing your teeth, trains your concentration and your ability to be in the present moment with another. . . .

Heart communication happens when we slow down, when we quiet down, look, and listen. Stop to take a breath. Become fully present with the person we're with. Listen with all of our being. At this point, communication can occur without words. Being present is a gift that fills our hearts and spirits. We are in communion.

Centre for Action and Contemplation

GERRY CROUCH SHARES ABOUT HIS LIFE

“DOWN UNDER”



With immense gratitude to the monks, I offer this short account of my life since I left the CBs in early

December 1983. The sheltered life in the CBs, the awesome strength and sense of brotherhood that

Community life provides, and the wonderful routine of life hitherto enjoyed were now a thing of the Past.

Only the robust and sound lessons learned from Dermot and de Britto, along with their grounding us in the

biblical perspective on life, helped me to navigate this rather challenging period.

After two years of giving private tuitions, I entered the workforce in a data processing firm, learning the intricacies of computer programming, cutting my teeth on Cobol programs. If that sounds like a long time ago, it's because it is. During this period, I took on the mantle of choir master at our parish; all of de Britto's music lessons and training bore fruit. It was here, too, that I met Michelle who was





also in the choir. Killing two birds with one stone, I believe is the term!



Gerry, Michelle, his 3 sons and daughter in law

By now, it was time to settle down. Michelle and I pronounced our vows in 1990. She had found her Mr. Right. And I had discovered Mrs. Always Right! I'm glad that has been sorted out! We have three sons, Stephen, Ian and Noel.

In 1996, I took up a new job in Bangalore, India's Silicon Valley. The family joined me the following year, and we settled ourselves in the Garden City of India, Bangalore. Two years on, I joined Tata

Infotech "TIL" (which was later merged with TCS - Tata Consultancy Services). During the next 5 years, we enjoyed visits from monks that were passing through Bangalore (Lennie Lobo, Kevin Ward, Cyril Christopher, Tony Keane et al); their visits always brought much joy and pleasure to the family.

And then the world changed forever. In 2001, our company TIL was awarded a contract with the United Nations in the US of A for some IT work. Four of us were sent on deputation to the UN headquarters in New York in June of 2001. Following the initial study, three of them returned to Bangalore, and I stayed on in NY to liaise with the UN team. Three months later, I witnessed the second of the two planes fly into the World Trade Centre from the UN HQ. It was a harrowing time, as I was alone in NY while my family was back in India. It was then that I experienced the promise of the psalmist: "Even though I walk through the valley of darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me."

On returning to Bangalore in November that year, it was business as usual, until a family friend talked about migrating to Australia. Since a brother of mine had already made Oz his home in 1993, I decided to give it a shot. The family and I landed Down Under in the winter of 2004; it was freezing cold. Those slick, glossy tourist brochures might promote the Aussie sun, sand and surf - but the grey, wet and cold winters in parts of the country can serve as a chilling reality check.

OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE
GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.
RUMI





Arriving at Melbourne Airport on that penultimate day of May 2004, the customs guy checked our bags for illegal foodstuffs, seeing that we were arriving from the sub-continent. In one suitcase, he found a can of rasgullas - those juicy, sweet, syrupy dumplings of goodness, which he promptly tossed away into a nearby bin.

We were then allowed to proceed to the exit. A bit negligent on his part, as we had four more tins distributed among a few other suitcases. You just can't separate a Calcuttan from his rasgullas!

In September, I joined a company that offers IT solutions for the Reverse Logistics space. For the next 17 years, I worked with them until my retirement in August 2021.

On the personal side, I took charge of the choir for a Sunday morning Mass at our parish. It was an international choir of sorts – there were Aussies, Filipinos, Italians, Mauritians, Dutch and Indians in the choir. They were a wonderful group to work with and provided some very uplifting music for the liturgy for the nine years that I was their choir master.

Looking back on the last 39 years, it's clear that our lives are guided by a loving God, and that everything works for our good if we only trust Him. Scripture that was opened to us by de Britto and Dermot always helps me to discern the hand of the Lord in life's daily events. And having witnessed theirs, and hundreds of other Christian Brothers' profound devotion to the Eucharist and daily Rosary and selfless service of others, I can only take inspiration from their lead in following Christ and do likewise.

Gerry Crouch

CB PRINCIPALS' MEETING

1ST AUGUST TO 4TH AUGUST 2022.

The much-awaited CB Principals' meet was held from the 1st to the 4th of August 2022, in Silaom, Meghalaya, at an altitude of 3500 feet.

Sixteen principals attended.

The quietness of the serene pine forests tucked away along the creeks of the Umiam mountain lake-reservoir provided the perfect setting for us principals to reflect on our journey thus far and to plan ahead to ensure that our schools/college manifest the values and vision of our founder Blessed Edmund Rice.

It was wonderful catching up with colleagues after more than two years as Covid 19 had made it





impossible for us to meet in person. The excitement was palpable!

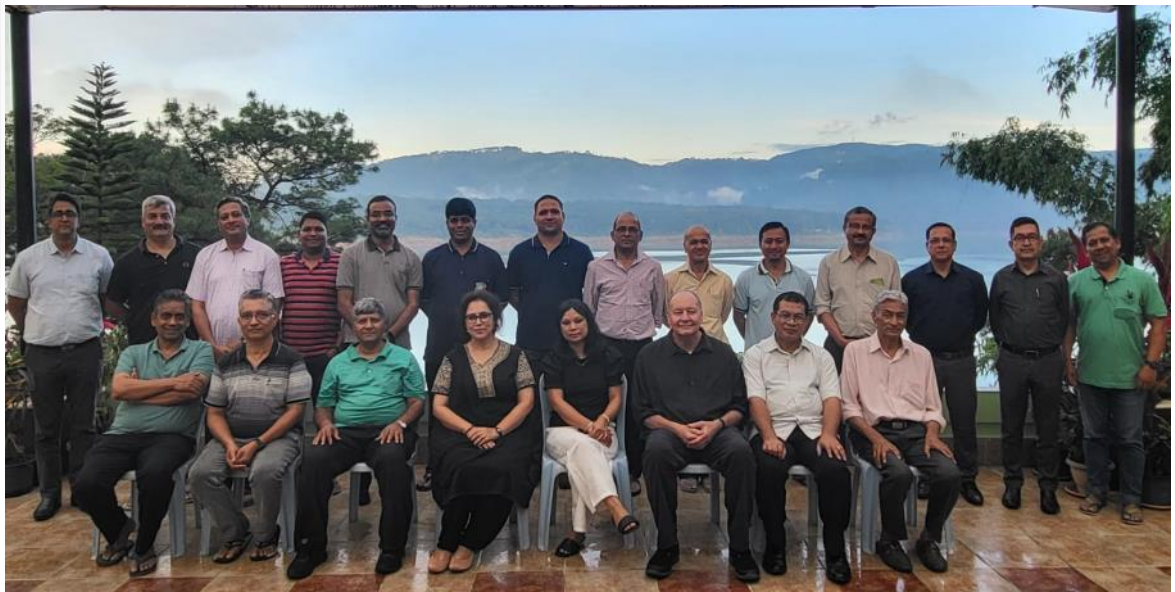
Our Province Leader Br. Steve Fernandes, along with Brothers Joe Johnson, Simon Coelho and Stelljes Julius, warmly welcomed all the principals.

Each morning our sessions would commence at 9am with a short prayer service conducted by the principals. This would set the tone for the day. The prayers centered around thanksgiving, gratitude, compassion and deep listening.

Dr Wayne Tinsey, Ambassador for Edmund Rice Schools, would take a session each day from 9:30am to 11am.

He reminded the principals of the ethos of an Edmund Rice Institution.

He stated that our aim should be to nurture the fire of passion for the vision of Edmund. He emphasized that our voice in the Edmund Rice Mission must amplify the voice of the poor and the forgotten ones in the world. Edmund Rice was moved by the Holy Spirit to open his whole heart to Christ present and appealing to him in the poor.



He reminded us that an Edmund Rice Education demands that we prioritize the plight of the poor and marginalized members of our society. He stated that 'Inclusion' is at the heart of the Gospel and the vision of Edmund Rice. Exclusion in its many shapes and forms, is the Gospel's greatest betrayal. To be faithful to the inclusive vision of Edmund Rice requires most of us to have a conversion of heart.

He reminded us that the call to 'Presence' is rooted in the deep belief that within each human being lies a divine essence that must be nurtured and formed to enable one to

OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE
GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.
RUMI





experience the fullness of life. Service to the poor and marginalized is core to our identity and the vision of Edmund Rice cannot be separated from a commitment to stand with and for those who are marginalized and excluded. The sense of 'Presence' will move us from charity to compassion and justice in our hearts.

He emphasized that an Edmund Rice education should be liberating. It should unshackle us from beliefs that bind us to a shallow vision of what constitutes a well lived life. A liberating education challenges the young to claim their capacity to be free and engage with the world on their own terms. He reminded us that when we remember our common identity in God , we are led to be compassionate and loving towards others. In the words of Swami Ramdas, " When the heart burns at the suffering of others, that is God's own heart."

Dr Wayne Tinsey summed up the Edmund Rice ethos by stating that our role is to collaborate with God to be instruments of mission and to be the embodiment of divine love, compassion and justice. By removing what is false, petty and self seeking we can bring forth all that is good, loving and compassionate within us.

Mr Andrew Pinto, our next resource person would take sessions each day from 11:30 am to 1 pm.

He took us through the skills required for good leadership. He stressed upon the importance of reflective practice. It is a skill that enables one to analyze the background of each action that one takes. One is able to examine consciously how our belief systems provide the frame of reference for our actions.

He explained how shifts in the school culture are the need of the hour. Education has to be more collaborative.

We need to shift from supervision to mentoring, from 'I' to 'We', from large group discussions to smaller group discussions so that each one is listened to, and feels valued. The leadership function should be 'service before self'.

Our institutions should be places that value people and provide an ambience of trust, support and encouragement.

He also stressed on the importance of good communication and behaviour. As leaders we should avoid personal attacks, rather we should be empathetic in our dealings .

He touched upon the need for partnership and accountability. Effective feedback must be given to members of our institutions after periodic reviews. Feedback given should never compromise the dignity of the individual. It should be objective.





Sessions were also held where principals shared their concerns. The brothers on the PLT and Ministries Office addressed these concerns.

Principals also shared some of the good practices prevalent in their institutions. This was enriching, as we got to learn from each other. There was a spirit of collaboration rather than competition.

Br Joe Johnson, took us through a session on child safety and financial compliances. He reminded us of the necessity to have a strong code of conduct in our institutions.

He also explained the importance of ensuring that all financial compliances were met with within the due dates.

Each day the sessions would be brought to a close with a reflective prayer. This would help us to briefly summarize the happenings of the day and to give thanks to the Almighty for His many graces.

On the 4th evening, a get together was held. Brother Steve Fernandes thanked each member and presented each one with a token of appreciation.

On the 5th of August the principals left for their centres of activity, energized and invigorated.

Nigel D'Souza



Still waiting



Over the past number of weeks, a lot of news coverage has been given to the crisis in the lack of suitable accommodation for the new influx of Ukrainian Refugees. Since last May-June the government were able to make good use of the halls of residences in universities to house refugees. Now with universities about to open again there's now a new pressure to find suitable accommodation for three and to five thousand refugees. New

requests have gone out to all Centres housing refugees to try and create more space to

OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE
GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.
RUMI





accommodate these refugees. Emmaus received such a request.

A request was received by the Emmaus Centre to accommodate another 50 refugees some weeks back. Emmaus was informed that once it agreed to accept more refugees they would arrive within days. We are still waiting. Allpro- the managers of the Emmaus Centre have prepared dormitory style accommodation. Allpro have been assured that this arrangement is only temporary at most will last for between two to three weeks. However, we have not yet received any new residents. Why? We really don't know and the company itself is not sure what the hold up is. When they enquired they were assured that the new intake would arrive within a few days. So, the assumption is that whatever pressure existed a few weeks ago has been relieved. Most likely this has happened because some hotel has become available or a Sports Centre like Aviva or Croak Park was willing to make its facilities available. It must be a big centre as the need was to house three to five thousand refugees on top of the hundred and seventy that are arriving weekly.

Meeting new needs: These new refugees will have needs other than those served by accommodation and feeding. Most refugees don't have time to plan their escape, some are fortunate to pack a few belongings and get on a bus to Poland or other neighbouring countries. Once in Poland they receive information on which countries are taking refugees. What makes Ireland so attractive is that Ukrainians do not require a visa to come here. Then they buy their tickets, get on a plane and land in Dublin Airport. We have heard the accounts of the cramped conditions in Dublin Airport especially in what was once the first Terminal building and City West hotel. Ireland is doing its best to accommodate more and more refugees but sometimes we are overrun by circumstances and although we wish things were better, gaps appear, and people end up sleeping on the floor or on chairs.

The temporary accommodation, while not adequate, is better than being left to fend for oneself on a chair or a floor. Hopefully, after a few weeks our new visitors will move on to more permanent accommodation where they can settle and get the various documents that they will need to sign up for a doctor, medical card, social welfare, pensions, child benefits and open bank accounts. In the meantime, they will be grateful for any assistance they can receive in terms of toiletries, clothing, money for travel and other needs that come with living away from home. While all meals are provided for, and the food is very wholesome not all meals are suitable for all residents. Some people supplement what is being provided with food they buy in the supermarket and cook in microwaves.

An urgent and important need: One of our residents is an elderly woman in need of an operation to remove cataracts from both eyes. This lady has very limited eyesight and without an urgent and immediate operation her ability to live independently is becoming limited. She has a medical card and she is on a list for a cataract operation sometime in the next three years. Because of her present circumstances it would be better for this lady if her cataract operation could be done privately. We need to fundraise to meet this need.





OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART. RUMI

A Parent's love: I have great admiration for a mother with one, two or more children. In normal circumstances trying to cater for the food needs of children is a challenging job. To have to meet those needs in their present situation and to do it with such care and attention is truly heroic. It can't be easy. These extra needs are costly the cost-of-living spiralling upwards catering for a child needs has become a daunting affair. So, parents with children are really burdened and while they are getting support from the government it is not enough.



Next month these same parents have the added burden of trying to find the extra money to kit out their children for school. The government has increased the back-to-school grant by a €100 for both primary and secondary children. It will not be enough to cover the actual costs of sending a child back to school. It is estimated that it costs a family one thousand two hundred Euros to send a child to primary school and over one thousand five hundred Euros to kit out a child for secondary school. What a worry it must be for parents living with limited funding in a foreign country but wanting to ensure that their child's education is not also a causality of war.



Apart from uniforms and books, sport equipment, and costs for games and the provision of extra materials during the school year some parents will need to supply their children with high-vis

jacket, helmets, lamps, and locks for their bicycles.

Thankfully, most children don't have to buy their own bicycle as many have been donated. However, most of the junior children either walk to school or depend on the parents of some of their school friends for lifts. The safety equipment and locks is mainly for the boys going to secondary school by bicycle.

Declan Power & John Ledwidge





POETRY SECTION

My Soul Is In A Hurry.

I counted my years and realized that I have less time to live than the time I have lived so far.

I have more past than future.

I feel like that boy who had a bowl of cherries. At first, he gobbled them, but when he realized there were only few left, he began to taste them intensely.

I no longer have time to deal with mediocrity.

I do not want to be in meetings where flamed egos parade.

I am bothered by the envious, who seek to discredit the most able, to usurp their places, coveting their seats, talent, achievements and luck.

I do not have time for endless conversations,
useless discussions about the lives of others who are not part of mine.

I no longer have the time to handle or manage the sensitivities of people who, despite their chronological age, are immature.

I hate to confront those who struggle for power, and those who do not debate the content, just the labels.

My time has become scarce to debate labels. I want the inner essence.

My soul is in a hurry.

Not many cherries in my bowl.

I want to live close to people who are "human" - humans who laugh at their own weaknesses; and away from those became smug and overconfident with their triumphs, and away from those filled with self-importance.

The essentials are what make life worthwhile. And for me, the essentials are more than enough!

Yes, I'm in a hurry. I'm in a hurry to live with the intensity that only maturity can give.

I do not intend to waste any of the remaining cherries.

I am sure they will be exquisite, much more than those eaten so far.

My goal is to reach the end satisfied and at peace with my loved ones, and my conscience.

As said by Confucius: "We have two lives.

The second begins when you realize you only have one."





I bid you a very meaningful day.

Mário de Andrade

(Brazilian poet)

Preparing for a New Nation?

If you are a Muslim woman, they will sell you on apps
The moment you speak, they will collectively pull out your tongue to render you speechless.
They'll threaten to murder you. Kill you. Sliding hatred into your DMS.
If you demand your rights, How dare you?
Is this the preparation for a new nation?

The foundation of it was laid on my chest. The floor, constructed of corpses.
There is indiscriminate violence all around. And the pretense of development.
All the institutions defending my rights have been looted. A deafening silence in justice chambers.
The decisions of courts are weighing heavily on justice.
Is this the preparation for a new nation?

The one who kills and murders us, is a celebrated revolutionary.
The one who rapes us, is hailed as cultured.
How can they be labeled as criminals? They adorn the sacred thread!
The criminals are hailed and celebrated when released from the jail.
Is this the preparation for a new nation?

Those junctions where once protests would happen.
The resounding slogans of "save women", "save daughters" would fill the air.
How will the daughters of the nation survive, was discussed.
Those junctions, those roads, those lanes are empty today.
Is this the preparation for a new nation?

You may run around writing writs or petitions.
You might await the due process or show your faith in justice.
Nothing is going to happen. Only failure will come your way.
The Constitution has been forgotten. New law of the land prevails.
Is this the preparation for a new nation?

You will threaten us, murder us.
You will find new ways to torture your fellow Muslim brethren.
You will call us traitors and celebrate our murderers as heroes.



OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE
GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.
RUMI





You will receive rewards then, For violently violating us.
Is this the preparation for a new nation?

Taken from Feminist, India



**JTI CLUSTER BULLETIN
SEPTEMBER 2022**

A PRAYER FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION

*I think a lot about Adam in the garden,
About God inviting him to name every living thing,
About God's delight in hearing such freshly formed words
Bobolink and badger, red finch and rhinoceros.
I think a lot about how the first act of co-creation
Was a symphony of sacred taxonomy.*

*And I imagine God standing with us now,
High on a precipice somewhere east of Eden,
Sharing in our sorrow as we gaze down upon devastation.
I imagine we are being called, once again, to name things,
To call them what they are:*

*Rising seas and rising temperatures,
Drought and wildfire, pollution and extinction.*

*Our call to co-creation is now a call to conservation.
Amen.*

Cameron Bellm

UMTYRKHANG

In the beginning of the month of August we had visits made by Sunil from the Hub and Samuel Nonglait our Project Coordinator. While Sunil's visit has been a great in terms of the Pastoral support, Sam has been visiting families with the Brothers of the SHG group members to monitor the piggery project as well as for the data collection of the families rearing silk in the 3 villages and looking at the possibility of assisting them in another income generating activity.

The response from the children in Umyrkhang for the afternoon tutorial classes has been excellent post the mid-term break. The focus for the tutorial classes has been Maths and English.

On 15th of August the Pamlatar village school celebrated the Independence Day with a number of activities organised for the whole day. Edwin as the main chief guest hoisted the flag and took the salute for the march past. Ajay along with the teachers in Pamlatar had done a wonderful job for





preparing the children for the cultural programme as well as the outdoor games. In the evening the Brothers screened a Hindi movie for the people of Umtyrkhang.

PATHARLYNDAN

After the Midterm exams, the parents and the teachers had a meeting to discuss the performance of the students. Since the basic foundation of the students is poor, the



Samuel Nonglait meeting with members and president of the Womens' groups



Ajay and the children of Pamlatar primary school are ready for a school day

result wasn't satisfactory. However in the subjects that are being taught by the Brothers, most students have passed with good marks. At the Parent-teachers meeting, Brothers shared on the importance of the students coming to school. The need to reduce the use of plastics to keep the village and environment clean was also discussed.

The computer literacy program is proceeding in full swing. Around 20 students come in two batches and are picking up computer skills very quickly under the guidance of the computer instructor Merinda Kurbah and the Brothers.

After attending the 75th Independence Day celebrations in Mairang, the Brothers also visited the local MLA Bah Metbah (the Speaker of State Assembly) and other District officials to build rapport and to invite them for the upcoming events - Lum Laudato Si' program and the Edmund Rice Football Tournament.

Monday 22nd August 2022 was a special day in Patharlyndan as we inaugurated Lum Laudato Si'. Lum in Khasi means Hill. We are afforesting with indigenous trees a big hill of around ten acres and renaming it Lum Laudato Si'. The afforestation process will take years. And this is by no means a simple event in a place where deforestation and charcoal making are rampant. It is totally counter-cultural for the people to do this. And it is happening assisted by the Brothers.

OUR GREATEST STRENGTH LIES IN THE
GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.
RUMI





ERPAKON

On Saturday 6th of August the Brothers had their monthly recollection with Philip Pinto where he shared with us how Pope Francis is inviting us to join him to rebuild the Church. Quoting Pope Francis



The Computer Literacy project in Patharlyndan hitting fourth gear



Lum Laudato Si' inaugurated by Bah Metbah, the State Speaker

he asserted that “When the Church does not come out of itself it, becomes self-referential and then gets sick.”

All Brothers are invited to join us for the Saturday Recollection. The next one is based on the second Spirit statement from the Dublin Chapter and will be on Saturday 1st October. John Casey is happy to give a 45-minute input at 9 am.

We use Google Meet and the link is <https://bit.ly/saturdayrecollection>.

One of the hub members and the Project Coordinator make a week's visit every month to each of the mission communities. Sunil spend a week each in Umyrkhang and Patharlyndan in August. Both the places are a hive of activity and is always enriching to visit the Brothers.

The Cluster Project Office is exploring what educational response will be effective particularly in Umyrkhang. We consulted with seven individuals involved in education and social development to build a model of educational response in keeping with best practices of sustainability, people participation and quality education. We are indebted to Khilesh Chaturvedi, Xavier Manjooran. Steve Rocha, Larry Miranda, Neha Pradhan, Carmo Noronha and Valerian Castelino for their valuable suggestions.

Sunil Britto

