

# anima

ACTION NETWORK IN MISSIONARY ANIMATION



## Message from the Rector Major



I want to say something simple and clear:  
***The missionary dimension is part of our IDENTITY and that cultural diversity, a multicultural and intercultural situation, are a treasure towards which in this six-year period we are advancing.***

According to *Evangelii Gaudium* (nos.111, 115, 120), the proclamation of the Gospel is the mission of all the People of God and is meant for everyone, since "there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek ...

but all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (*Gal 3,28*). It means we are the leaven of God within the human race, a humanity and a People of God with many faces, with many histories and different cultures where we are all *missionary disciples*.

The Pope is calling for the Evangelisation of all peoples and we are directing our gaze, always so as to recognise ourselves in our *identity*, on the missionary character of our Congregation. Don Bosco wanted the Salesian Society to be determinedly missionary. In 1875, from among the small group of the first Salesians, he chose ten to go to South America; before his death he had already sent 10 missionary expeditions and the 153 who were in South America at the time of his death were almost 20% of the Salesians at the time according to the *Elenco* of the Congregation for 1888.

This missionary identity, preserved and cultivated as the years passed led the Special General Chapter to make a special appeal which I want to renew today, on the threshold of the Bicentenary of the Birth of Don Bosco and as a living homage to him: "*The Special General Chapter appeals to all the provinces and even to those who are poorest in numbers so that by obeying the invitation of the Council and following the courageous example of our Founder they may contribute, even in a temporary manner, to the spread of the Kingdom of God*" (SGC, no.477).

I sincerely believe, dear Confreres, that this call remains fully relevant in the current situation of our Congregation. When I speak about a homage to Don Bosco on the occasion of the celebration of the Bicentenary of his birth, I am not doing so in an empty spirit of celebration or for the sake of statistics, but because I truly believe – and it was the feeling of the GC27 – that a **great wealth of our Congregation is its missionary capacity, the possibility of being there where there is the greatest need for us in the work of Evangelisation**, even though all our efforts are very valid wherever we may find ourselves. In this context I take this opportunity to invite all the SDB Salesians – and I earnestly extend my invitation to all the Salesian Family – at an appropriate time to read, meditate on and discuss *Evangelii Gaudium*. Certainly it will be good for us to do so; in many places it is still not known (ACG419).

**FR. ANGEL FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME, SDB**

## Editorial...



## The Universal Brother

This era of the globalization of economy, politics, culture, technology and religion speaks of many 'globals', and those which are global in scope and application: the global market, the global economy, the global consumerism, the global superpowers, the global hegemony, the global network, the global technology, the global mission, the global solidarity and so on. The 'Globals' have become part of our daily menu. Today, one can add 'global' to almost everything in life. That being so, why not a 'Global Brother'?

From a theological perspective, the term "Universal Brother" is a better substitute for the 'global brother' because every believer in Christ becomes a "Universal Brother" through Faith and Baptism; and every child of God is called to become a "Universal Brother" to the entire human family and to the universe at large. The term "Universal Brother" can be aptly applied to a missionary. The missionary is a "Universal Brother" or sister in the true sense of the term. (Here I use the term 'brother' to include also 'sister').

The missionary as a "Universal Brother" can mean many things. Nevertheless, I would like to focus on two fundamental realities: 1) the bearer of a universal mission; 2) the universal lover. The missionary is the bearer of a universal mission because he shares in the universal salvific plan of God, and in himself is a herald of the Good News which essentially has a universal application. The missionary is a universal lover because he is a living icon of the universal love of God manifested in Christ. Or in other words, a missionary is a universal lover who carries in his heart the universal mission of God revealed in Christ and who joyfully shares it with all.

**The Bearer of a Universal Mission:** Every missionary is the bearer of a universal mission. The Gospels bear testimony to the truth that the mission which Jesus entrusted to the apostles has a universal dimension: "all nations" (Mt 28:19); "Go into all the world...to the whole creation" (Mk 16:15); "all peoples" (Lk 24:47); "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Moreover, those sent on mission are not left alone in their mission but accompanied by the presence of the Lord Himself and the power of the Holy Spirit. "And they went out and proclaimed the Good News everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it." (Mk 16:20); "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20); "I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you" (Acts 18:10).

**The Universal Lover:** The missionary is a universal lover because the mission itself is the fruit of the Father's unfathomable love for

humankind. "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jer 31:3). And Jesus, the missionary of the Father, is the ultimate and perfect sign of this same love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (Jn 3:16). The missionary is sent by Christ to carry out the universal "love mission" of the Father for which He anointed Jesus. Therefore the call to be a missionary is a call to be a universal lover.

The missionary is a passionate lover of Christ. This love comes from a personal experience of the person of Jesus. Paul's conviction that nothing would separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord came from an experience of the Risen Lord. Following the example of Christ, the missionary must also love the Church: "Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her" (Eph 5:25). This is the focal point of universal sacrificial love. Only profound love for Christ's Church can sustain the zeal of the missionary. For the missionary, "fidelity to Christ cannot be separated from fidelity to the Church" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 14).

*Redemptoris Missio* describes the missionary as a person of charity. "In order to proclaim to all his brothers and sisters that they are loved by God and are capable of loving, he must show love toward all, giving his life for his neighbour" (*Redemptoris Missio*, 89). As a Universal Brother, he bears in himself the Church's spirit of openness to all peoples and overcomes the barriers and divisions of race, caste or ideology. In today's globalized world, he is called to be the sign of God's universal love – a love without exclusion or partiality.

St. John Paul II who called the missionary a "Universal Brother" (*Redemptoris Missio*, 89) proved himself to be the best example of a Universal Brother *par excellence* of the century. We celebrated his first feast on October 22 this year. He travelled the length and breadth of the globe carrying the universal mission of Christ. He was a universal lover, who not only explained to the world the true meaning of love through his 139 speeches on the theme of the "theology of the body", but also through his concrete living out of God's universal love in action. As a heroic prophet, "Giovanni Paolo il Grande" (John Paul the Great), as he was called, was instrumental in breaking down many barriers, temporal as well as spiritual, that separated humanity from one another and from God, and building bridges of Universal Brotherhood. May he continue to inspire every missionary to be a Universal Brother and Sister.

#### FR. T.C. GEORGE SDB

Editor,  
South Asian Delegate for Missionary Animation



**Anima congratulates  
Rev. Sr. Yvonne Reungoat FMA  
who is re-elected as the 9th successor of  
Mother Maria Domenica Mazzarello**



*This issue is dedicated to  
St. Thérèse of Lisieux,  
patron saint of the missions.*

## THINK MISSION

FR. (DR.) JOSEPH PUTHENPURAKAL SDB



## 'JOY' shared MULTIPLIES !

Joy shared multiplies. I must immediately add that these three words could also be taken as a brief summary of Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* [EG]. The whole Apostolic Exhortation is a passionate appeal to every Catholic Christian to be a *missionary*. We read in it a somewhat surprising sentence, "It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but 'by attraction'" (EG 15). What follows is a brief comment on it.

We would need a separate article only on the word 'proselytizing'. But here we can be satisfied with a few remarks. A proselyte was one who was attracted by the Jewish wisdom, but did not become a Jew. He came to the door, but did not enter. At a second moment, the word came to mean cheap attempts to gain adherents to a new religion/belief. These attempts themselves became "proselytizing" in the course of time. In fact, we have in English the saying, "... no amount of *proselytizing* is going to change his/her mind!"

The Catholic Church does not proselytize, even though she is accused every now and then of proselytizing. The Church *shares* the Good News. She shares it in innumerable ways. In fact she exists in order to share the Good News of Jesus. In other words, she evangelizes. Evangelization simply means to *shout* aloud the Good News of Jesus so that as many people as possible may hear it and thus help to *transform* the world.

Jesus' Good News is so simple that we tend to make it complicated. It can be summarised using His own words. He tells us to *love one another* "as I have loved you". The small word "as" is the most important there. In the strength of His Good News everyone in need of us becomes *our* neighbour. And the meaning of the word "neighbour" is so deep that there can be no more *enemies*. It is in this sense that we should understand His command to "love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you", for in Him we are all *brothers* and *Sisters*. In Him who overcame sin and death all of us are lead to Eternal Life. "There are many mansions in my Father's house..."

To share this Good News, the Church and every Christian in the Church use *innumerable ways and means*. All these ways and means can be summed up in the one word we have mentioned above from Pope Francis, namely, *attraction*. The proclamation of the Good News has to be attractive. And the evangelizer himself/herself, and in fact, the Church Herself have to be attractive! This is the only way the Church and the Christians use to draw people to the Good News of Jesus. All the rest is only a preparation for it.

The attraction –the Pope mentions– comes from a simple and genuine Christian life as Jesus wants His followers to live. Structures, big constructions and very learned programmes have only one goal, namely, to attract people to Jesus and not anything or anyone else.

Priests and religious and all lay faithful who miss this point themselves get lost. They become mere "social workers" losing the Eternal Perspectives found in everything we do as Christians and as followers of Jesus. The fullness of Life which Jesus offers cannot be limited only to this passing world. Real life is Eternal. So too is real love. May all what we do help us to multiply the Joy that comes from sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. This is our *vocation*. That is why we are *missionaries* "sent" to share and multiply the *joy* of proclamation.



## A Language, an Altar and a Pillar, and a Highway (Is 19:18-25)

**Prophet Isaiah announced "this way" 700 years Before Christ**

Isaiah 19:18-25 contains a pericope which surprises the readers. The prophet inserts into a block material (Is 13-23) where he lashes out against nations for their iniquity. Even Jerusalem itself is warned about its sinfulness. However a new style of speaking is found in Is 19:18-25. Threat, condemnation, and warnings give way to a note of consolation and hope. Isaiah, excoriating the language of condemnation, uses a language of optimism and joy.

Isaiah projects God as the author and master of Evangelization. The Good News belongs to God. He can offer it to everyone and anyone. The heralds of the Good News are simply instruments in God's hands. The task of the evangelizer is to facilitate the diffusion of the Good News which is meant for everyone and which should reach everyone everywhere (see also Mark 13:10 and Acts 10:1-11:18).

Isaiah is among the most cultivated of Old Testament writers. His command over the language and the imageries that he uses are exquisite. In speaking of the spread of God's word, Isaiah speaks of God's language, an altar and a pillar, and a highway. In the land of Egypt, the Egyptians will praise the true God using Hebrew. Similarly the Egyptians will bring sacrifices and burnt offering in order to worship the true God. A special altar and a pillar will be erected for this purpose. Isaiah assures the Egyptians that God will lead them to repentance. He will listen to their supplications and heal them of their wounds. Isaiah speaks of a highway between Egypt and Assyria so that the latter too can come and worship the true God of Israel in the land of Egypt. The highpoint in Isaiah's universalism is "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage" (Is 19:25). **Distinctions between peoples and peoples are removed when there is the genuine worship of a common God who is the Lord of all.** Here we want to recall how the Pauline writings which repeatedly recall this idea, namely, the worship of one true God that needs to take away all differences (see especially 1 Cor 10:16-17; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:4; Col 3:11).

The word of God that Isaiah tries to diffuse is an invitation to remove any form of superiority when announcing the Good News. With humility and a sense of gratitude the heralds of the Gospel are to offer

Jesus and his Good News to all in order to create a more humane society. Like Isaiah the great visionary and prophet, we want to tell all peoples that the acceptance of the Good News makes them all into "God's people, the work of God's hands, and God's heritage" (Is 19:25).

**FR. (DR.) JOSE VARICKASSERIL SDB**



## "I am ready to serve the LORD in all possible ways"

Here is the story of a family that found its way. Read on...

Indeed, I am very glad to tell you my story of becoming a Catholic. I live in Wokha, Nagaland. I was born in a Baptist family and was brought up as a Baptist youth. We were not taught the Christian Faith properly. What we were taught was an emotional way of worship where a lot of singing and dancing was central. Then the Pastor would preach to us at the end of the devotional service.

In early nineties, when I was in the college I met one lecturer by the name John. He was a Catholic and was very good to me. We were together most of the time either in the college or outside. Frequently I visited him in his residence. I saw the way he brought up his children. And he explained the Catholic Faith in an open and simple way. He explained to me the way Catholics worship and what they believed. He was a real inspiration for me.

In the middle of the nineties, I got married to a Catholic woman. More than nine years we remained as Baptists after getting married. But we did not go even to the Baptist Church. I am a teacher in a Govt. School and my wife works as a nurse in the Civil Hospital at Wokha.

In 2006, I was under training in DIET (District Institute of Educational Training) in Chiechama, Nagaland. There I was planning my future i.e. how I should bring up my children, etc. I have four children. That same year I decided to become a Catholic. Then I came to Wokha to convince my wife about my becoming a Catholic. She said that the family members back in our village, and the Baptist Community there would turn against us since there were no Catholics in our whole range, an area comprising 6 or 7 villages. We would have to face the dire consequences of leaving the Baptist Church. Nevertheless, she was ready to cooperate with me. Then one day we called up the Parish Priest of Wokha, Rev. Fr. T.D. George who came to our house with some Catholic elders and prayed in our house. They prepared us for the Baptism. On 31st Dec. 2006, my whole family was baptized by Fr. George. My wife already had been baptized as a child.

At first, as a newly baptized, I was feeling shy to go to the Catholic Church. Sometimes I even thought that I had made a mistake. But gradually, I learned many good aspects of the Catholic Church and I am convinced that this is the true Church. I am very happy to be an active member of the Catholic Church today. Moreover, my family members are also very happy that we have embraced the Church. We do enjoy the blessings of God in various ways, and I am ready to serve the Lord in all possible ways.



**MR. T. EZANTHUNG SHITIRI**

## MISSIONARY COURSE

The second Inter-regional missionary course was held at Sacred Heart College, Shillong, from August 03-30. There were 22 participants, including one each from Myanmar and the Philippines.



Participants of the missionary course

The missionary group of Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore





# Mission Councillor's maiden visit to the region

**Rev. Fr. Guillermo Basaños SDB, the General Councillor for the Missions,** made his maiden visit to the region. He arrived in Bangladesh on July 24, 2014 and spent a week in the new missions initiated by Fr. Francis Alencherry, the former Councillor for the Missions. "This is my maiden visit to Asia and I am happy to have started it with Bangladesh. Quoting Pope Francis who spoke about going to the periphery, he said, "Bangladesh is truly a periphery and so my visit is all the more significant". Visiting the Salesian missions in the country Fr. Basaños congratulated the confreres for their hardwork & missionary initiatives.

In Kolkata Fr. Guillermo Basaños visited the tomb of Bl. Mother Theresa and a couple of Salesian houses. During his two week long stay at Guwahati, Silchar and Dimapur provinces, visited many Salesian mission centres and formation houses including those of the other Salesian Family members.

Fr. Basaños had interaction with the participants of the missionary course at Mathias Institute, Shillong, conferred the ministries of Lector and Acolyte at Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong and inaugurated the academic year. His visit to the missionary aspirantate at Sirajuli, Assam instilled missionary zeal among the young seminarians.



At the Don Bosco school, Tangla, Assam

## He said

### At the Generalate house of the MSMHC sisters at Hatigaon:

*'The most important thing is to learn to become holy. This is the most difficult thing to learn. Activities and other things anyone can do.'*

### At Don Bosco Provincial House, Guwahati:

*'We need to think of other regions too in the congregation and send out the best ones to the missions.'*

### To the boarding boys at Don Bosco Nongpoh:

*'It is important to create brotherhood and friendship, not enmity. Those who are different from us are not our enemies.'*

### At Mawjrong Parish:

*'We need to go out to other countries as missionaries; we should also be missionaries wherever we are.'*

### At St. Antony's Higher Secondary School:

*'It is not enough to study and qualify ourselves for our own sake. We should also help others and bring peace and joy into their lives.'*

### At the MSMHC Novitiate Community, Mawroh:

*"I am on a pilgrimage in India where many missionaries gave their lives." Mission and holiness are related. Holiness is needed for mission. Saints are canonized either for their martyrdom or for holiness or for both; for no other reasons.'*

### At Don Bosco Technical School, Shillong:

*Reminding the confreres of the 145th missionary expedition, Fr. Basaños challenged the Salesians to send the best personnel to the missions for fruitful mission of the Lord.*

### At MSMHC Provincialate, Peachland:

*He exhorted the sisters not to loose their bond with the Salesian Family. He gave them a "preventive advice": "You need to study and Don Bosco; No MSMHC should say there is no need to study Don Bosco. If you loose your bond with him you will die".*

### At St. Antony's College Hostel, Shillong:

*'It is not enough to grow higher and higher in excellence; we need to grow in our solidarity with others. We need to be useful for others, bringing peace and joy into the life of others, no matter to whichever ethnic group they belong...We need to appreciate the variety of ethnic groups represented in this college. Diversity can become a challenge. We should learn to include and not to exclude others. The tongue of St. Antony remained incorrupt and is preserved in Padua because he made the best use of it. Use your tongue not to irritate or hurt others but to bring them peace and solidarity.'*

### At Sacred Heart Theological College, Mawlai:

*'Ministries are not diploma to be technicians or mechanics. We are not mechanics at the altar, but pastors. We are meant for breaking the Word and the Bread of Life for the people of God. Our formation should be missionary formation. Mary, the Mother of God teaches us how to live a synthesized life: she carried Jesus in her womb and rushed out to share him with others; she is the best example for missionaries.'*

### To the Salesian novices at Sunnyside:

*"Becoming Salesians should bring about a genetic change in you. When you make your profession you belong to a bigger tribe than your own, forever. My belongingness to the congregation becomes bigger than my belongingness to my brothers or sisters because the congregation is my own choice whereas my own brothers or sisters I did not choose! We need tremendous faith to accept this reality." Fr. Basaños explained to them the importance of Salesian unity, oneness and belongingness to the congregation beyond all ethnic ties, citing the example of the ethnic genocide of 1.2 million people in just four months in Rwanda in 1994.*



A moment of Salesianity with the missionary aspirants at Sirajuli



Fr. Basaños at St. John Bosco Shrine, Cherrapunjee



Reception at the Dimakuchi Parish, Assam

Fr. Basaños with the Visitation Sisters of Don Bosco at Upper Shillong



Fr. Basaños sings a Spanish love song for the St. Antony's College Students



With the Salesian Novices at Sunnyside, Shillong



Fr. Basaños at Utrail, Bangladesh

At the Pre-novitiate Community of the Salesian Sisters at Nongpoh



At the MSMHC Novitiate at Mawroh, Shillong

Addressing the St. Antony's Higher Secondary School, Shillong



# Re-Launching Missionary Animation in South Asia

The Delegates for Missionary Animation in the region came together to re-launch missionary animation. The two day meeting, held at Don Bosco Provincial House, Kolkata, from July 31 to August 02, 2014 had the following objectives:

- 1 to strengthen and re-launch the missionary animation in the region
- 2 to evaluate action plans and strategies
- 3 to draw up a 6 year plans for missionary animation
- 4 to promote collaboration with various SPCSA commissions
- 5 to strengthen communication and collaboration among delegates

Rev. Fr. Guillermo Basañes SDB, the General Councillor for the Missions, addressed the delegates on August 01. He emphasized that the first target group for missionary animation is oneself. 'It's a wonderful opportunity as a delegate, animating the province with the mind and feelings of Christ who said, "I have come to bring fire on earth..."' Fr. Basañes challenged the delegates to have the same passion of Christ. One should cultivate the missionary zeal through personal prayer, study and reflection.



The South Asia Missionary Animation Team with Fr. Guillermo Basañes

## ANIMA Released



Rev. Fr. Guillermo Basañes releases the first issue of ANIMA at Don Bosco Shillong on August 3, 2014, and hands over the first copy to His Grace Most Rev. Dominic Jala, the Archbishop of Shillong. His Grace Most Rev. Thomas Menampampil, the Archbishop Emeritus of Guwahati, Rev. Fr. George Maliekal, Provincial of Silchar, Rev. Fr. Thomas Vattathara, Provincial of Guwahati, Rev. Fr. Nestor Guria, Provincial of Dimapur, Rev. Fr. Michael,

Provincial of New Delhi were among those present.

## 145<sup>th</sup> Missionary Expedition sets sail



**The Rector Major challenges missionaries "to be upright before God, serve the underprivileged and always do the will of the Father"**

The Salesians, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA) and lay volunteers leaving for the *missio ad gentes* gathered in Turin on 28 September, 2014 with Fr Ángel Fernández Artime, the Rector Major, and Mother Yvonne Reungoat, the Mother General of the FMA, for the 145th Missionary Expedition.

The Rector Major opened the gathering by recalling the first of the 145 missionary expeditions that have taken place in the Basilica of Mary Help of Christians: that day, 11 November 1875, Don Bosco gave the mandate to ten young Salesians to go to Argentina. In the expeditions that followed during Don Bosco's lifetime, a total of 153 missionaries departed, bearing testimony to the founder's great openness to the needs of the universal Church.

In his homily, Fr Ángel pointed to three core ideas, inspired by the liturgy of the day. He invited the missionaries to be "upright before God", free of any attitude of superiority due to the gift they received. He urged them to be "servants without privileges" of young people and of the people to whom they are sent, after the example of Don Bosco, who gave of himself to his last breath for the young. Finally, he reminded everyone that the meaning of our being missionaries who are baptized and consecrated is "to fulfil the will of God," working fraternally and in profound communion with the pastors and educators they will meet in the course of their mission.

## Bicentenary Offer!

**Would you consider joining the 146<sup>th</sup> Missionary Expedition in 2015?**

The Rector Major informs us of the fields of pastoral mission:

**Missionary work needed in Amazonia, especially in Manaus, Campo Grande, and Venezuela; in the Chaco Paraguayo; in some regions of the Pampas and of Argentine Patagonia.**

**Missionary presence required among the immigrant communities in the United States; in the Middle East, in addition to being tremendously afflicted by a variety of armed conflicts; in North Africa, in the countries of the Arabian Gulf and Pakistan...**

**Missionaries are invited by the Project for Europe which is concerned in large measure with the emarginated as a result of the various migrations.**

**Missionaries needed for the strengthening of the new missionary presences for First Evangelisation in Asia and Oceania: Mongolia, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Laos...**

## Watch and Pray: Mission Videos on the net

On the 88th World Mission Sunday on 19 October 2014,  
Don Bosco Missions of Turin  
produced and published on the net  
seven videos to promote the Salesian Mission Day 2015.

**Watch them on this link:**

<http://www.missionidonbosco.tv/en/engms>.

**Place this link on your facebook and invite all to watch.**

**THANK YOU!**

Anima thanks **Fr. Anto Tharakan** for supporting the printing of this issue. We invite sponsors to support the forthcoming issues.





## From Sri Lanka to Papua New Guinea

*The more we give the more we receive.*

October 18th 2014 was a memorable day for the Vice-Province of Sri Lanka (LKC). It was a happy send off to a young missionary in the person of Cleric Thennakoon Harsha Bandara SDB. Having finished his missionary course in Rome and received the 'Missionary Cross' from the Rector Major, Bro. Harsha came to the Vice-Province before he took off to the Philippines and from there to his mission destination of 'Papua New Guinea (PNG)'. He is the second missionary after Fr. Priyanga SDB (missionary in Solomon Islands), opting for the missions already as a cleric.

On that day, the Salesians of the Novitiate and Philosophate of Kotadeniyawa gathered with all the Novices and Post Novices for a Solemn Mass in the morning. Fr. Dixon Fernando SDB, the Vice-

Provincial of the Vice-Province presided at the Mass and gave a fitting introduction while Fr. Thomas Ellicherail, the Rector of the Philosophate gave a solemn homily.

Thanking the confreres at the end of the Mass, Bro. Harsha underlined that his desire to serve in the missions began already when he was a novice and it flowered in his philosophate days at Karunapuram and in his experience that he had during holidays, working with the street children cared for by the Salesians in Hyderabad. Bro. Harsha is to be noted as the only son in his family and his two elder sisters and parents are settled abroad and his father is a Buddhist. With all this background it is really appreciable that Bro. Harsha has taken up this challenging task of working in the Missions.

As Bro. Harsha got his inspiration during his Novitiate we also chose to observe this celebration of 'Send Off' in the Novitiate so that many more get encouraged to opt for the Missions. Though the Vice-Province itself is small in number, offering another confrere for the Missions was a tough task for Fr. Nihal, the Provincial and the Vice-Province. Yet with the thought that 'the more we give the more we get' the Vice-Province has generously accepted to relieve him and see him off with a Solemn Mass and a lunch. It was very fitting that on the following day of 'Mission Sunday' Bro. Harsha took his flight to the Philippines. All the confreres in the Vice-Province wish him well and fulfilment in his calling wherever he will go to work. Congrats Bro. Harsha. Buon Voyage.

**Fr. Arokiasamy sdb,**  
Sri Lanka Delegate for Missionary Animation

## They inspire us !

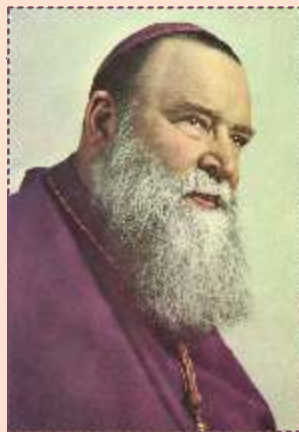
*Anima begins a new series on the real life stories of the veteran Salesian missionaries who made history in the annals of the Salesian India. They gave their lives for Jesus and his Kingdom. They showed us the DB way in action. They challenge us.*



The First Group of Salesian Missionaries to India - 1906  
Sitting : Fr. Richard Biebuyck, Fr. George Tomatis who led the expedition, Fr. Ernest Vigneron.  
Standing : Br. John Rostagna, Cl. Mario Balestra, Adrian Rovetto (aspirant)

### Coming Soon !

A Bicentenary Column Anima will introduce a new column on the missionary sayings of St. John Bosco, the saint of the missions, from the first issue of 2015.



## Archbishop Louis Mathias

Louis was born in France in 1887, became a Salesian in 1905, and was ordained priest in 1913. Nine years after his ordination Fr. Louis Mathias headed the first team of Salesian missionaries to India in 1922. He was forthwith appointed Prefect Apostolic of Assam. When he and his team reached Shillong, the Catholic population of the entire Assam was only 5000. With extraordinary vision and foresight, he soon opened a novitiate and studentate. Young aspirants were brought from Europe to be trained in loco, he himself being personally involved in their formation. With its phenomenal growth, the mission became a paradigm of missionary expansion in the history of Church's evangelization. Mgr. Mathias also gave priority to education and opened numerous schools, technical institutes and a press. The year 1926 saw him as the Salesian provincial of India. In 1934 when the Prefecture Apostolic of Assam was made into a diocese, he was appointed its Bishop. The following year, the Holy See transferred him to Madras, where he forged ahead as was his wont. Having spent his entire life for Christ and his Kingdom Archbishop Louis Mathias died at Legnano at the age of 78.

Archbishop Louis Mathias was a Salesian who dared and hoped. He stands out as a stalwart pioneer in the history of our mission. His leadership, vision, commitment and dedication were largely responsible for the remarkable growth of the Church. A priest of intrepid faith and dauntless hope, he was a dreamer, a planner and a builder. He adapted himself so totally to India that it became his second home. Speaking at his funeral at Madras, Cardinal Gracias eulogized him: "...a noble son of his country, a genuine lover of India, an outstanding member of his religious society and an ornament to the hierarchy of India; one who during his and distinguished episcopate combined in himself the qualities of an able administrator, a dynamic leader, an efficient organizer, a noted educator and a sound social worker." Read the complete biography of this great missionary in the book *Dare and Hope*.





## Brainstorming

### Responses to the previous Question:

#### Q What is the greatest challenge in mission today?

"The greatest challenge to mission today is the great stress that the priests, religious, brothers, and the laity give to school, education, worldly knowledge career, name, fame, business, wealth, etc and forgetting to give the knowledge and love of Jesus in word and deed to people especially the poor and the needy. They forget the motto *Da mihi animas, caetera tolle*, and stop visiting, preaching, teaching catechism, healing the sick, and being available for the sacramental life of the people."

- Fr. Joe D'Souza SDB (Delhi)

For me the challenges in mission are: relativism in faith; the influence of consumerism that weakens the belief systems; the erosion of family values; and the scandals in the Church that shakes the faith of simple people.

- Sr. Christine Mynsong MSMHC (Assam)

"According to me the greatest challenge to mission today is: persons who can announce the love and mercy of Jesus, with their life, than with their words."

- Sr. Marietta Kaidathara FMA (Bangalore)

"The greatest challenge today is first of all to be full of passion for Jesus Christ. No matter what happens, ultimately it is Jesus who matters to me. He should be my topmost priority. He is the greatest treasure and Good News for me. If one is convinced of this, then the he/she will share this Good News and the treasure with others, particularly with those who have not heard of Him."

- Fr. Manuel Murzello SDB (Mumbai)

"The challenge is to bring back kerygmatic preaching so that the power of the Gospel will transform the lives of God's people."

- Fr. (Dr.) Devasia Vazhayil SDB (Shillong)

"The biggest challenges are: 1) Need of missionaries who are deeply rooted in their own Jesus experience. He alone is the reason for mission; 2) Need of the missionary to have a great love for the people to whom he is sent, ready to accept them and make of them his new family. That is what our pioneer missionaries did; 3) Need to bring back enthusiasm and initiative in our missionary methods."

- Fr. (Dr.) Roy Antony SDB (Cherrapunjee)

"I have been reflecting on your Brainstorming question. The greatest challenge in mission today in India is building communion. *Redemptoris Missio* calls missionaries universal brothers (and sisters). We are bridge builders or to put it in theological language, agents of communion. There are many divisive forces at work in our country. These are also affecting the congregation. To the extent we

are able to deal effectively with these challenges, we are missionaries. Otherwise, we run the risk of becoming failed politicians trying our luck in religion and calling it mission."

- Fr. (Dr.) Paul Vadakumpadan SDB (Shillong)

### Question 2:

#### How can we transform the families into evangelizing families today?

Email your reflection to the editor in one paragraph (maximum of 100 words). Selected reflections will be published. You could also post your questions for reflection.

## LAUGH CORNER



A missionary was driving a jeep to a mission centre in a remote village in India. To his bad luck that day, he knocked down a cow on the road, of course on an Indian road! The owner of the cow and the villagers surrounded him and began accusing him of rash driving and not respecting the animal on the road. The smart missionary rose up to the situation and asserted: "I have the license to drive on the road, show me the license of your cow". As he proceeded, he thought to himself, "After all, the Lord appointed me the shepherd of his sheep and not of his cows!"

## Biblical Word Puzzle - 2

Read Acts 13:16-41

Paul preaches at a Jewish synagogue in Antioch at the request of the officials there. He boldly presents the Risen Jesus as the Saviour sent by God.

THEME: "By Jesus, everyone who believes in Him is set free"

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ANCESTORS  
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DAVID  
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GENTILES  
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ISRAEL  
JESUS  
JUDGES  
KING  
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PILATE  
PROMISED  
PROPHECY  
PROSPER  
SAMUEL  
SAUL  
SAVIOR  
SEVEN  
SLAVERY  
SYNAGOGUE  
WANDERING  
WILDERNESS  
YEARS

### Puzzle - 1 Solved

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### Congratulations to the Winners!

Sr. Gorantla Bala (Bangalore)  
Bro. Alex Carvalho (Ahmednagar)  
Dayalraj (Chennai)  
Sr. Santana P. (Bangalore)  
Sr. Prakasamma (Nellore)  
Sr. Margaret Ranjithan (Gujarat)

Identify the words given below among the scrambled words above.

Send your answers by December 20, 2014.

Please send only photocopy or scanned image. Avoid cutting the bulletin.



# In focus

## From Persecution to Glory

Muniguda, one of the remote villages of Odisha (Orissa) the 11th largest state of the Indian Union, enjoyed the peace and tranquillity of the rural India until 2008 when persecution against Christians broke out in some parts of the state. Although the worst hit district was Kandhamal, in the midst of deadly violence against Christians and Christian institutions, the peaceful tribal Christians of Muniguda, located 60 km from Rayagada, was not spared. A mob of around 1000 people belonging to fundamentalist groups dashed into the campus with weapons, petrol bombs, gas cylinders etc. And what followed was violent destruction: the Church was ransacked, sacred articles were desecrated and set ablaze inside the church, buildings and properties were destroyed. The nuns who were looking after the poor village girls providing the grhani training were chased out along with the boarders... The priests who took care of a small Catholic community had to flee for life.

With the arrival of three Salesians of the Hyderabad province on January 26, 2010, Muniguda began to rise from persecution to glory. "We had to face many difficulties in the beginning" says Fr. Sony Cyriac, the rector. The presence of the newly arrived Salesians was seen with great suspicion by some who were involved in the communal riot. "The Andhra Christians have come to take revenge on us", they said. A group of CRPF men came to take over the entire church campus claiming to have the permission of the local bishop. They did not succeed.

Against all odds, the Salesians put themselves at the service of the local people. In six months time, they opened a school for the village children. This primary school has today a strength of 220 students and 10 teachers. The CMC sisters arrived this year and have joined hands with the Salesians in the mission.

The church was repaired and re-dedicated at the request of the people themselves who said: "We feel guilty to see the church remaining in this condition." The local people including those of other faiths, made contribution to the church. All the villagers were invited for the blessing of the church on December 13, 2012. A new spirit began to grow among people of different faiths as a result of the Inter-religious Dialogue meeting held on the day after the dedication of the church. Besides the local Bishop and priests, leaders from the various faith groups such as the Hindu Samaj, the Sai Baba Group, the Brahma Kumaris and the Protestants came together on a common platform to build up religious harmony.

Free vocational skill training programme for the BPL (Below Poverty Line) youth was introduced with the help of DB-Tech. Each training programme lasts three months. Within a short span of just two years, the mission trained up 622 young boys and girls, in three separate trades, among whom 484 were job placed.

Muniguda has also become a nursery for vocations. During the first year of the arrival of the Salesians, a group of 15 aspirants began their formation journey with hardly any building facility available. Today, 48 boys recruited from Muniguda are under formation in different formative stages. 8 have professed so far. Muniguda presbytery homes around 20 aspirants today.

Rising from the ashes, the Christian community of Muniguda looks forward to the reign of freedom from all forms of discrimination, fear and ignorance. The people of Muniguda have great hope in the Salesians whose presence made a big difference in their lives. Needless to say, Muniguda offers scope for great work and will continue to rise to glory if the peace and harmony which the people enjoy today continue to prevail.

Fr. Sony with the aspirants in front of their residence



The sanctuary of the rebuilt church



The school kids in assembly



### PRAYER MISSION

Salesian missionary intentions  
for the three months



#### OCTOBER

*For pastoral work amongst migrants from Latin America to the United States, that they may discover God's love through the range of services they receive from the Salesians and lay people who help those without documents, education, catechesis, and show solidarity to the hungry and homeless...*

#### NOVEMBER

*For Salesians in the South Asia Region. May Salesians in the South Asia Region be committed to Evangelisation in all their educational or social works, and in political empowerment of all our beneficiaries.*

#### DECEMBER

*For the Salesian Co-operators in Africa, that they may be true lay missionaries in their setting.*

### You too can join our Mission!

- 1 Join our prayer hub and pray for the missions:  
[prayermissionhub@gmail.com](mailto:prayermissionhub@gmail.com)
- 2 Spiritually adopt a mission centre (praying for one year)
- 3 Participate in the missionary course in Shillong
- 4 Volunteer to work in the missions part time or full time
- 5 Offer financial help to missionary works: build village chapels, support training of catechists, missionaries, education of poor children, sponsor seminarians, sponsor Bibles, religious articles, etc
- 6 Write your missionary reflections in the Anima
- 7 Sponsor a missionary aspirant donating Rs. 22,000 / USD 370 per year.
- 8 Sponsor Anima with a donation of Rs. 35,000 / USD 590 per issue: 4 issues a year.

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