



INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

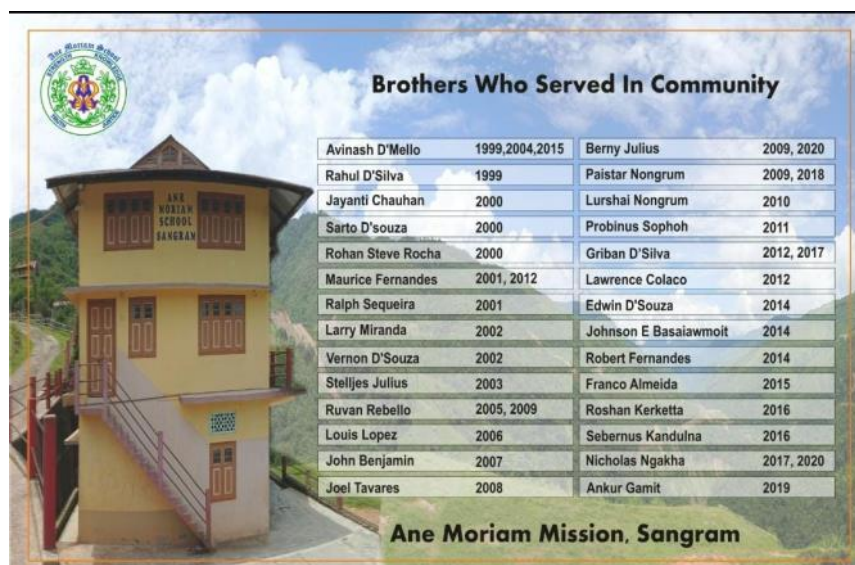
Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,

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Greetings from Goa. The weather continues to be very hot and humid. One feels sorry for the people who work on construction sites and have to carry heavy loads in the blazing sun.

The 5th of May was Founders day and this year several significant events took place on the day.

The Brothers who served for several years in Ane Moriam school bid farewell to the children that they ministered to with great dedication



A new building in Providence was blessed on the 5th. Unfortunately the founder – Steve D'Souza was not able to be present for the occasion.

The 5th of May also saw a change of guard in St. Edmund's College. Mr. *Sylvanus Lamare* retired from the college and Dr. Br. Simon Coelho, took over as the Principal in charge.

Yours fraternally

Mark



PROPHETIC DISCIPLESHIP

Christian discipleship calls all of us to be prophetic, to be advocates for justice, to help give voice to the poor, and to defend truth. But not all of us, by temperament or by particular vocation, are called to civil disobedience, public demonstrations, and the picket lines, as were Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Daniel Berrigan, and other such prophetic figures. All are asked to be prophetic, but for some this means more wielding a basin and towel than wielding a placard.

There is a powerful way of being prophetic that, while seemingly quiet and personal, is never private. And its rules are the same as the rules for those who, in the name of Jesus, are wielding placards and risking civil disobedience. What are those rules, rules for a Christian prophecy?

First, a prophet makes a vow of love, not of alienation. There is a critical distinction between stirring up trouble and offering prophecy out of love, a distinction between operating out of egoism and operating out of faith and hope. A prophet risks misunderstanding, but never seeks it, and a prophet seeks always to have a mellow rather than an angry heart.

Second, a prophet draws his or her cause from Jesus and not from an ideology. Ideologies can carry a lot of truth and be genuine advocates for justice. But, people can walk away from an ideology, seeing it precisely as an ideology, as political correctness, and thus justify their rejection of the truth it carries. Sincere people often walk away from Greenpeace, from Feminism, or Liberation Theology, from Critical Race Theory, and many other ideologies which in fact carry a lot of truth because those truths are wrapped inside an ideology. Sincere people will not walk away from Jesus. In our struggle for justice and truth, we must be ever vigilant that we are drawing our truth from the Gospels and not from some ideology.

Third, a prophet is committed to non-violence. A prophet is always seeking to personally disarm rather than to arm, to be in the words of Daniel Berrigan, a powerless criminal in a time of criminal power. A prophet takes Jesus seriously when he asks us, in the face of violence, to turn the other cheek. A prophet incarnates in his or her way of living the eschatological truth that in heaven there will be no guns.

Fourth, a prophet articulates God's voice for the poor and for the earth. Any preaching, teaching, or political action that is not good news for the poor is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus came to bring good news to the poor, to "widows, orphans, and strangers" (biblical code for the most vulnerable groups in society). As Pastor Forbes



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once famously said: Nobody goes to heaven without a letter of reference from the poor. We are not meant to be the church compatible.

Fifth, a prophet doesn't foretell the future but properly names the present in terms of God's vision of things. A prophet reads where the finger of God is within everyday life, in function of naming our fidelity or infidelity to God and in function of pointing to our future in terms of God's plan for us. This is Jesus' challenge to read the signs of the times.

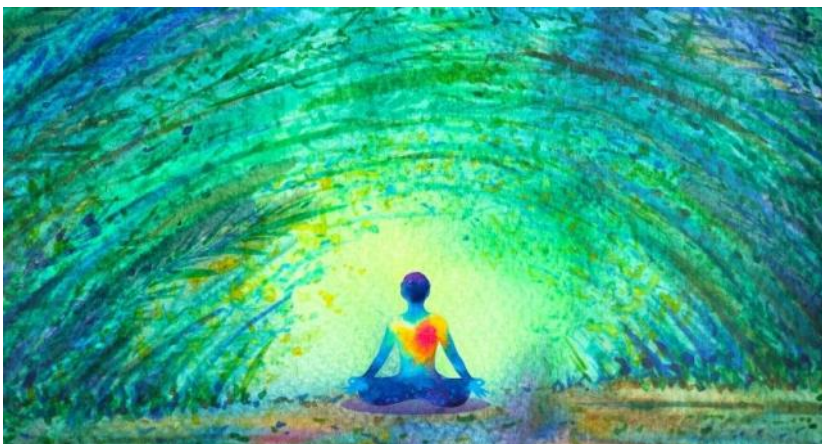
Sixth, a prophet speaks out of a horizon of hope. A prophet draws his or her vision and energy not from wishful thinking nor from optimism, but from hope. And Christian hope is not based on whether the world situation is better or worse on a given day. Christian hope is based on God's promise, a promise that was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus, which assures us that we can entrust ourselves to love, truth, and justice, even if the world kills us for it. The stone will always roll back from the tomb.

Seventh, a prophet's heart and cause are never a ghetto. Jesus assures us that in his Father's house there are many rooms. Christian prophecy must ensure that no person or group can make God their own tribal or national deity. God is equally solicitous vis-à-vis all people and all nations.

Finally, a prophet doesn't just speak or write about injustice, a prophet also acts and acts with courage, even at the cost of death. A prophet is a wisdom figure, a Magus or a Sophia, who will act, no matter the cost in lost friends, lost prestige, lost freedom, or danger to his or her own life. A prophet has enough altruistic love, hope, and courage to act, no matter the cost. A prophet never seeks martyrdom but accepts it if it finds him or her.

This last counsel is, I believe, the one most challenging for "quiet" prophets. Wisdom figures are not renowned for being on the picket lines, but in that lies the challenge. A prophet can discern at what time to park the placard and bring out the basin and towel – and at what time to lay aside the basin and towel and pick up the placard.

Ron Rolheiser





A PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE ARCHIVES



Brothers in Sangram on a feasibility visit with the children of Sangram

INAUGURATION OF A NEW BUILDING FOR PROVIDENCE



A view of the New bulding

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One of the new classrooms



The Head mistress of Providence-**Varina Kharumnuid**, The Founder – **Br. Steve D'Souza**





ST. COLUMBA'S SCHOOL, NEW DELHI

4th MAY



A very impressive service was held in front of the Middle School. The following address was read out by one of the boys -

Good morning Brother Robert, Mrs Pal, coordinators, teachers and my fellow Columbans. Today we are gathered here to celebrate our Founder, Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice as we commemorate Founder's Day. I hereby commend and express our heartfelt gratitude to all the Christian Brothers who stand as the torch bearers of his legacy and have walked in the footsteps of our Blessed Founder, working tirelessly for the good in society. Edmund is our guiding light who continues to live within each one of us and inspires us each day...!

If Brother Rice were to convey a message to students in St Columba's on this special day, we believe that this is what he would want to say to you:

- ◆ **Embrace your education** : Br Rice believed that education was the key to unlocking one's potential and achieving a better future. He would want to encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities available to you and strive for excellence in your studies.
- ◆ **Serve others**: Br Rice was deeply committed to serving those in need. Especially the poor and the marginalized. He would want to encourage you to use your talents and skills to be compassionate and kind to those in need, and to work towards creating a more just and equitable world.
- ◆ **Have Faith**: Br Rice was a man of deep faith who believed that God was at the

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centre of everything he did. He would want you to nurture your own faith and to develop a relationship with God, knowing that this would provide you with strength and guidance in all aspects of your life.

- ◆ **Be resilient** : Brother Rice would encourage you to be resilient in the face of adversity, to never give up on your dreams, and to have the courage to keep going even when things are tough.

Overall, the message for all of you today would be one of hope, encouragement and empowerment. Use your education, your faith and your talents to make a positive impact on the world and create a better future for yourselves and others.

A group of boys formed a heart shape on the steps. Each boy held a placard with the name of a Brother from the Indian Province - those in the country and those abroad. All were represented. Suitable prayers were offered, especially for our Brothers to keep them in the heart of Edmund. The assembly ended with the singing of "Where to now, Edmund?"

Ms Grace David

VOCATION PROMOTION CAMPS

The Catholic Diocese of Sambalpur organized the General Vocation Camp 2023 at Utkal Jyoti, Jharsuguda. The camp was held from 22 March to 25 March 2023 for the boys and girls who had just appeared the Metric Examination. 64 girls and 102 boys attended the camp. The vocation Promotion Day was on 24 March. The Day began with the Holy Eucharist at 7 am, concelebrated by the Bishop of Sambalpur, Rt. Rev. Niranjana Sualsingh and about twenty priests. The Bishop in his half an hour homily emphasized the concept of vocation being the call from God, that one has to be ready and accept the challenge. At 11 am the Vocation Promoters were given an opportunity to speak to the boys and girls separately. There were more than one hundred Women Religious Congregations to address only 64 girls. The diocese of Sambalpur and Baraille priests, about thirty five Men Religious Congregation priests and seven Religious Brothers Congregation addressed the 102 boys. The vocation promoters were given two minutes to speak. It took about two hours and then the boys and girls were allowed to meet the priests, sisters and brothers. The interaction with the boys was very fruitful; about 13 boys gave their names and were interested to know more about our Congregation. Lunch was served to all at 2.30 pm. There was a cultural program at 6pm. I stayed back for this program and after dinner I boarded the train to Howrah Station.

The Catholic Diocese of Rourkela organized the General Vocation Camp 2023 for boys who had





finished their Metric and Plus two at Nava Jagriti Laity Formation Centre, Kalunga from 16-19 April. Jayanti and I stayed at the Redemptorist Priests Residence nearby and attended the Camp. On 19 April, at 8.30 am registration was done. Five hundred and sixty two boys attended the camp. More than one hundred men Religious and Dioceses priests and brothers



came to recruit the boys The Vocation promoters were given a minute to tell the boys about their congregation and mission. Jayanti and I did the same and interacted with many who came to our stall number One hundred and forty four. Sixteen boys gave their names and they were interested to know more about our Congregation and mission. Lunch was served to all at 2 o'clock.

After lunch Jayanti left and went to Mumbai. I stayed for an extra day with the Redemptorist priests and went to Berhampur Railway station.

I stayed at the Bishop's House in Berhampur for two days and rested. The general vocation Camp for boys for the Diocese of Berhampur started on 20



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April. About two hundred and boys attended the same at Anugraha Peetho, Mohana. The registration for recruitment began at 8.30 am on 22nd April. Since Jayanti was otherwise engaged, I was alone. About thirty plus men religious congregation and diocesan priests registered for the Camp. We were given three minutes to speak on our Congregation and Mission. About nine boys gave their names. Lunch was served to all. After lunch, returned to bishop's house and later took a train to Bhuvaneshwar.

Br. William D' Souza

THE SILENT SCREAM

(Part 1)

This writing was dormant in me for quite sometime. A recent article on suicide, spurred me to write this.

*Fools, said I you do not know
Silence like a cancers grows
Hear my words that I might teach you
Take my arms that I might reach out to you
But my words like silent rain drops fell
And echoed in the wells of silence.*
(Paul Simon's The Sound of Silence)

There's a kind of hush, all over quite a number of our children, which is loud enough. But we don't seem to hear. We are not able to sense it. Perhaps, some of us do feel its vibrations, but we dismiss it with indifference. There is a serious dis-ease among our students. They are screaming for help. We, adults are unaware of the deafening call. It reminds me of the picture The Scream, by the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch – the second most famous image in art history, after Leonardo's Mona Lisa. What is this scream about?

The effects of the two years of the pandemic are slowly emerging. I have personally witnessed a rapid decline in the academic grades. A lot of our children are distracted very easily. They are fidgety, restless and get irritated quite easily. A number of children in the senior school are seen yawning right from the first period and it is not because the lessons are not engaging enough. They have not had adequate sleep the night before. Most of our children are addicted to their mobile phones, You Tubes, Internet, WhatsApp, Instagram, Gaming and surfing.

In a reflection exercise given to the senior students of a school, it was found that a number of our students had various issues affecting their mental states. Some of these issues are:





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- a. Anger management / Aggressive behaviour
- b. Stress
- c. Addiction to internet
- d. Addiction to pornography
- e. Addiction to smoking and drinking
- f. Wasting of time
- g. Poor time management
- h. Procrastination
- i. Lack of friends and loneliness
- j. Getting distracted easily
- k. Peer pressure
- l. Falling into bad habits
- m. Lack of focus
- n. Lack of aim in life

Mind you, all these issues are affecting our children who are wonderfully created. They are truly gifted, talented and decent human beings. But most are unable to handle pressures. They lack resilience. They succumb to pressures and tend to give up easily. They need help. They need role models.

What can we adults do in order to help these frail and vulnerable young people? First of all, are we aware our children are going through serious crises? Are parents in touch with what is going on in their children's lives? Are they being monitored? Do we have time to sit with them and have an honest chat? Can we hear their silent screams for help? Screen addiction can have several negative psychological effects on teens, including:

Depression and Anxiety: Teens who are addicted to screens may experience increased levels of depression and anxiety. Spending excessive time on screens can interfere with sleep and social interactions, which can negatively impact mental





health.

Social Isolation: Teens who are addicted to screens may spend less time socializing with friends and family members, leading to social isolation and loneliness.

Poor Self-Esteem: Excessive screen time can lead to comparisons with others on social media, which can lower self-esteem and lead to feelings of inadequacy.

Lack of Empathy: Spending excessive time on screens can reduce opportunities for face-to-face interactions and empathy development, which can negatively impact teens ability to form meaningful relationships.

Attention Problems: Screen addiction can make it difficult for teens to focus and pay attention to tasks outside of technology, leading to attention problems in school and other areas of life.

Irritability and Aggression: Teens who spend too much time on screens may become irritable and exhibit aggressive behaviours due to the lack of social and emotional skills development.

Addiction: Screen addiction can become a serious addiction, leading to a compulsive need to use technology, difficulty in controlling usage, and withdrawal symptoms when not using technology. It is important for parents to monitor and limit their teens; screen time to minimize the negative psychological effects of screen addiction. Encouraging alternative activities, such as sports or hobbies, can also help teens develop a healthier relationship with technology and improve their psychological well-being. (Continued next month)

Solomon Morris

A REPORT ON THE FORMATION PROGRAMME

By Br William D'Souza—10th MAY 2023

The session with Br. William was thought provoking, enlightening and enjoyable.

We started with a 'check-in' of the whole group, where each member spoke about how they were feeling and this made us aware of each one's circumstances, which otherwise we were all unaware of.

The two important questions:

Who am I?

Why am I here??





The answers to these two questions will help us discern our purpose in life and help us take stock of our situations. It puts things in the right perspective.

When we are stressed, upset, angry, confused a 'check-in' will help us be in charge of ourselves, our situations and emotions. Then we can move forward in the right direction.



(L-R) Belinda Rego, Glenn Rego, Gladys Saldanha, Br. Willie DSouza, Mary Vanderveen, Janet Aranha, Peter Aranha, Myrna Rego.

The Poem ' The Summer Day ' by Mary Oliver made us conscious of the fact that the appreciation and awareness of our surroundings can also be a prayer.

As the culmination of this beautiful session, we went to the Chapel to celebrate the Feast Day of Blessed Edmund. Each of us gave thanks to God for all we have received and placed our petitions at His Feet in front of the alter.

Being the Karnataka election day, we moved out to a small restaurant "Kudla" for dinner, which was a happy ending to our beautiful experience of the Formation Programme.

Janet Aranha.

President, Bl. Edmund Rice Group, Bangalore.

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POETRY SECTION

WHAT IS A BROTHER?

He is just that,
a brother
to everyone he meets
and greets along
life's highway.

But he is especially concerned
for those who need a brother's
love and care.

To the poor, the marginalized,
and the young, he reaches out
his hand to help
and his heart to heal.

He is just a brother.
He is big-hearted,
kind-hearted,
warm-hearted.

He is all heart,
and he gives his all
with Jesus,
in Jesus,
through Jesus,
to the lonely,
the joyless,
the suffering,
and all in need
of a brother's love.

E.B. Wakeham, CFC (June 2007) © Edmund Rice Christian Brothers ielenArt Foundation, LTD

NOT AGAIN!

Love is what everything is about

It seems certain that love is the key to all life,
That love's the one answer to all sorts of strife.





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Your everyday working so others feel blest

Encourages everyone's better than best.

It's corny I know to refer to the trees –

People love them, and rabbits, and seagulls, and bees –

But it does make me think there is some greater why

They exhaust their best gifts – and that then thy just die!

I'm for ever exploring *So what's it about?*

Though the evidence seems to admit of no doubt.

It is love for each creature, each other, the world,

No mere cliché – in fact, it's the primary Word.

So interpret things thus, and then add one thing more:

It's not just that you know; it's about you, the knower.

It's about me as well, what each cell is made of.

So what's it about? It is all about love.

Brendan May 2023

LIKE PORTIA

When Shakespeare wrote

In truth I know not why I am so sad ...'

he spoke for all of us
not Portia only.

There is a (perverse?) streak in human beings

whereby they choose

to see the dark side only

of things

while all around

God places as is God's style





Prodigally,
great goodness, beauty, truth
that should give birth to smiles
and grateful worship
not sadness only.

How can one behold a butterfly
lured by the loveliness
of a laughing flower and
not be lost in awe?

And can you stand at dawn in
a field near trees
when rays of sun steal brightly
upon our broken world
and banish what is dark?

How can you not be moved
when love wafts by
in word or gesture or
in a soft embrace
and makes you more alive?

Another poet, Pearse,
once wrote:
*The beauty of the world hath made me sad
This beauty that shall pass.*
When next you're sad
make fully sure that all your tears
are flowing
because of passing beauty
and not because
our world has none at all.

Kevin Ward

