



INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,

Greetings from Goa. It is still very hot and humid and will be for some time. Some weather pundits are forecasting that we could have a sub normal monsoon. Let's hope that they are proved wrong once again.

On the 9th of April we celebrated the feast of Easter. I listened to a homily from the Redemptorist church in Bangalore that caught my attention at the beginning. Quoting the priest, "A man came out of church at the end of the Easter service and said to his friend - Jesus has risen!! So what!! The sermon was long and boring. The service and ritual went on for hours and I got nothing out of it." I did not find the rest of the homily interesting enough to recall it now.

But what struck me was the following prayer from the reflections sent by Paul Hendrick: "We focus on the risen Jesus and his message, a man with a dream for a better world, a man of extraordinary courage, a man willing to die for what he believed, a man who knew he would never see his dream fulfilled, a man who had to trust that those who came after him would keep his dream alive."

On the 1st. of April, I travelled for the first time after the pandemic lockdown. My destination was Mangalore and I had Brs. Len and Raj to help me get into the train in Madgaon and get out in Mangalore. I spent a very enjoyable holy week in Bajpe. John Pereira and the community were excellent hosts.

April 22nd was Earth Day. The theme for this year was to invest in our planet. Our Congregation chapter called each of our Brothers to love and protect our planet through contemplation prayer and action. The Province Chapter committed the Province to a number of shared objectives. Is it time now to have a relook these objectives and determine how they can be implemented?

Congratulations to Sanjoy and Dilip who made their first profession in Bhopal on the 25th of April. All God's blessings to them and their families.

The 26th of April was the 86th birth anniversary of Fr. Stan Swamy, S.J. His was the voice of the poor in India and he died because he worked for the poor.



My thanks to Fr. Avinash for writing an appreciation of Con D'Souza. They knew each other from the time they were in school.

Yours fraternally.

Mark

WE LEARN BY DOING IT WRONG

Dominican sister and counselor Catherine Chapman describes why so many of us struggle to accept our powerlessness:

The very idea that we are powerless over people, places and things is an alien concept to many of us, especially men. We grew up with the notion that we could do anything we wanted if we put our minds to it....

We are powerless to control anyone and anything except ourselves; and there are even things about ourselves we cannot control. If we are an addict we are powerless over drugs and alcohol *or anything else we use compulsively*. Those of us in relationships with addicts are powerless over the addict. All of us are powerless to make anyone be, feel, and do exactly what we want. We have very limited control over what happens in the world at large....

Admitting we are powerless over people, places and things, and that our lives have become unmanageable, can be one of the most difficult, yet one of the most freeing, admissions of our lives. It is usually beyond our comprehension that admitting powerlessness and unmanageability will help us find peace. For many, if not most of us, this admission implies we have given up or we are defeated. However, this is exactly what the First Step is asking us to do: admit defeat. But, we are only admitting defeat in relation to our way of doing things.

Admitting our powerlessness frees us to allow the One who is Power to become active in our lives. We become more open to new ways of doing things as we allow God to love us and teach us how to give and receive love. We also begin to accept people and situations as they are. As we realize we aren't in control, but God is in control, we are more able to detach from people and situations that are unhealthy for us, and accept these the way they are. This doesn't mean we quit caring. We care, but we don't allow the situation to determine our thoughts, actions and feelings. We will discover, as our detachment and acceptance deepens, that we have more emotional energy to spend on



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ourselves and the activities we would like to do.

The emotional component of Step 1 is getting in touch with our powerlessness over people, places and things. The behavioral response to Step 1 is letting go of control. Not controlling means we do not try to manage anyone's life in any way. Not controlling means we allow other people to be responsible for their lives.... We begin to listen to others and, on occasion, try things their way. No longer are we rigidly wedded to the notion that our way is the only correct way. Not controlling means letting go and going with the flow.

Richard Rohr -Daily Meditations

JUBILEE ADDRESS

Br. Conrad D'Souza



In the words of the Bard: A rose by any other name would smell just as sweet

The subject of this Jubilee Address is affectionately known among his Brothers by a variety of names: Con Das, Con Dom, Con Senior... Call him what you want, he is the irrepressible Br. Conrad D'Souza. How many Novices would enjoy the same degree of freedom to tell their Novice Masters.. to cool it?

There is a story which went around shared by Con Himself.. While he was discerning his Call he visited the nearby Community of Franciscan Brothers. After being welcomed and ushered into the Community Parlour he was told to wait till a Brother responded to his request. The Brother was long in coming so Con did a quick re-think and made for the door never to return. The hand of Providence intervened in good time.

Tony Keane, our Postulator, lost no time in making arrangements for Con to arrive at our Novitiate in Shillong. The Dapper Con dressed in a "Beige" suit made quite an impression on arrival in the Campus. Not shy by disposition, during his first week in Shillong he visited all our Formation Houses on the Campus and laid the foundation of many relationships which have endured to the present time.

Con has been blessed with a wonderful of freedom which expressed itself in the early days of his Novitiate. Debritto Curren (affectionately referred to as "Novi" who often expressed his enthusiasm sometimes ,in verbal outbursts, Our Con, witnessed once such moment and typically offered his brand





of wisdom, “Cool it Maan..:

I, too benefitted from his down to earth advice. Barely a month into my role as Head of the School in Dadar, when I was in a fairly relaxed mood, he posed a simple question that really grounded me. “How come that you only recognize good ideas if they originate from yourself?”

That was an Eye-Opener!! Unfortunately being a slow learner, there was hardly any noticeable change in my mode of operating??

After Shillong, I next caught up with Con when he joined our community in Dadar. Ivor D’Mello, Fr. Avinash’s brother, used to weekly screen 16mm Western Movies for our students. He would view the films with all the seriousness of a concerned parent. He would then censor the films. Naturally Con was curious. Somehow he managed to secure some of these clips and proceeded to enjoy a private viewing of the same.

Br. Peter Gomes, our Community Leader was an avid student of the Stars and other “Heavenly Bodies”. He was persuaded by his community to conduct evening sessions on the Terrace. A letter was dashed off to the Superior of St. Joseph’s College, Nainital. Prompt was the response from Bernard Vieyra. “Get the best Telescope available and send me the Bill”

No time was lost and our Evening Sessions began in real earnest. Peter’s eager neophytes readily lapped up his inputs. One evening, however, midway through our session, Peter was called away to attend to a phone call. While he was away Con had changed the settings of the Telescope and had zeroed in on the tallest building in our locality – the “Twin towers”. Just as our Superior walked in he was heard to say, “Lenny, she’s wearing the same sari tonight”. That was the end of our lessons in Astronomy and to this day we continue to stumble in darkness.

By the time Con moved on to Vasai, he had developed into an very effective teacher of Mathematics in Class 10. Here he threw himself into his new school with the same degree of enthusiasm, he found time to pursue a Master’s Degree in History without any fanfare or drama. Con’s suitability for Formation was soon recognized by the P.L.T. That meant 3 years at the Brothers Institute in Bangalore studying Scripture, theology and internalizing his knowledge and insights

While the Brothers in the Province seriously considered extending our involvement with the “poor” in rural India, Con accompanied a handpicked group of brothers on a trip to Bahad (a village in the Hindi belt). Part of the initial Interaction consisted of



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introducing the group to a gathering of villagers. Con introduced himself as “Main Con Hu” which drew quizzical looks from his audience, who responded “Tume Kon hai” only to be repeatedly told “Main CON Hu”. A brother had to intervene and say “Brother ka naam Con hai”. The ice broke, laughter prevailed for a while and a relaxed audience were ready to go interact with this group.

After serving his term as Novice Master, Con found himself elected to the Province Leadership Team. The Brothers enjoyed his visits and his openness in sharing his experiences and struggles.

No stopping Con after that, after completing his term on the PLT, he opted to pursue an M Th. In Pune. With this qualification under his belt, to make his services available to a much larger audience as he undertook to conduct Retreats, Reflections and community animation. Here too he made his mark and today is a much sought after Resource Person.

Congratulations Con on completing 50 deeply satisfying years as a C.B.. We are proud to hail you as a wonderfully human and inspiring personality.

Ad Multos Annos!!

Lenny Lobo



Con with his brother Jude, sister in law-Vincy, and sister-Jean

A BUDDY RECALLS HIS FRIEND

Conrad D'Souza, more familiarly known to us as Con Das, is for me the face of a true CB, showing me what it is to be a 'Brother' today. He reflects the face of Jesus in a most unique and beautiful way.

The words of the song, 'Strong and Constant', come to mind:





*'I will be Yahweh who walks with you!
You will be always within My hand!
Take your heart and give it all to Me
Strong and constant is My love.'*

Yes, I see in Con's life, a God who has been walking with him; holding him, closely guiding him and leading him into ever new pastures. The Classroom ministry was his passion and joy for some twenty years. Then he was drawn to the Formation ministry when he enjoyed teaching Scripture, having fun, and shepherding the young Brothers. Then came a bold change when he joined the 'Journeying Together' communities.

Right from the Novitiate days, Con was a man of prayer, who treasured his union with Jesus above all else. I enjoyed the Novitiate 'villa days' with him. He was a terrific walker and had a good sense of direction. I remember once we had our 'tails cut' when we trekked down to Barapani, took a short cut and reached well before the others. The Teacher Training Program we had in Asansol, under Br Ollie Slattery was tough going for all of us, and especially for Con. He rose from the ashes to be a brilliant teacher. We were together again in the Scholasticate. In the first week of College, his adventurous spirit made him try Political Science, then English before settling down for History Honours. Bernard Viyera would remark, 'Man Alive, Con..'

His years in Bajpe saw him shine as a Teacher and Principal. He had a great relationship with the staff, the Sisters and the students. I enjoyed being in community with him. I remember the time, when he was learning to ride the bike, how he almost drove the bike into the well, when someone said, 'Good evening Brother'. Then, there was our dog, Tiger, who would bite the College girls who would come to the Brothers' House. We decided to kill the dog. Con said he would take care of that. With a solid iron rod, Con clobbered the dog on the head, while it was sleeping on the sand. The dog stood up, shuddered and collapsed, for dead. Jockey and I dug the grave in the garden, near the Jackfruit tree. As we were going to pick up the corpse, the dog got up and walked away. Con would love to go to Mangalore at the weekends, for the English Mass there and for a break. I remember having many a deep discussion with him while riding on the bike. Con was an ace in relieving tension in community, with his openness and his sense of humour. He was great in drawing Christie Murphy on to punning and joking.

There were the years Con was passionate on the Universe Story, read many books on the subject, and got us all interested in it. Later he researched and wrote on 'Brotherhood', something he lived to the full. Then he moved to the Gospel of Mark,



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which he studied so very well. As a true learner, now he is moving on to study John's gospel. Thanks Con, for being a true friend, a model in accepting pain and the Cross that have come your way in your back aches and more. Your way of keeping in touch with students and friends over the years, keep reminding me of the importance of relationships. You are one who believes in the 'God of surprises,' who makes all things new. The words of Ezekiel are a prophecy for you:



'I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you.' Ezk 36:26

And Con, just sing this song, giving thanks to the Lord, for the amazing works He is doing in you:

*'Till the end of my days, O Lord,
I will bless your name.
Sing your praise, give you thanks, all my days.
You have blessed me with good things and plenty
'And surrounded my table with friends...'*

Fr. Avinash D'Mello

THE DIVA OF ST. JOHN'S.....



For the past 16 years our school's corridors have been buzzing with her presence, grace and wit. Yes, I am talking about our very own in house diva Mrs. Kavita C. Das. Her presence has inspired, motivated, enlightened and filled us with joy. The school revolved around her dazzling and charismatic personality. Ma'am's dynamic leadership qualities have capitulated the school to the number one in the country. She has taken St. John's to greater heights and encouraged us to aim for the sky. Her ability to reach out to people not only at the times of distress but otherwise also, created a niche in everybody's heart. She has always been patient and resilient regardless of the situation or the person. She is a firm believer in God and her faith in





'him' has kept her going through difficult times.

She joined the school as an English teacher, almost 25 years ago. She took a break in between to give time to her family and joined back as a part time teacher. In 2006, she took reigns of St. John's as a Principal and since then she has held the fort for her students and teachers. Deeply committed to education, she looked for ways to enhance the learning experience for everyone. Her passion for teaching and deep affection for each and every child made her popular amongst the students. According to her, teaching is not a profession but a vocation. Her compassion and empathy is visible in her interaction with not only people around her (outreach initiatives like working with transgender community) but also towards animals (animal adoption). It is heartening to see her taking a stand and making a difference in every life that she touches. She is an exceptional leader who has made significant impact with her incessant service to the community.

She has been a great support system for us. The environment she creates with her boundless empathy, unending integrity and persistent humility is exactly what our fraternity needs. We will dearly miss her walking down the corridors adoring her beautiful sari and her contagious smile.

Vandana Bansal (Co-ordinator, St. John's School, Chandigarh)

The First Profession Day of Brothers Sanjoy And Dilip in Simran, Bhopal.

The first profession of Br Sanjoy and Br. Dilip was held on 25th of April. Much preparation went before the day. We, the postulants, were involved in practicing hymns, cleaning the house and the surroundings, preparing the rooms for the visitors and making sure of the availability of things that were required by the families and visiting Brothers.

The holy Eucharist celebration was in The Queen of the Universe Church, Kolar at 5:30pm. The main Celebrant was most Rev. Dr. A.A.S. Durairaj, SVD, Archbishop



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of Bhopal, along with Rev Fr. Ronald PP, Fr. Johnny Wilson and Fr. Alexander.

The delegate of the Provincial, Br. Ceddy, along with the vocation promoter Br. William, and Br Placid came to witness the first profession of our two young Brothers.

The family and relatives of both the brothers were also present that day.

The sisters from different Congregations, some of the Parishioners, and some young friends were invited.



After the holy Eucharist we came to Simran house for the reception. At the reception, a welcome song was sung by the families of the newly professed Brothers, and then they placed a garland of flowers and shawl around the necks of each of the Brothers present.

Soon the cake was cut and a congratulatory song was sung. All the guests were congratulated with a bouquet of flowers, which was followed by a prayer. Then, a delicious meal was served.

After the meal, as the religious left, the youth along with the postulants and the newly professed, with their families, danced through to midnight, as was their wont.

Postulants

EDMUND RICE HOUSE, BAJPE



Left to Right: Fr Ronald Cutinha (PP), Amrit, Ritesh Kumar, James, Raj, Dr. Peter Paul Saldanha (Bishop Of Mangalore), John Pereira, Enosent, Emilaiano, Sonshine, Fr Trishan D'Souza) Not in photo: Nico





A short account of themselves written by the candidates who were in the House at the time of our visit.

Ritesh Kumar: I lived in Gurgaon and did my higher studies there. However I am originally from Patna, the capital of Bihar. My family lives in Gurgaon and consists of my Father, Mother and two sisters, one is younger and the other is older than me. I am thus the middle child.

At present I am pursuing my degree from St. Aloysius College, Mangaluru and I am staying at the Edmund Rice House, Bajpe. I really enjoy the weather of Bajpe and the environment within the campus is very peaceful. The things that make me feel so happy about the place is the beautiful nature and the fresh air. Also i like community life especially playing and working together . Everyone here is friendly and caring. I am blessed to be in such a beautiful place with caring people around me.

Sonshine Lyngdoh M: "I'm just an ordinary person who believes that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when they believe in themselves"

I come from the Eastern West Khasi, Meghalaya, one of the cold places in Meghalaya. I am currently doing my graduation at St. Aloysius College Mangalore and my subjects are Psychology and Social Work.

I enjoy Nature, listening to music, traveling, meeting people from different places, helping others, cooking and games..

I have 5 brothers and 1 sister who are all still doing their studies. I am discovering that I am a person who has the sensitivity to feel for people around me. As I grow I understand much more that we need to changes, accept others, be kind and introspective in life in order to improve the quality of life especially for those in need.

I like helping to those in need and make friends with everyone.

I'm grateful to the Christians Brother's for allowing me join the congregation and making me feel at home.

Emilianus Syad: from the East Jaintia Hills District, Meghalaya. Presently, I'm doing my 4th Semester BA(Psychology and English Literature) in St Aloysius Autonomous College Mangalore. College is a place where we can mingle and talk to classmates and friends. Most importantly, there are a lot of things to be learnt every. As of now I'm very busy with, assignments, projects, presentations and sometimes surprise tests too.



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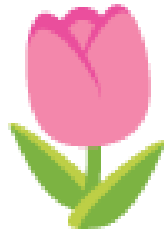


I love to play football, as well as singing though my voice isn't great. I'm a person who loves to spend more time with my own self especially at home. I try to make people laugh both in the college and at home.

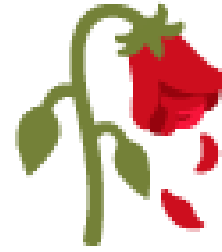
POETRY SECTION

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.

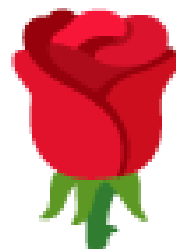


The secret of unfolding flowers
Is not known to such as I.
GOD opens this flower so sweetly,
When in my hands they fade and die.



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

April Fools

Holy fools!
Refusing to be constrained
by published creed and code, daring to pour
brilliant blobs of color
on the neat black and white
of soul-less bureaucracy





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and corporate power.

Holy fools!
Challenging small minds
and dried-up spirits
to quicken with forbidden fruit
and burst the narrowed vision,
laying bare in awesome display
ultimate integrity.

Holy fools!
Breaking the rules
in the name of God
and refusing to recite the law
In favor of the spirit;
breaking down the prisons,
opening forbidden doors
to sing and dance to a different
and most glorious tune.

Edwina Gateley in Christ In The Margins

Jesus Wept

Poet Ann Weems (1934–2016) suffered tragedy first hand when her twenty-one-year-old son was murdered. She poured her profound grief into writing her own versions of lament psalms. Here she takes heart from Jesus' own weeping:

Jesus wept,
and in his weeping,
he joined himself forever
to those who mourn.
He stands now throughout all time,
this Jesus weeping,
with his arms about the weeping ones:
“Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.”
He stands with the mourners,
for his name is God-with-us.

Jesus wept.

“Blessed are those who weep, for they shall be comforted.” Someday.





Someday God will wipe the tears from Rachel's eyes.
 In the godforsaken, obscene quicksand of life,
 there is a deafening alleluia
 rising from the souls
 of those who weep,
 and of those who weep with those who weep.
 If you watch, you will see
 the hand of God
 putting the stars back in their skies
 one by one.



JTI CLUSTER BULLETIN MAY 2023

Laudato Si' Week 2023 will be held from May 21 to 28 to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the publication of the encyclical Laudato Si'. "Hope for the Earth. Hope for humanity", will be this year's guiding theme.

The film "The Letter," which tells the story of four "social poets" affected first-hand by the climate crisis who travel to Rome to meet Pope Francis, will be the main resource guiding the week's events, encouraging people to organize community screenings.

Several global events will take place during the week, including an event dedicated to "The Letter" on Saturday 27, and the conclusion of the Week on Pentecost–Sunday 28.

Laudato Si' Week is organized by the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, and facilitated by Laudato Si' Movement together with other partners.

For more information visit: laudatosiweek.org

COMMON PRAYER
 for the 8th anniversary of
Laudato Si'

Loving God,
 Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them,
 You created us in your own image and made us
 stewards of all your creation.
 You blessed us with the sun, water and bountiful land
 so that all might be nourished.

Open our minds and touch our hearts,
 so that we may attend to your gift of creation.
 Help us to be conscious that our common home
 belongs not only to us, but to all of your creatures and to
 all future generations, and that it is our responsibility to
 preserve it.
 May we help each person secure the food and
 resources that they need.

Be present to those in need in these trying times,
 especially the poorest and those most at risk of being
 left behind.
 Transform our fear and feelings of isolation into hope
 and fraternity so that we may experience a true
 conversion of the heart.





PATHARLYNDAN

In Patharlyndan the weather is warming up after the cold winter. The farmers have begun preparing the fields for cultivation. The schools have begun and are functioning smoothly. The Brothers are teaching in the three village schools.

One of the schools in the village were not open to Brothers' involvement in the school are now open to receiving help. The Manager of the school residing in the village had approached the Brothers requesting their help to teach in his school. The Brothers agreed to his request and Gambhir is teaching in the Christian UP school from Monday to Friday.

The PLT had come for the visitation of the community for three days. We greatly appreciated their encouragement and support to us in Patharlyndan. We had a monthly visit from Br. Sunil from the Hub to support us in our ministry and community life. We shared our successes and struggles in the ministry front as well as our community life. We greatly appreciated his visit to us.



Joel and Brothers from Wahrinong celebrate with Theo



Our co-workers join Vinod's birthday celebration

The dairy cooperative has received their first installment of money to build a cow shed and storage room, and five members have started building the cow sheds. The Brothers are monitoring the progress of the construction.

We celebrated Vinod and Theo's birthday in Patharlyndan. We invited the co-workers and the Brothers from Wahrinong to celebrate brotherhood and gift of life.

UMTYRKHANG

On the 11th of March, a one-day program was held for the women of four villages around Umtyrkhang. Besides some fun and games, the main speaker of the day Sr

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Soria Nongtdu spoke on the theme 'Parenting' and 'Role of women in Ecology.' About 50 women turned up for the programme. The women thanked the Brothers for organising such an inspiring program.

Following that we had the PLT visitation by Steve, Joe and Cedly. During their stay here they interacted with the staff and students of the two village schools, Pamlatar and Mawlaho and also with the women of the SHG group in Umtyrkhang.



Ajay giving Yoga lessons to the children in Pamlatar



11 March Women's Day program held in Umtyrkhang

Ajay and Jerry continue with their teaching ministry in the two neighbouring village schools for this year too. The idea of having a supplementary teacher for the village school trained by the Brothers unfortunately has faltered in the last stage of its implementation due to the lackadaisical attitude of the school management and village executive council.

Towards the end of March and in April we have been able to harvest the mushroom that was planted early in March. So far it has been sold only in the village..

ERPAKON

On Earth Day April 22nd, under the leadership of Sunil, who is the CRI President, the Religious Sisters, Fathers and Brothers of Nongpoh subunit organised an Ecology awareness program including a youth rally, street plays and cleaning drive. Many youths were involved in this initiative which took place in MUDA complex, Nongpoh. The event was also covered by T7 a Khasi news channel.

We had a Vocation camp in the Hub on the 22nd of March for boys who just finished their Board exams. Seven boys from the neighbouring villages attended the camp. Bipin is in touch with them.





We had Steve, Joe and Cedly for visitation. They listened to us and shared possibilities. We appreciate their stay with us.



Earth Day program by religious of CRI Nongpoh



Interaction with some fine young men during the Vocation camp

THANKSGIVING EUCHARIST AND FAREWELL FOR THE BROTHERS IN SANGRAM



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