



# INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

*Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,*

Greetings from Goa where the weather is getting warmer as the days go by.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, Br. Wilfred D'Souza completed 60 years as a Christian Brother. However he was not in his home community on the 2<sup>nd</sup> but in Chandigarh on "official" duties. The Brothers in Chandigarh celebrated the occasion with him by having a prayer service and dinner for him. Also invited were all the Ex-brothers based in Chandigarh with their families.

Unfortunately soon after, Wilfie's defibrillator started giving him a number of shocks and he rushed to Bangalore for a surgical procedure. Prior to the procedure he accidentally fell in the hospital room and he to have 3 stitches at back of his head and also injured his tailbone.

He was back in Goa on the 12<sup>th</sup> along with his family members to celebrate occasion appropriately on the 19<sup>th</sup> with a prayer service followed by lunch.

On the 13<sup>th</sup>, we were shocked to receive the news that George Rosario who had- been the co-ordinator of the NIOS for many years passed on after a sudden heart attack. Sushma Upadhyaya has paid a very moving tribute to George in this newsletter.

The Goa Carnival was celebrated this year in the 4 towns of Panjim, Vasco, Madgaon and Ponda. The daughter of our former nurse- Louisa was selected as Queen Momo for Vasco.

The 24<sup>th</sup> of March marked the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine. As this senseless war in Ukraine threatens to escalate, Pope Francis has asked us to redouble our prayers so that peace may be restored in this war torn part of the world.

Yours fraternally

*Mark*



## THE LESSON WITHIN LONELINESS

Soren Kierkegaard could be called the patron saint of the lonely.



Søren Aabye Kierkegaard was a Danish theologian, philosopher, poet, social critic, and religious author who is widely considered to be the first existentialist philosopher.

**Born:** 5 May 1813, Copenhagen, Denmark

**Died:** 11 November 1855, Copenhagen, Denmark

As a young man, Soren Kierkegaard renounced marriage to someone he was engaged to. Rightly or wrongly, he felt that what he had to give to the world was rooted inside the pain of his own loneliness and could only issue forth from that center and, if he was less lonely, he would have less to give.

Was he right? He confessed that he lived the curse “of never to be allowed to let anyone deeply and inwardly join themselves to me.” Thomas Merton, commenting on the same thing, once said that the absence of married intimacy in his life constituted “a fault in my chastity.” This kind of depth comes at a price.

Why, despite such an obvious downside, are the Kierkegaards of our world drawn to loneliness in the belief that it holds the key to depth, empathy, and wisdom? What does loneliness do for us?

What loneliness does for us, especially very intense loneliness, is destabilize the ego and make it too fragile to sustain us in the normal way. What happens then is that we begin to unravel, feel ourselves become unglued, become aware of our smallness, and know in the roots of our being that we need to connect to something larger than ourselves to survive. But that’s a very painful experience and we tend to flee from it.

However, and this is a great paradox, this experience of intense loneliness is one of the privileged ways of finding the deep answer to our quest for identity and meaning. Because it destabilizes the ego and disorients us, loneliness puts us in touch with what lays below the ego, namely, the soul, our deepest self. The image and likeness of God lies in there, as do our most noble and divine energies. That’s the truth behind the belief that in loneliness there is depth.

The lesson is this, whether married or single: Don’t run from loneliness. Don’t see it as your enemy. Don’t look for another person to cure your loneliness. See loneliness as a privileged avenue to depth and empathy.

*Ron Rolheiser, OMI*



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GENTLENESS AND TENDERNESS OF OUR HEART.  
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# BR. WILFRED D'SOUZA- GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Celebration in Chandigarh – 2<sup>nd</sup> February



**FRONT ROW**-Roshan Kerketa, John Xavier, Val Rosario, Louis Lopes  
**Back Row**-Andrew Pinto, Lenny Lobo, Philip Pinto, Wilfred D'Souza, Bob Beddoe

**Front Row:** Barisha, Niti, Wilfred, Jenny, Val, John  
**In Between:** The twins Keenan and Nathan  
**Back Row:** Philip, Bob, Louis, Roshan, Andrew, Lenny





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## BR. WILFRED ADRIAN D'SOUZA cfc

### 60 YEARS A CHRISTIAN BROTHER

1963-2023



Wilfy, sixty years ago we saw you leave a loving home and family only to be welcomed into another - the Christian Brothers.

When you entered Mt. Carmel, Kurseong, few would have imagined that this young man, deceptively simple, naïve and afraid of non-existent 'flying leeches' would play such a significant role in the life and governance of the Province and Congregation.

Early in your life as a Brother you displayed traits such as self-belief, crafty diplomacy, composure, punctuality, flair for administration and stickler for rules, which you no doubt inherited from your father. With time, you honed these many talents into fine skills, which you used most effectively when dealing with troublesome parents, officious Government bureaucrats, and even pompous clergy and hierarchy. You were "shrewd for the sake of the Kingdom of God", but never unfair or hurtful. You are "an original blessing" for the Province when financial, administrative or obstructive crises crop up.

Life dealt you many seemingly unfair blows in the form of both bereavements and serious health concerns. Early in life, in a short period you lost two young siblings and your father. It took all the love of your family, confrere's support, and your own resilience to enable you to deal with these losses in an exemplary way.

Later in life, you had to deal with serious and permanent health issues, which necessitated frequent visits to doctors and hospitals. You accepted these setbacks with a stoic calmness, which stemmed from a lifelong surrender to and acceptance of God's Will in your life.

You refused to let these adversities constrain or discourage you. On the contrary, you continue to accept appointments and burdensome tasks. On your frequent trips across the country, you do what you do best - conduct meetings, solve problems, dispense sound advice, and energize yourself for your next trip! Your positivity, humour and zest for life remains undiminished.

Your life is totally unostentatious. In community life and prayer, rules and traditions matter, though you are not averse to bending these when required. You enjoy company, but are more at ease on a one-on-one basis. Many a time have you asked if you could, "Drop in for a chat", with a definite emphasis on the 'drop'. You also earned yourself the affectionate moniker, "The Whacker", given your propensity to





appropriate others' everyday possessions, presuming tacit permission. Moreover, no Brother can recall an occasion when you reached into your pocket for your purse when a waiter presented a bill. No one resents these little quirks; they only add to the colourful and likeable character you are.

Wilfy, right from your school days you have always ensured that you stayed a step ahead of others. We recall the time in St. Columba's when you were able to manoeuvre a "double promotion" from Standard three to five, leaving your classmates bemused and a little envious.

Your diplomacy and shrewdness leave many to regard you as a person who follows someone through a revolving door, but exits before him!

We rejoice with you Wilfy and give thanks to God for you as we celebrate your 60 Years of service to the Province and the Congregation. May God reward you with happiness and good health.

In conclusion, we quote a few personal opinions expressed by some of your Brothers:

*"With his gusto for life, one can hardly guess that he is living on borrowed time. His positive outlook enables him to tide over many a health crisis. Such an appetite for life can only come from his deep relationship with the one Life that matters --- with Jesus --- to whom he has committed his life the last 60 years."*

*"He always encouraged me and helped me to feel at home and I don't think we ever had a row. Wilfie always won anyway so what would be the point in arguing! I have been so blessed to have had Wilfie there, walking behind me, supporting and encouraging me in his own inimitable way. I owe him so much in my Indian incarnation."*

*"Wilfie was the first Christian Brother I spoke to in my life and also my first CB teacher. I am grateful to him for dragging me out of the class when I was late for study one morning; but instead of scolding me for being late, he asked me to join the Brothers! This simple gesture did change my life."*

*"The most important aspect of your work and ministry has been relationships. You have been able to form bonds of friendship, trust, and support with a large number of people. You are gifted with the one skill that is needed: the gift of love and faithfulness in that love".*

*"I often accuse Wilfie of being a big 'bluff', never associating himself with spirituality. Religion, yes. He is totally unostentatious when it comes to a deep and letting go surrender to his poor health dealing with a very weak heart, cancer and a host of other debilitating illnesses. This, Wilfie faces in silence, surrender, and quiet reflection and may I add hard work and travel. Wilfie is a saint in my estimation. This statement might jolt the Province. Not me!"*

AD MULTOS ANNOS

*Martin Fernandes*





# Celebration in Goa -19<sup>th</sup> February



Wilfie: When are you bringing out the champagne?



**Left to Right:** Patsy, Wilfie, Ronnie, Lynette, Cynthia  
**Front:** Steve, Gerard, Wilfie, Bap, Lynette  
**Back:** Frank, Sebastian, Arthur, Mark, Placid, Cynthia, Raj, Len, Patsy, Con, Shawn, Ronnie, Martin, Pravin, Reena

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## Sir George –Gone too soon.....

George Anthony Rozario, lovingly called, Sir George by the faculty and students of St. Mary's Orphanage and Day School, Dum Dum left for his heavenly abode on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2023. The news of his sudden demise left us in shock and sadness.

For the students of NIOS, Sir George was more than a mere coordinator and teacher. He was a friend, a counsellor, a mentor, a guide and a good facilitator. Being hardworking and dedicated to his work, he also led by example. Sir George was the guiding force for those adolescents who passed through the portals of SMO and stepped into the real world. Being closely connected to the NIOS

section, he looked after the overall growth, development and well-being of the students under his care. Sir George took time to visit the houses of the children who came from humbled backgrounds in order to ensure that everyone was well included into the educational system. All extra-curricular activities, concerts, sports and picnics were well organized under his leadership.

Sir George became the NIOS coordinator in June 2006. Prior to that he was taking care of the relocated SMO boarders in Howard Memorial School. His journey was a challenging one as these students hailed from difficult backgrounds. He took upon this mammoth task of walking with them on their journey to build and guide them to learn to fend for themselves and their families. He was known to have a good rapport with his students. Bringing in years of experience and insight as a teacher, he made the classroom a brighter place to learn and have fun.



Sir George had a cordial relationship with the staff and the students in the school. Being down-to-earth, humble and kind at the core made him a lovable educator. Having worked with the Christian Brothers for the past several years, helped him impart the tenets of his Christian faith through dedicated service, integrity and respect.

Suddenly, it feels like we have lost one of our best teachers! We have beautiful memories to cherish forever. SMO will never be the same without you, Sir! Your demise has created a void. You will be missed. We at SMO keep your family in our prayer as they bear the burden of your demise. RIP Sir George.

*Ms. Sushma Upadhyaya*





## IN MEMORY OF A BELOVED TEACHER

Br Greg is fondly remembered by his many ex students as being their best science teacher ever. In addition to being a most gifted and extraordinary teacher Br Greg was also a very fine sportsman. Hence it was decided that the last major event of the Golden Jubilee Year would be the setting up of an annual Inter School Under 14 Football Tournament in his memory.

A very nice invitation was prepared and sent out to all nearby schools.



The following schools responded : Notre Dame, St Anns, St Xavier's ,St Peters, Nazareth Convent, Jesus and Mary ( Pali),Cambridge Rustomjee, Carmelite Convent, St Aloysius, Don Bosco ( Naigaon) and Vidya Vikasini.

The 4 teams playing the first set of games were present for the opening ceremony .Mr Neville Gonsalves ( SSC 1980) shared his memories of Br Greg at the ceremony.

The trophies and match officials for the game were organised with the help of our football coach Mr Murugan.

The visiting teams enjoyed the tournament and each school was presented with a souvenir to mark the Golden Jubilee of the school. Our school team did well.They won both group games comfortably and reached the finals where we had to play against Vidya Vikasini School,

Vidya Vikasini proved to be a vastly superior team and beat us 5-1 inspite of our home ground advantage.( A



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senior ex student named Santosh Sequeira shared later that he remembered St Augustine's being beaten by Vidya Vikasini by a similar margin 30 years ago!! ) So that bit of history repeated itself. We will have to better in second edition of the tournament next year.

Rustomjee Cambridge School took third place, Vidya Vikasini took home the winner's cup and St Augustine's were runners up in the inaugural Br C G Fernandes Memorial Inter School U 14 Football Tournament.

Bassein Catholic Cooperative Bank Ltd were the main sponsors for the tournament and director Mr Benauld Dias was the guest of honour for the prize distribution at the end.

*St. Augustine's School, Vasai*

## POETRY SECTION

### WISDOM

What can I learn from one book, I said,  
 or many,  
 that birds have not already taught me  
 with their song  
 and seeming being at peace  
 with the world as it is –  
 mess and all?

Birds have everything in almost nothing  
 a world in a branch or leaf,  
 and provident food,  
 and ample bird contentment.

Ah, dear feathered evangelist,  
 sing on till all the world is listening and  
 brought to graced silence  
 and freedom not to need more  
 than nature places on the table.

May we cease  
 from earning, buying, craving  
 and dare





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to receive, openhanded  
the gifts of a provident  
God.

May we look at birds and be reminded  
we are worth  
'more than many sparrows.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bible, Luke 12:7

*Contributed by Kevin Ward*

## **Tahlia Hunter - November 2022**

Patience visited me  
And it reminded me  
That good things take time to come to fruition  
And grow slowly with stability

Peace visited me  
And it reminded me  
That I may remain calm through the storms of life  
Regardless of the chaos surrounding me

Hope visited me  
And it reminded me  
That better times lay ahead  
And it would always be there to guide and uplift me

Humility visited me  
And it reminded me  
That I may achieve it  
Not by trying to shrink myself and make myself less  
But by focusing on serving the world and uplifting those around me

Kindness visited me  
And it reminded me  
To be more gentle, forgiving and compassionate toward myself  
And those surrounding me

Confidence visited me





And it reminded me  
 To not conceal or suppress my gifts and talents  
 In order to make others feel more comfortable  
 But to embrace what makes me me

Focus visited me  
 And it reminded me  
 That other people's insecurities and judgements about me  
 Are not my problem  
 And I should redirect my attention  
 From others back to me

Freedom visited me  
 And it reminded me  
 That no one has control over my mindset, thoughts and wellbeing  
 But me  
 And love visited me  
 And it reminded me  
 That I need not search for it in others  
 As it lies within me.

Tahlia Hunter has written some very inspiring lines in the poem.

# Influence of seven significant women in the life of Blessed Edmund Rice





## Grandparents Day Report—Chandigarh

Grandparents have silver in their hair and gold in their heart."

**HAPPY GRANDPARENTS' DAY!**

Grandparents are "Our Roots, Our Happiness", they bring joy and knowledge with them. Through their special love and care, grandparents keep a family close. To honour these special people, St. John's High School celebrated Grandparents' Day in February 2023 with great enthusiasm.

Grandparents were welcomed by our little ones by applying tilak on their foreheads.



The programme started with the prayer by the boys of class Prep. To show respect and love for their grandparents, the boys of all sections of class KG recited poems and anchored the programme flawlessly. It was an incredible moment for the grandparents to witness the synchronization of the talent of their grandchildren.



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To balance the tones set by the events thus far, we had a number game in which grandparents participated with great zeal and a round of fun-filled "Questionnaire" for the grandparents was also held.

This was followed by Kavita ma'am's speech. Snacks were then served to the grandparents and a small handmade keychain was gifted to them as a token of love and regard from the Johnian family.

The audience appreciated and responded overwhelmingly to this unique initiative taken by the school and bid their grandchildren





## JTI CLUSTER BULLETIN MARCH 2023

*The universe yet incomplete, on the sixth day,  
God created her. WOMAN and God said to her:  
I shall give you*

*A heart full of compassion  
A spirit free to fly with the birds  
A vessel to carry life into the world  
Wisdom to know great truths  
Courage to rise out of oppression  
Strength to move mountains  
Gentleness to kiss the earth  
Passion to set the world on fire  
Vision to respect the earth that bore  
you  
A playful nature to dance with  
children  
Laughter to fill the valleys  
Tears to wash the pain away  
Hands for labouring and loving  
Intuition to know the unknown  
Desire to be that which you were created to be*

*And God said to her: Woman,  
I have created you in my image and likeness and You are good.*

*Sr Susan Marie Doyle, 1988*

***Which of the above feminine gifts have not yet shown up in me? our communities?  
our Church? our world?***

### PATHARLYNDAN

The students in Patharlyndan began their new academic year in the month of February. The elections for the Meghalaya Assembly have forced the schools to closed down as the teachers are helping in election booths and other duties, in the smooth conduct of the elections.

Iatreilang Edmund Rice Youth Action group held an orientation as well as to become familiar with the terrain of Lum Laudato Si to take the tree planting activities forward.



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Two field workers, Bah Tobias Jana and Balawansuk interacted with the youth to explain to them the importance of harmonious living with nature. Meghalaya BASIN Development visited Patharlyndan in January, to involve the local people in Micro planning exercise to address Climate Change initiatives. The BASIN Development personnel checked forest cover in the area. Water sources were identified to build check dams to preserve water.

The recently formed Iatreilang Dairy Cooperative Society is taking a step forward by keeping 10 high milk yield cows as their livelihood. The Dairy Milk Mission of Meghalaya has sanctioned an interest free loan to start this venture. This is a small beginning for the people to take another initiative forward.

A group of Ex-pupils of SMO, Dum Dum visited our village with Br. William Dsouza. They interacted with some students attending Computer classes as well as the field workers. They even climbed the Lum Laudato Si' and saw for themselves the advocacy initiated by the Brothers and the village leadership.



*Iatreilang ER Youth Action group on Lum Laudato Si'*



*During our boatride on Lake Umiam on our outing morning*

## UMTYRKHANG

While Jerry and Ajay were on home leave, Edwin assisted a few children of the village studying outside with some remedial teaching of English, Maths and Science in the month of Jan.

In the third week of Jan a couple of youth attended a week's training in the Hub on basic teaching skills for the lower primary classes. It was heartening to see the progress made at the end of the week by the two who were very raw at the start of it. Thanks to Sr. Baiada, a Loreto nun working in South Sudan who had come on home leave for being generous with her time for imparting the necessary skills and to Sunil for all the hard work in putting this training together.

On the 25th of January we had the good news of the second sow delivering 9 piglets with the piggery project that the Brothers are involved in with a SHG group. We would be assisting another 3 families of the village with the piglets.

Even though we had majority of the chicks (of Rainbow breed) dying at the beginning of the project last year, the ones that survived are doing very well and in the last two months we have been able to





collect 260 eggs from the 8 chickens. People are now buying some eggs from the Brothers in order to try out the same in their houses.

In the month of February, we received the spawns for the mushroom cultivation and been distributed to the trainees who attended the training along with Jerry and Ajay. The Brothers are also trying it to see it's variability as another source of income for the villagers.

Because of the teachers being involved in the election duty, the reopening of the schools and teaching has been delayed in the 3 villages. Hopefully, post elections regular teaching will take place.



*Ajay and some village women working on mushroom cultivation.*



*The two teacher trainees preparing charts and flashcards with Sr. Baiada*

## ERPAKON

The Cluster Brothers gathered in the Hub for the Cluster Gathering for two days in the second week of Feb. We commenced our time with a Check-in sharing how we are and then had open sessions to talk about any issues that we wanted to talk about. We also went for an outing to Lumsohpetbneng, the mythical place in Khasi folklore proceeding then to a boatripe on Umiam lake. We continued our quality social time together in the evenings with a movie, bbq, and party games.

Earlier in January we conducted a teacher training program for two youth from Umtyrkhang by Sr Baiada IBVM and Sunil Britto. These youth Elisha and Joseph could be helping out in the primary school in Umtyrkhang. During the weeklong program the two trainees grew immensely in confidence

On the 26th of Feb, we heard of the tragic accident that happened in Sumer in which six were killed on the spot including a priest, three sisters, a teacher, and the driver. When we heard that bodies were taken to Nongpoh Civil Hospital, we rushed there offer any support needed. The next morning Bipin's dad passed to the other world leaving us in further sadness. We send our heartfelt condolences to Bipin and his family.

*Sunil Britto*

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