



INDIAN PROVINCE NEWSLETTER

Dear Brothers and friends of Edmund,

Greetings from Goa.

The cumulative rainfall in Goa has exceeded 100 inches which should be good news for the farmers.

I begin to write this on the Feast of our Lady of Sorrows. According to legend, the first sorrow that Mary experienced was the Prophecy of Simeon. Simeon ends his prophecy with the words that a "sword shall pierce your own soul too."

These days I listen to the India Today reporter in Manipur. I listen to interview after interview that narrates the horrendous stories of man's inhumanity to man and particularly of man's inhumanity to women. Mothers have been raped and the whole family suffers shame. When will peace be restored? When will restorative justice be done? Families are packing their belongings. But they have nowhere to go .

The second sorrow of Mary is about the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt. And I am reminded of refugees fleeing or having fled from countries like Syria, Yemen, Ukraine and Afghanistan to mention a few. What about the repressive regimes that have caused these people to leave all they owned?

The third sorrow of Mary is losing Jesus when he was 12 years old. And I am aware of countries like Philippines, India and Kenya where young children are kidnapped from economically poor families and sold to middlemen who exploit them. What can the poor mothers do? There are no government laws to redress their plight. And no political will to prevent this happening again and again in a so called post enlightened world.

The next 4 sorrows that Mary suffered are connected with the crucifixion of Jesus. Crucifixion in antiquity was the most shameful death that a person could die. And Mary was a witness right through to his burial.

Jimmy Carter when he was elected President said that the world should be guided by the following text from Scripture- "To act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." Jesus was crucified because he put into practice this text. He spoke on



behalf of those who were treated unjustly and he loved the publicans and tax collectors.

In our day, Fr. Stan Swamy died in jail because he spoke on behalf of the adivasis. Pope Francis speaks daily about those who are disenfranchised. But many leaders in the church hierarchy and governments round the world are more interested in maintaining the status quo. Where do you and I stand?

Yours fraternally.

Mark

THE HUMILITY OF GOD

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.—Philippians 2:5-8

Franciscan sister Ilia Delio considers how Francis mirrored God's humility:

I think Francis of Assisi grasped something of the mystery of God and, in a particular way, the mystery of God's humility.... Francis did not study theology. He did not try to figure out what God is through reason. He simply spent long hours in prayer, often in caves, mountains or places of solitude, places where he could distance himself from the busy everyday world. Thomas of Celano, the first biographer of Francis, wrote: "Where the knowledge of teachers is outside, the passion of the lover entered." What Thomas perceived is that love, not knowledge, allowed Francis to enter into the great mystery we call "God." As he entered into this mystery he discovered two principle features of God—the overflowing goodness of God and the humility of God.... Francis came to know the God of humble love by meditating on and imitating the poor and humble Christ.

Theologian Bruce Epperly shares how Francis modeled God's humility revealed in Jesus:

Francis patterned his life ... after the gospel simplicity and humility of Jesus, whose self-emptying and letting go of power and prestige was at the heart of his divinity. Divine power is found in downward mobility and identification with human suffering, not in weaponry, status, or comfort. God's love for the world is expressed in solidarity with



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the least....

Jesus embodied a radically different lifestyle than that of the heads of church and state. In Francis's time, some church leaders dressed in the finest clothing, lived in comfortable homes, and managed vast fortunes despite the poverty of most worshippers. In contrast, Francis discovered that the glory of God is found in identification with the salt of the earth, the most vulnerable people, the poor, disabled, and leprous. The incarnation of Christ means that Christ is one of us, not lording it over like presidents and prelates, but living among the poor and dispossessed. A poor Christ reveals what Abraham Joshua Heschel describes as "the divine pathos," God's intimate experience of the world's pain and suffering. God feels our pain and rejoices in our celebration. Foolish by the world's standards, Francis, Clare, and their followers sought the way of holy poverty or spiritual simplicity that breaks down walls and builds bridges with all God's creatures. Better than none, equal to all in need of God's grace, and depending on God's gifts for life itself, Francis and Clare found God in the least of these. They served Christ by letting go of power in order to become siblings of all creation.

Richard Rohr

A SOLITARY PATH (PART 2)

Br. D'Souza is remembered for his concerts. "During the winter months, he would be in Shillong, working till January to take extra classes. He would go home in Mumbai for two weeks. That's when he prepared for the school concert. Upon return, he was not only ready for it but also operated in a secretive manner. No one knew what the play was about. He was able to spot talent and possessed a keen eye for detail," Br. Morris recalled.

For the past pupils, the corridors of their school still echo the memories of Br D'Souza (lovingly called "Dasu") ... a teacher whose influence reverberates beyond textbooks, making him "one of a kind".

Debajit Chaliha (batch of 89), Jyotirmoy Sharma (batch of 91), Pranjal Dutta, Sairengliana Sailo and Ayeto Y Ayemi (batch of 92), and Pradipta Dhar (batch of 2010) hold him in high regard.

For Sharma, it's their beloved Dasu's multidisciplinary teaching prowess, often extending beyond the classroom, in extracurricular activities like sports, music and drama. "Br D'Souza was my class teacher. His passion for teaching





and making learning fun makes him an exemplary teacher. The extra classes he held in the winter leading to the board exams is an example of his service to the students, where he went beyond the call of duty.”

Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, for instance, came alive under Br D’Souza’s guidance. Jyotirmoy recalled, “He made us watch the Shakespearean play a couple of times on video during the course of the year. By the end of the year, we knew almost every line of every character of the book.”

Ahead of his time, he introduced computers for his students, while the rest of the nation was still reliant on typewriters. Computer classes also had periods of tension, given the gaps in knowledge, resulting in Dasu’s frustration.

Dutta said, “I vividly recall the day when his arrival at St Edmund’s was announced. The principal of St Columbus, Delhi, a leading educational institution in India, was to be a teacher.”

He acknowledged Br D’Souza’s insight, even predicting the future stardom of a certain student, “I recall his prediction about one of his favourite students, Shahrukh Khan, who he believed was going to be India’s superstar”, an assertion initially met with scepticism but ultimately proven accurate.

A defining incident encapsulated his unwavering spirit, “He had to be rushed to the hospital due to a heart issue, and a few of us were quite amused to find a sticky note on his door that said, ‘Gone to fight the Japs.’ Such was his spirit.”

Listening to the past pupils opens a window. That Dasu understood the importance of communication is no secret. He made it a point that every student communicated their thoughts. This, he did through writing exercises to foster self-expression, self-discovery and critical thinking among students.

Sailo highlighted, “He had a special knack for connecting people. I don’t think there was a single boarder in St Edmund’s who has not, at one time, gone to his room to socialise. He was a leader, a teacher, a friend. Most of all, he was a bridge that connected students of different ages and races with each other.”

Ayemi pointed out his unique approach to teaching and mentorship, “Dasu set a very high bar for himself. He said that he failed as a teacher if we all passed out of X still not knowing what we wanted to do with our lives.”

Beyond the classroom, there was the spirit of camaraderie. Dasu’s inclusivity extended



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to matters of faith, as Ayemi shared, “He never really pushed anyone towards any religion or such and expressed his tolerance for all.”

Chaliha remembered his teacher as someone with his “eyes popping out, smell of cigarette smoke around him, the sash to his habit dangling almost to the floor”.

“We used to call him Fancy pants. He shaped so many lives, including mine. He was an educator at heart, which was not confined to just the classrooms. For him, education meant shaping the child to have a well-rounded personality.”

The swagger and a dash of humour made him different. Dhar spoke warmly of his experiences, sharing an insightful anecdote that reflects the essence of Br. D’Souza’s humility. It was after his 10 board examination results... an accomplishment that he was eager to share with his mentor.

“I went to school to let Br D’Souza know that I had topped the examination. When he saw me, all he asked was, ‘How are you doing?’ I replied that I am good and here to let him know I’m the topper. None of it would have been possible without his guidance over the past year, so I wanted to express my gratitude. His only response was, ‘That is good to hear. Keep it up.’ We then talked about the weather. He asked about my friends and how they were doing and told me to keep visiting the school. That is all we spoke about.”

Reflecting on the significance of that interaction, he added, “It was one of the greatest lessons in humility for me. Only after that incident did I introspect and realised he was responsible for doing big things for people as a teacher. Among them, conducting countless hours of extra classes in the mornings to help his students or giving back to the community through Providence school – he never took credit for any of that work.”

As everyone’s beloved Dasu battles an ailment in silence, we, too, must ponder on his legacy. Can one among us step in to fill the void, listening to the needs of a new generation?

This remains to be seen. Someone has to walk the talk, no matter how solitary the path.

(To be ahead of time is to invite scepticism, despite an innovative approach. Yet Br. Eric D’Souza persevered and shaped a generation of students, wrote Adity Choudhury and Aparmita Das)





St. Edmund's College

THE CENTENARY CLOSING CEREMONY

The Closing Ceremony of the Centenary Celebrations at St. Edmund's College, Shillong took place on 29th August 2023, which is also the death anniversary of Blessed Edmund Rice, termed as Founder's Day. The chief guest was the most Reverend Viktor Lyndoh, Archbishop of Shillong. Amongst the audience included the Rev. Fr Richard Majaw, Shri. Ritam Chandra Dey, the Senior Superintendent of Post Offices Meghalaya Postal Division, Mr. Frederick Roy Kharkongor IAS, Prof. David R. Syiemlieh, Principals of other colleges in Shillong, dignitaries of the college, special invitees, former teachers of the College, faculty members, staff, alumni and students.



The programme started off with a welcome by the hosts of the programme, Prof. (Ms.) Shekinah Challam and Dr. Eros Vasil Kharshiing, both faculty members of the College. This was followed by the felicitation of the chief guest and the special invitees by various Professors of the College after which we had the invocation by Rev. Fr. Richard Majaw, Vicar General, Shillong Archdiocese.

The welcome address was then delivered by the Principal i/c Br. (Dr.) Simon Coelho who opened with warm greetings to everyone present at the occasion. On behalf of the Brothers' community, Br. Coelho noted a debt of gratitude to each and everyone present at the ceremony. He then proceeded to thank all the various individuals who were responsible for the centenary activities from music to games, from debates to outreach, from seminars and webinars, all of them, to celebrate the greatness of our college. He also went on to thank the Chairman of the Centenary Celebrations, Br. E.V. Miranda and Prof. Monotosh Chakravarty who is the convener of the Centenary Celebrations Committee and lastly thanking God Almighty for helping our college achieve more than we could have ever dreamt of.

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Following this, the audience was blown away by the presentation of the Centenary Theme Song by the College Choir, under the guidance of Mr. Edward Thma and Prof. Rajesh Dutta, and a lovely dance performance which had a fusion between the Oriental and Western styles of dancing by the Dance Club of the College.



The College Choir



The Dance Club

We then had an ear-catching speech by the Chairman of the Centenary Celebrations, Br. E.V. Miranda, who humorously noted that the college need not wait for 2123 for the bi-centenary celebrations where we would be happy to be there in spirit but to carry on in 2036 with another celebration to mark the 100 years of the introduction of Degree Courses in the College. He then went on to give the audience a small peek into the history of the college, also noting the applaudable amount of cultural diversity that we have in the college. Br Miranda's speech was indeed a heart-moving one as he went on to say that we may be inspired by those who have made commendable sacrifices so that young people may dream dreams that they have never dreamt of. He concluded his speech by giving us his best wishes and looking forward to the various celebrations we are yet to have in the future.



Br. E.V. Miranda delivering his address

The next item was the release of the First Day Cover by Shri Ritam Ch. Dey, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Meghalaya Division. The cover was unveiled by the Chief Guest, Archbishop Viktor Lyngdoh.

This was followed by a heart-moving song by the faculty





members of the College with a message for their friends and students - "To take Courage, friends of mine".

After this, Jethro Jarvis Roy Jyrwa, a 5th student of the college from the BCA Department delivered an elaborate and concise report on the Centenary Celebrations, which encapsulated the achievements and milestones that had taken place in the college from the opening on 5th November 2022 up till the closing on 29th August 2023.

Jethro Jarvis Roy Jyrwa

BR. SAMUEL IN ROME TUTTI FRATELLI



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REGINA MUNDI CELEBRATES GRAND PARENTS DAY

13TH SEPTEMBER



Asansol Community New Residence blessing

On the 16th of September, Bishop Cyprian Moniz blessed the new residence of the Brothers in Asansol. 14 Brothers were present for the blessing. The program commenced with cultural items performed by students of St. Vincent's and St. Patrick's in the Edmund Rice auditorium. Br. Walter felicitated all those who were instrumental in putting up the new residence called Callan House.



CALLAN HOUSE



Brothers present (L-R)

Joe, Walter, Joel, Raj, Sameer, Ruvan, Cedly, Willie, Dilip, Ronnie, Steve, Placid, Lawrence, and Sunil Lobo

The Bishop, Priests, Sisters, Brothers and invited guests then moved to Callan House where a short prayer service was held and the Bishop blessed the house. Br. Walter then thanked the invited guests, the staff and students who took part in the program.





Snacks and coffee were served to all those present.

Placid Henriques



Community Chapel



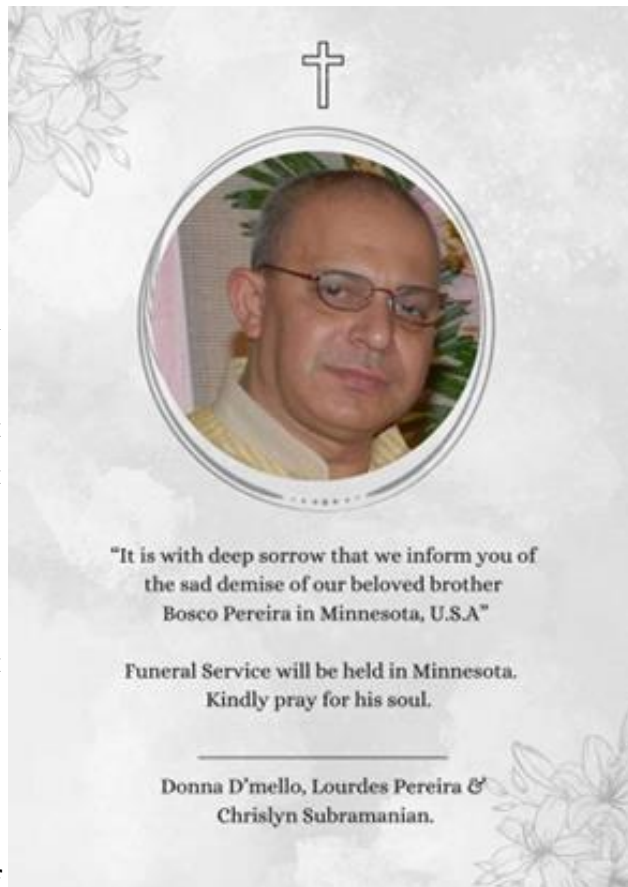
Guest House remodelled from old staff qrs.

BOSCO PEREIRA PASSES AWAY

Bosco Pereira joined our congregation in 1978 and was in the Brothers for a few years leaving before making his final profession.

Both in the Novitiate and the Scholasticate he was a very popular brother. He took his vocation very seriously. He was always full of fun, joining Raj in making Parachutes that took off from the Novitiate roof but landed on the ground in record time. In the Scholasticate he secretly brewed wine and even Henry McGann, whose father was a policeman, could not detect the source of the camouflaged brewery.

After leaving the Brothers, he went to the states and worked in the software industry. He played host to a number of visiting brothers and was now able to take them on real parachute jumps and other



"It is with deep sorrow that we inform you of the sad demise of our beloved brother Bosco Pereira in Minnesota, U.S.A"

Funeral Service will be held in Minnesota. Kindly pray for his soul.

Donna D'mello, Lourdes Pereira & Chrislyn Subramanian.



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bona-fide adventures.

Bosco was very fond of loving. He used to run part of the distance when we walked to our picnic spots in the Novitiate.

He was only 60 when he passed away but will be fondly remembered by his novitiate and scholasticate companions.

POETRY SECTION

The tree

Sometimes I came across a tree which seemed like a Buddha or a Jesus:

loving,
 compassionate,
 still,
 unambitious,
 enlightened,
 in eternal meditation —
 giving pleasure to a pilgrim,
 shade to a cow,
 berries to a bird,
 beauty to its surroundings,
 health to its neighbours,
 branches for the fire,
 leaves for the soil, asking nothing in return,
 in total harmony with the wind and the rain.
 How much can I learn from a tree?

The tree is my church,
 the tree is my temple,
 the tree is my mantra,
 the tree is my poem and my prayer.

Satish Kumar





T S Eliot — in The Waste Land

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
 When I count, there are only you and I together
 But when I look ahead up the white road
 There is always another one walking beside you
 Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded
 I do not know whether a man or a woman
 —But who is that on the other side of you?

Indian Sisters at the Synod



Sister Lalitha Thomas SJT and Sister Maria Nirmalini AC

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