



In the Shadow of the Cross



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Go, Enflame all!



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Rev. Fr. Alex SDS

POPE FRANCIS' STRATEGIES FOR HAPPINESS

Pope Francis is known as the unconventional pontiff who often surprises with his off-the-cuff remarks. The Argentine weekly, *Viva* (27 July 2014) published a very frank interview in Spanish to mark the first 500 days of this pontificate. Pope Francis, drawing on his personal experiences, identifies Top Ten strategies for Happiness that involves both personal and community development. Following are his Top 10 tips for bringing greater joy to one's life and community.



1. "Live and let live." Everyone should be guided by this principle, he said, which has a similar expression in Rome with the saying, "Move forward and let others do the same." This principle is basic to happiness. Given our human tendency we are prone to organizing and controlling people's lives. We must live by our own convictions and let others do the same.

2. "Be giving of yourself to others" Happiness lies in giving ourselves away. We need to be open and generous to others, particularly to those in need, doing so brings in contact with Christ. Whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do for him. "People need to be open and generous toward others, he said, because "if you withdraw into yourself, you run the risk of becoming egocentric and stagnant water become putrid."

3. "Proceed calmly in life" in life. The Pope, who used to teach high school literature, used an image from an Argentine novel by Ricardo Güiraldes, in which the protagonist -- gaucho Don Segundo Sombra -- looks back on how he lived his life. "He says that in his youth he was a stream full of rocks that he carried with him; as an adult, a rushing river; and in old age, he was still moving, but slowly, like a pool" of water, the pope said. He said he likes this latter image of a pool of water -- to have "the ability to move with kindness and humility, a calmness in life." Calmness provides space for personal examination of our time and our activities.



4. “A healthy sense of leisure.” The pleasures of art, literature and playing together with children have been lost, he said. “Consumerism has brought us anxiety” and stress, causing people to lose a “healthy culture of leisure.” Their time is “swallowed up” so people can’t share it with anyone. Even though many parents work long hours, they must set aside time to play with their children; work schedules make it “complicated, but you must do it,” he said. Families must also turn off the TV when they sit down to eat because, even though television is useful for keeping up with the news, having it on during mealtime “doesn’t let you communicate” with each other, the pope said. He said Leisure activities provide our bodies and minds with opportunities to refresh and renew themselves and to reconnect with one another.

5. “Make Sundays a family day” Workers should have Sundays off because “Sunday is for family,” he said. With the way our society is geared Sunday is a workday for many. But the sentiment here is that once a week we should have a day that restores the mind, body and spirit and gives time to those who are most precious to us.

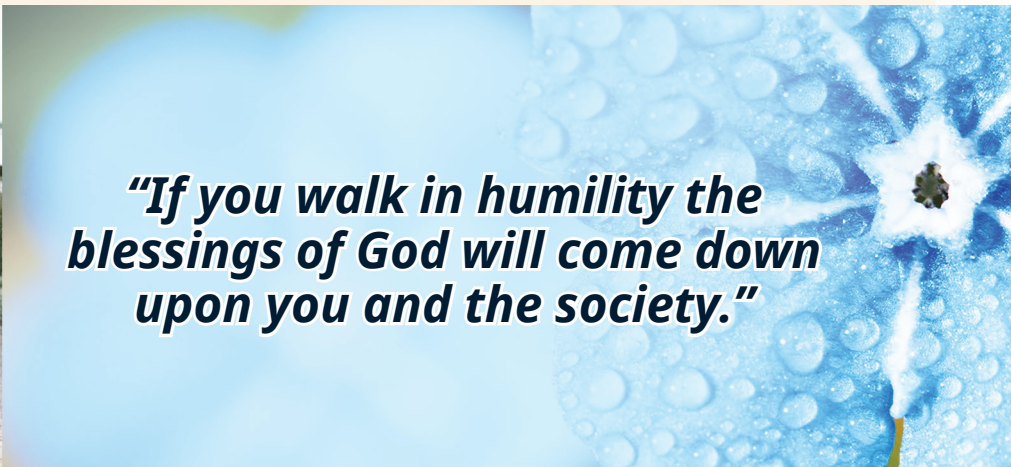
6. “Find innovative ways” to create dignified jobs for young people. “We need to be creative with young people. If they have no opportunities they will get into drugs” and be more vulnerable to suicide, he said. “It’s not enough to give them food,” he said. “Dignity is given to you when you can bring food home” from one’s own labor.

7. "Respect and take care of Creation" Environmental degradation "is one of the biggest challenges we have," he said. "I think a question that we're not asking ourselves is: 'Isn't humanity committing suicide with this indiscriminate and tyrannical use of nature?' We have to think about nature holistically in our pursuit of happiness. While it is good to use nature for its resources we need to think about how we ultimately hurt ourselves when we use it with a short-sighted mentality. Our salvation, like our happiness, is tied to the way we treat the mother earth.

8. "Stop being negative" Constant complaining, biting criticism, backstabbing and gossip are the tools we use to destroy happiness. "Needing to talk badly about others indicates low self-esteem. That means, 'I feel so low that instead of picking myself up I have to cut others down,'" the pope said. "Letting go of negative things quickly is healthy."

9. "Inspire Faith through witness" Respect others' beliefs. "We can inspire others through witness so that one grows together in communicating. But the worst thing of all is religious proselytism, which paralyzes: 'I am talking with you in order to persuade you,' No, Each person dialogues, starting with his and her own identity. The church grows by attraction, not proselytizing," the pope said. Witnesses to Christ, other people are attracted by the inner peace and joy that emanate from us. When we treat them with respect, we create a bond of happiness between us.

10. "Promote peace" "We are living in a time of many wars," he said, and "the call for peace must be shouted. Peace sometimes gives the impression of being quiet, but it is never quiet, peace is always proactive" and dynamic. Peace is more than the absence of war and working for peace means more than not causing disharmony. "Your happiness has no price," the pope once told your people. "It cannot be bought: it is not an app that you can download on your phones nor will the latest updates bring you freedom and grandeur in love.... That is because love is a free gift which calls for an open heart. It is a noble responsibility which is life-long; it is a daily task for those who can achieve great dreams🌸"



"If you walk in humility the blessings of God will come down upon you and the society."

VISITATION INDIAN MISSION VICARIATE

The visitation to the Salvatorian confreres of the Indian Mission Vicariate continued after beginning in Sri Lanka. Youth and the dynamics of youth mark the Vicariate, established in 2010. India holds a very special place in the heart of Salvatorians because it was the first place our Founder, Fr. Francis Jordan, sent missionaries in 1890. He sent them from Rome where we were founded to what was then known as Assam, today Northeast India. The mission was very successful and Salvatorians are credited with establishing Catholicism and the church in that area even today. However, since most were of German origin, we were expelled in 1915 and only returned in 1989. We established ourselves in the south but then returned to the Northeast



Fr. Raul Gomez Ruiz SDS

were we have been growing and slowly recovering the parishes we had originally established.

On 17 AUG 17 Fr. Chris and I flew to Bangalore (Bengaluru) where we stayed overnight before flying to Hyderabad and from there drove to Warangal where we have a house of formation for those studying philosophy. We spent a couple of nights there and then flew from Hyderabad to Kolkota (Calcutta)





to Ranchi in the north. Here we have a parish, a kindergarten, and another house of formation for aspirants completing their secondary education. We had a very pleasant visit with Cardinal Toppo where I was greatly surprised to see an image of Guadalupe in his sitting room. From Ranchi we went to the Northeast, where we met with our seminarians who are studying theology in Shillong. We also visited our parishes in Nongbah and Leitkynsew these were intense days and unfortunately I acquired a respiratory infection.

We continued in Nagaon in Assam State. Here we have two important schools. The students at both received us with much fanfare. We also went to nearby Tokobary where we have another house of formation for those aspirants finishing secondary education. There is also another school at nearby Dhing where again we were received with great fanfare. I'm grateful to the Mercy Sisters

in Nagaon who generously treated my infection at their hospital.

The next part of the trip took us back to Bangalore for a community meeting and then to Chullikkera in Kerala State where we inaugurated our new minor seminary for candidates to the Society. It was a wonderful celebration with Mass in the Syro-Malabar rite, one of the 23 "oriental" rites of the Catholic Church.

All in all it was a very intense visit but worthwhile. There is much exotic beauty in India and our confreres are on the verge of becoming a very important element in our Society in a multicultural and multi-religious setting, not always friendly to Christians. We were happy to visit with the Salvatorian Sisters and the various bishops of the places where we are located. Fr. Chris and I returned to Rome on 12 SEP 17, one month after beginning the visitation to the Indian Mission Vicariate ❁

PRIEST: GODS CHOSEN

Who knows one's own Destiny?
No One! That is how it would be.
Yet God has made with His hand
For us a marvelous plan.

Before He sends us to this world
He gives each one a call
As priest, as nun, as lay and so on
And that is what, is his vocation.

But, to priest He gave a great part
When from apostles He did depart,
To go to proclaim and baptize
And from His example, imbibe.

St. Francis said, between an angel and a priest,
Give more to the priest reverence he will
For the priest entirely represents Christ
The one eternal High Priest.

To administer all sacraments
On the very self of priest, He descends
To interpret His Holy Word
He sends forth before he ascends.

The promise He made to men
To be with till the end of time
Is accomplished with this gift
Of Holy Orders to a priest.

Many are called and a few are chosen
From tribes, nations and men
To share His love for the world
And to His work and be bold.

Thus, the Lord with His vocation
At every moment and occasion
Wins the priest to abide
With him in heaven at his side.



Dn. Kitbok Umlong M SDS



PASSION FOR THE SAVIOUR'S MISSION

Human history is a story of a unique and unfathomable relationship between the Divine and the Human. There is a constant thirst and a relentless quest to meet the Divine in human hearts. The passion for God and the passion for his people made young Baptist Jordan to found the Society of the Divine Saviour in Rome to make known the Saviour to all. *A missionary is someone who has been sent.* That's what the word "mission" entails. Keeping the Gospel as the standard of living and inspired by the famous Biblical passage Jn 3:11 "Eternal Life is this: To Know You, the One, True God, Jesus Christ whom you have sent", Jordan launched rather his ambitious project of including all sections of people to partner in his work of saving souls. God sometimes chooses the weak thing of this world to confound the strong is very much true in the life of Jordan.

8 December, 1881 was the red letter day in the annals of the Society of the Divine Saviour. On that day, under the watchful eyes of God, a tiny seed was sown. It was the birth of the new baby i.e. society. It has grown gigantically and gave birth to multitude of mission centers across



**REV. FR. VARA PRASAD
SDS (RECTOR)**

globe today. Jordan, in his early thirties had an *unquenchable fire*, an *indomitable passion* and above all an *insatiable thirst* for the salvation of souls did what was impossible. Yes, Jordan deprived of every infrastructure for action accepted the herculean task of sending the first missionaries to North East India for the greater glory of God and salvation of souls, when asked by Holy See. I can confidently state that Jordan accepted to leap into a deep dark and cloud filled precipice, not knowing what would be at the bottom of the precipice! He boldly accepted the challenge to implant the Church in the North East India, with that same, nay, greater faith than that of Abraham!(Gen 15:6)!God alone knows. By then, he had at his disposal, only six priests, three deacons, four sub deacons and 124 students studying for priesthood. Hardly eight year old society was given such a vast and important mission territory. Was



it not entrusted with full of admiration for the courage, the spirit of enterprise, the faith and the zeal of the young founder Baptist Jordan?

On 19th January 1890, at the request of the Holy See and under the guidance and care of Fr. Jordan, Frs. Otto Hopfenmuller & Angelus Muenzloher, Bros. Marianus Schumm & Joseph Baechle set their journey with great aspirations and dreams to the far away land i.e. India. As early as on 8th December, 1891, we have already the historical records to state that Anna Sada Nongrum and her daughter Maria Shitmon, the first ever khasis to be baptized by Fr. Ignatius Bethan in St. Mary's Church, Shillong. By early 1897, the number of Catholics increased to 1300. From its difficult beginnings, the Assam Mission grew to be a great success with schools, churches, orphanages and a large number of Catholics among the Khasis.

Due to the heroic efforts of the first missionaries, the First Daughter of the Society (Assam Mission) was born

painstakingly in a totally unknown land and place i.e. India. Oh! India! My India! How precious you have been for the entire Society of the Divine Saviour! God, in all his eternal plans wanted India to be the first daughter of the Society. As an Indian, I feel elated to learn and grasp the mighty providential plan of God which was realized for the Society's First Mission. It is the providence of God that North East India should open its door of faith through the Salvatorians. Yes, indeed! The providence of God did open the doors of faith to the North East India through the heroic and selfless missionaries of Salvatorians. Our mission is a passion for Jesus and at the same time a passion for his people. Our pioneers followed Jesus our Saviour passionately and were motivated by his compassion to reach out to people. They had a compassion for the lost and a desire to live a godly life. Their spiritual fervor, passion for God and the things of God made them effective witnesses in the world.

A true missionary is passionate for the gospel too. St. Paul said, "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel", (1 Cor 9:16). The gospel is the source of joy liberation and salvation of all men and women. Great people radiate the grandeur of the Divine with a touch of love. They change adversities into opportunities for they are citadels of courage and people of vision. Although all of the Salvatorian Missionaries were expelled from Assam



**“Whosoever shall confess that
Jesus is the Son of God, God
dwelleth in him, and he in God.”**

1 John 4:15

following the outbreak of World War I in 1915, the birth (arrival) of Catholic Faith among the people of Assam can be attributed in a large part to the work of Fr. Otto who tirelessly accomplished so much during this short time in the mission field and to his committed band of companion missionaries thereafter.

Where there is even one catholic, there is the church. Like the mustard seed, it (the Mission in North East India) was destined for prodigious growth. Today, the tiny seed which had been planted has given birth to 15 dioceses: Shillong (Archdiocese), Guwahati (Archdiocese),

Imphal Archdiocese, Tezpur, Dibrugarh, Kohima, Tura, Agarthala, Aizawl, Diphu, Bongaigaon, Jowai, Nongstoin, Itanagar and Miao. Leaving behind a heritage of dazzling holiness, heroic courage and faith, more than 100 years after the death of Fr. Otto, there are many who still experience the fruit of Fr. Otto’s tireless sacrifice. The memory of German Fathers (Paders) is kept alive in the life of people till date.

The year 2015 has unfolded as a year of Grace, Blessing and a Monumental one for the Society of the Divine Saviour (Salvatorians). It recalls to our mind



- i) The 125th (Quasquicentennial) Anniversary of sending of our First Salvatorian Missionaries to North East India.
- ii) The 125th Death Anniversary of Fr. Otto Hopfenmuller, the First Catholic Mission Superior of the North East India.
- iii) The 125th Arrival of Catholic Faith to the North East India.
- iv) The 100th Anniversary of SDS (Salvatorian Missionaries) leaving the North East Mission.
- v) 25 years of Re-establishment of Salvatorian presence (second coming) in India.
- vi) Convocation of Salvatorian Missionary Year with the famous dictum "Saviour's Passion is our Mission"

On this occasion, we need to be fascinated by our beloved founder's great zeal for souls. He always was enthralled by the word of God which was source of encouragement and solace. The numerous biblical quotations in his spiritual diary attest to this fact. Jordan

wanted his vision to be concretized, embodied and perpetuated. Our Lord's mission had a perpetual dimension whereas his physical human existence was not permanent. His mission was beyond himself and to continue that mission, he chose the apostles. Likewise, Jordan did not want his thirst for souls and passion for mission to be vanished with his physical death. In founding the society, he was not merely recruiting some people for accomplishing a mission or a task but rather it was an effort to embody his dream of generating many missionaries for Christ in the Northeast and in the world (universality and passion for mission). He perpetuated and handed down a legacy to Salvatorians to trust in Divine Providence at all times. The motto he gave to the society rings out clear and loud the missionary dream and passion of his heart for Christ.

International Salvatorian Missionary Year makes us to recall with gratitude the first Salvatorians who understood the missionary Charism of Francis Jordan. The pioneer valiant missionaries fulfilled

the mandate of the missionary saying, "Go, and make disciples of all nations". (Mt 28:19). As Jesus came to proclaim the word of God with impassioned zeal, the pioneer missionaries, spread the faith in the North East amidst the numerous challenges of our times thus leading the people to God. We owe an immense debt of gratitude to them for their untiring efforts to establish our society in the soil of North East. With the passion of a lover, with the (compassionate love) tenderness of a mother, they cared for the people and shared the surpassing love of Christ through their ceaseless service.

Each moment in history is a fleeting time, precious and unique. We are called to proclaim the fidelity and *mercy of Jesus* to all humanity because we are convinced that the fullness of life comes from Christ. Our destiny offers not the cup of despair but the choice of opportunity. Our pioneers have left behind a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Though their journey and life as the missionaries in the North East was a hazardous one yet it was joyful. They expressed their great love for God through *unflagging zeal* and *generous service*. Our faith in Christ should impel us to *get out of our safe horizon*. The mission of the Church demands to give *our energy, intelligence, time and heart generously for the salvation of souls*. Our life today and always has been an adventure and a challenge. To answer God's call may take us to many places we never dreamed of

going, to do things we never imagined we could do and to live each day often in an unexpected way. We continue to share his passionate love in the community as well as in the society. The way of the world often may be against us. *We may be rejected, hurt, it may indeed break us but like the breaking of the bread in the Eucharist, we become instruments of reconciliation of healing and peace.*

The lifestyle of the missionary is to be in conformity with the lifestyle of Jesus. Jordan had the characteristics and qualities of a good shepherd as well as sensibility of his people. He was a man who always turned to God in all circumstances and dedicated his life for the cause of his master and his people. He saw the face of Jesus in the suffering humanity. His courage and vision enabled him to take definite missionary plans and carry it out with much confidence in God. He had perseverance in the face of opposition in the mission.

This was the motivating force behind all his activities and associations. We are privileged to have Jordan as our beloved spiritual father and founder who was remarkable for his deep faith, his trust in divine providence, missionary undertakings with much daring and optimism. We have inherited a most enviable, religious and missionary tradition from our founder. We need to preserve and strengthen the dynamism, freshness and unique sparkle of our missionary charism given by our founder.

Having inherited the zeal from our passionate founder, we are sent forth to proclaim the goodness and love of the savior to all people everywhere by all ways and means which the love of Christ inspires.

Today as we recall the past with gratitude it says that "Things can be different". Today there is neither a Christian Europe nor a pagan orient. Ours is a borderless mission land which requires digital evangelization. It is about giving a new vision in colorful new way, nurturing hope and being a catalyst for change. This is what I think by saying "to wake up the world" today by our beloved Pope Francis who had addressed to all the religious in the beginning of the year 2015. So let us say and work with passion and conviction that our world can be a different place and a different reality. As Salvatorians, we are called to be in touch with God's dream for the world, to present that dream in vivid imagery to help to make it happen. God's dream isn't about condemning the world, but to save the world. "God so loved the world so much that he gave his only son not to condemn the world but to save" (Jn 3:16). The core of our Salvatorian vocation consists in witnessing to Jesus the Saviour. As we are in the International Salvatorian Missionary Society, let's go forward to transmit with great zeal the fire of Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan's charism which probably can be equated with the Savior's Mission as our Passion for the greater glory of God and salvation of soul ❁

Enrich Your Life What You Plant...

If you plant honesty, you will reap trust.

If you plant goodness,
you will reap friends.

If you plant humility,
you will reap greatness.

If you plant perseverance,
you will reap victory.

If you plant consideration,
you will reap harmony.

If you plant hard work,
you will reap success.

If you plant forgiveness,
you will reap reconciliation.

If you plant openness,
you will reap intimacy.

If you plant patience,
you will reap improvements.

If you plant faith, you will reap miracles.

But

If you plant dishonesty,
you will reap distrust.

If you plant selfishness,
you will reap loneliness.

If you plant pride,
you will reap destruction.

If you plant envy, you will reap trouble.

If you plant laziness,
you will reap stagnation.

If you plant bitterness,
you will reap isolation.

If you plant greed, you will reap loss.

If you plant gossip, you will reap enemies.

If you plant worries, you will reap wrinkles.

If you plant sin, you will reap guilt.



FATHER JORDAN: MAN OF HOPE AND TRUST IN DIVINE PROVIDENCE



Dn. A. Susairaj SDS

In you o lord, I have hoped, I will not be confounded forever! (Fr. Francis Jordan)

Dear friends in divine saviour!

It is said that a person can live without food for 30 days, without water for 5 days, without breath for 5 minutes, without hope not even a single second. That's why we find in today's world many people especially the youth, the celebrities and well known business men commit suicide. One reason may be that they might have put their trust and hope in other persons, riches of this world or in name and fame, which are temporary; if they lose them, they find no alternatives to cope up with this life. Today, as Salvatorians and as followers of father Francis Jordan, we are invited to put our hope and trust not in the riches of this world but in the divine providence of God.

In order to better understand the theme '**Father Jordan: man of hope and trust in Divine providence,**' let's know the meaning of hope according to the teaching

of the Church. Our holy mother church, understands hope as one of the theological virtues together with faith and charity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines hope as "*the confident expectation of divine blessing and the beatific vision of God. It is also fear of offending God's love and of incurring punishment*". The theological virtue of hope is the firm expectation of attaining with the help of God's grace, eternal happiness and the means there to. It is based on three truths: **1. God is almighty, 2. God loves each person immensely and 3. God is faithful to his promises.** According to St. Paul, "Jesus Christ is the truly God of hope" (Rom 5:5), "Believing in Jesus Christ, we can abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Rom 15:13), "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). The church teaches that the virtue of hope does not come from our talents, success or physical health; rather it comes from God, from our belief in God. People of hope are those who believe that God created them for a purpose and that he will provide for their needs. They believe that God loves them as faithful father. Christian hope is also

animated by perseverance and constancy through difficulties of all sorts, which put obstacles in the way of Christian holiness.

The **object of hope** is eternal happiness which consists in the possession of God. The formal object is the **grace of God** (God helps us to have hope) and the secondary material object is the means to attain the end it has to come from our part, they are: **1. Remission of sins, and 2. Doing good works.** When a person tries to do all the things with the help of God, he can have the virtue of hope and will not easily fall into the **sins against hope**; they are: **1. Despair** (ceasing to hope in the unconditional love, mercy and goodness of God) and **2. Presumption** (hoping to save oneself with one's own merit without help from God). Our venerable founder father Francis Jordan practiced the theological virtue of hope as per the teaching of the church. He was truly a man of hope and trust in the divine providence of God. This fact is known from his spiritual diary. Let us try to know this fact under three different topics.

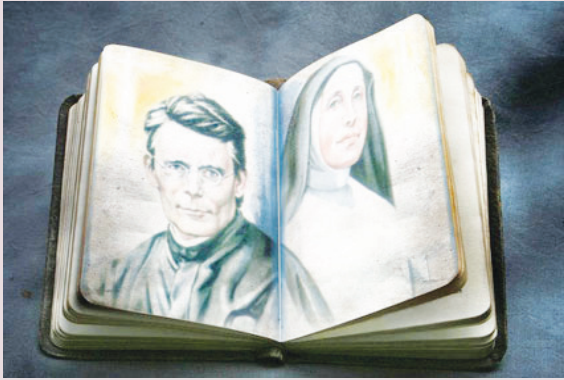
1. His help was in the name of the Lord

His unshakable trust in God together with his spirit of prayer was the most characteristic quality of father Jordan's life. His trust in God was like the ground water feeding his thoughts and actions. What other people achieved through their talents and capacities, father Jordan performed through his absolute trust in God. It is from his hope and trust in the Divine Providence that he got the strength to do everything in life. As he himself writes in his spiritual



diary, "they that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall take wings as eagles, they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."(SD 28) He continues, "If we have great confidence in God, then we feel the presence of God who leads us to a real relation with him."(SD 29).

He was deeply convinced that God was the object of his hope and that his help comes from God alone. We find this from his spiritual diary as he has quoted: "you are my hope and strength", "On you, I have put my trust, in eternity I will not be confounded", "you, lord, you alone are my fortress and my rock", "I can do all things in him who strengthens me". "My help comes from the lord, who made heaven and earth." This hope and confidence in God, he dared at the age of 21 to study for priesthood. In the same confidence he dared at the age of 32 to found a new congregation with worldwide dimensions. Because he put his trust in God, God also saved him from difficult situations. In his life time, for many years, he supported around 300 persons,



yet having no regular income and his trust in God was never put to shame. He only used to say, "The lord is good, and he will help us if we perform our duty." His faith in this love and fidelity of God remained constant even in hours of deepest desolation."

2. We must surrender to the guiding providence

Father Jordan, in his last days suffered many ordeals. Since, he was a German; he was exiled from Rome because of First World War. He was broken with old age and sickness that he could no longer be taken care off in his own community. Due to this and different situations, he had to be transferred to a home for the aged. When, because of these situations, his successor started to weep and said to the deadly sick founder, "Reverend father, how could things turn out so badly", the founder answered him, "remember well, God's ways are not

like ours, and his thoughts are not like ours. We must allow providence to guide us and we should take care not to thwart him."(SD 41)

3. Humility as Foundation of his Confidence

His trust in God rooted in his deep faith was unshakable because it was founded on his humility. He says, "God refuses the proud. Therefore, in the first place, humility, *magna humilitas*, by its means we draw down upon ourselves the grace of God. As the valleys gather up the rain, so do the humble gather up grace. No water remains standing up on the hills. How can we rely on God, if we are not humble? (SD 41).

His final admonition and spiritual heritage for us

Today, our venerable father Francis Jordan strongly admonishes all us, "Woe to you, if you place your confidence in men or riches" (SD 44). He also hands over to us his spiritual heritage, as he says, "I would like to leave you a special heritage, if I may so speak, and this heritage is great confidence in God" (SD 45). "Consider as your eternal inheritance confidence in divine providence, which as a loving mother will always care for you; for, no one who puts his trust in God shall be confounded" (SD 47)✿



"The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service and the fruit of service is peace,"

TRIP TO INDIA (JULY 3-23, 2017)



Fr. Adam Teneta SDS

In early 2017 I was invited by Fr. Agustín Van Baelen SDS, General Mission Secretary, and by the leadership of the Indian Mission Vicariate to preach the annual retreat to the Vicariate members. It was with joy and also with a little dose of apprehension that I accepted this invitation, as it was to be not only my first retreat for our members in India but also my first trip to that country. Soon, I received a detailed time frame of the retreats, as well as some practical information, and I was able to work on the content of the retreat, as well as to prepare for the trip. I was also very much looking forward to visiting the places where our first missionaries, sent by the Founder in 1890, began their ministry.

On July 3 I left Rome, and after change in New Delhi I arrived in Guwahati. At the airport, I was met by confreres and taken to Shillong by car. It was the first impression of the Northeast India for me, with its cultural richness, and with the magnificent Salvatorian historical context, which would continue to play an important role during my stay. On my arrival, I had the opportunity to meet the local community of theology students and some other Salvatorians who came to take part in the retreat. Since the

very beginning of my stay I experienced a very warm and genuine hospitality and care from the vicariate leadership and all the members alike, and felt very much at home at all times. This care and help made me able to adapt, step by step, to the new reality, culture and surroundings.

On the following day, we moved to the Moreau Institute of Integral Training in Shillong and in the evening we began the retreat. I was really happy to see that there were over 20 participants, and that the group was comprised not only of members of our Society but also of a good number of the Salvatorian Sisters. During the day that followed we reflected on our Salvatorian spirituality and charism drawing from the richness of the heritage left us by our Venerable Founder, referring to his personality, to his virtuous life, to his example of a religious, to his apostolic and missionary spirit, especially in the context of our preparation for the Centenary of his death next year. We had the opportunity

to look at certain important moments in his life from the historical perspective, to meditate on his heroic practice of virtues, and to see how he grew day by day in holiness. We also explored the life and work of two other great Salvatorians - real pillars of our Society - Fr. Bonaventure Lüthen and Fr. Pancratius Pfeiffer. The way our daily schedule was organized was indeed very helpful, as it gave enough time for the Eucharist, adoration, presentations, conferences and prayers, as well as for personal reflection and meditation.

A happy and interesting historical coincidence was that the retreat centre, the Moreau Institute of Integral Training, is owned by the Holy Cross Congregation, the very same religious institute, which owned St. Brigid house at Piazza Farnese in Rome at the time when Fr. Jordan stayed there and when the First Grade of the Society was inaugurated on December 8, 1881. The retreat finished on July 9, and it was very meaningful and moving for me to be able to pay a visit to the Shillong cathedral and to the tomb of Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller, located nearby. Then we returned to our formation house in Shillong and on the next day we left for Laitkynsew - a very impressive and picturesque trip along the road in the mountains - really breathtaking. I was deeply moved to visit the place where the first generation of our missionaries worked so hard, and I was honoured to be able to preside at Mass at the parish church with the local parish community. It is the place with the highest total yearly rainfall in the world, and the time of our visit was

no exception - everything was soaked with rain and covered by mist. Fortunately, on the following day it cleared up and I had the opportunity to see the magnificent view of the surrounding mountains and waterfalls, towards the Bangladesh border. The hospitality of the local community was great, and it made our stay really enjoyable, despite the overwhelming wetness. I heard the story of the SDS presence in Laitkynsew and was especially struck by the impact the ministry of our early missionaries made on the local Church and the Khasi community. After returning to Shillong it was time to pack up in order to go - together with some theology students - towards Guwahati again, and eventually to Nagaon. After a nice welcome and supper at our community house on Thursday evening of July 13, in the morning I had a tour of our schools and mission. In the afternoon we visited Dhing. It was very interesting to learn about our educative ministry in that village among the Muslim community. Our visit to Tokobari on the following day was also a very remarkable one and the tea with the Salvatorian Sisters there was a nice highlight of the trip.

On Friday, July 14 after the morning Eucharist at the SDS Sisters house in Tokobari, we travelled to Guwahati and caught a flight to Bangalore. The Eucharist in the local formation community marked the following Sunday morning and that afternoon saw us moving to the Camellias retreat house in order to begin the second retreat. This was again a very powerful experience of God's grace and of the work

of the Holy Spirit in a group of Salvatorian confreres and Sisters. The retreat finished on Friday, July 21, and on the following Saturday - a day of quiet and rest - we paid a visit to the community of the Congregation in Bangalore. On early Sunday morning, July 23, it was time to leave for the airport in Bangalore and to return to Rome.

I can say, and I do it with real joy, that the trip to India was a very positive and enriching event for me. Although I had the chance of meeting some of our Indian confreres earlier, it was a great Salvatorian experience to meet so many confreres and to visit the places, which are so very significant for our religious community: on the one hand they are important for us from the historical point of view, because they were so dear to our Venerable Founder and the missionaries he had sent did not spare themselves in their ministry there. And on the other hand, these are the places of importance and hope for our Society today.

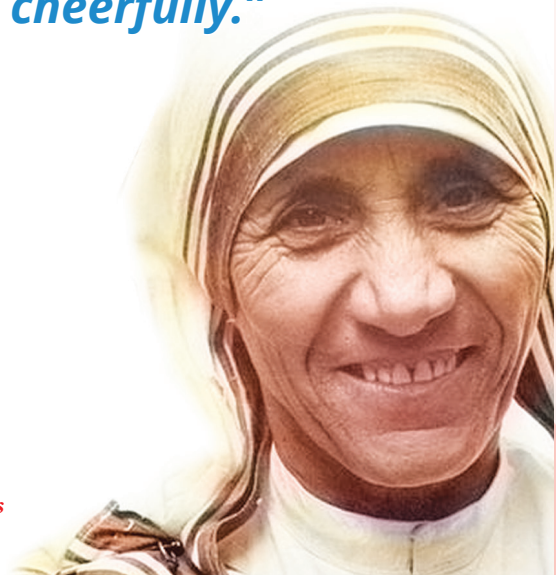
I had the chance to see and learn about some of our apostolates, I experienced the deep veneration and love towards the Founder and towards Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller. I was impressed by the lively interest in Fr. Jordan's cause for beatification. And above all I was struck by the deep spirit of the Salvatorian charism and identity, as well as by the understanding of our universal mission in the local reality and culture and by the love for our religious Society. For sure, the Indian Vicariate, as any other SDS unit, has got its problems and challenges to face, but without doubt it is a place where our present day, enriched by the meaningful

past, opens towards the promising and hope-giving future.

As I prayed at the tomb of Fr. Jordan after returning to Rome, I felt grateful not only for this particular enriching experience, but above all for the fact that the original dream of our Founder finds its realization in so many places of the world. Also by the fact that so many young people have been enkindled with his charism and vision of bringing the Saviour to all people, everywhere.

I would like to express my gratitude towards the leadership of the Vicariate, in a special way to Fr. Sunil and to Fr. Alex, and to all the members for the warm hospitality and a real Salvatorian spirit. May our Divine Saviour protect and bless you in your life and ministry. May our Venerable Founder intercede for you all 🌸

***“We learn humility
by accepting
humiliations
cheerfully.”***



PREACHING THROUGH LIVING

(MATTHEW 28: 16-20)

St. Francis of Assisi one day told the brothers in the community that they would go out to the nearby village to preach. So, all the brothers were excited for the big day and started to move for their journey to the village. On their way, they met many people; some who needed help to carry, some who needed guidance and support, and they happily helped all of them. It was almost evening, and one of the brothers asked St Francis "Father, the day is almost over and we haven't started preaching to the people, when are we going to start?", he replied "Brother, we will preach through living, if necessary only we will use words".

On the 20th August 2017, we remember the 127th dead anniversary of Fr. Otto Hoppenmuller, one of the first missionaries who came to the land of Assam (Meghalaya was under Assam) along with four other companions respectively; under the leadership of Fr. Otto. They reached Assam on 1890, with a soul **aim** to make known and preach about Jesus the Saviour to the people of the land. Their zeal and enthusiasm through hard work had seen through the conversion of many people in this land within a very short span of six months, and Fr Otto due to sickness passed



Bah. Donbok

away on the 20th August 1890. The words of Jesus became alive through them by living an exemplary life for the people and they believed in their preaching; as most people believed what they see.

There are many ways of preaching through living, and one of them is Forgiveness. Forgiveness is one of the hardest things to do, if we have to do it from our heart. From the book of Genesis Chapter 37, talks about the betrayal of Joseph's brother who sold Joseph and was taken as a slave to Egypt and in Chapter 45, in which Joseph met his brothers and revealed his identity to them. They were afraid and scared but Joseph said to them, not to be afraid or regret for having sold him but to take it as a God's plan to save his own people from famine. Here, we see the true spirit of forgiveness of Joseph to be able to look into his brothers with love and compassion to help them even after they have sold him.

This is a true story of a man who was both an atheist and a misogynist. He seldom believes in the presence of God and detests the presence of woman. So he started to kill the girls from the village one by one and day after day. The village people were surprised that, daily a girl would go missing and so they report the case to the local police to

by one, they came in front and all cursed the man that he would go to hell, he has no reason to live. And the man does not have any regret for the deeds he has done and was happy to be hanged. An old man came forward, and said, "I have lost the only daughter in my life, I loved her so much, but you have killed her. For this I forgive



investigate. It was a very tough case to solve for them as there was no evidence. But one day some of the local people were passing by his farm yard at night and saw that he was carrying a body and burying it. They immediately informed the local police about the same. The police searched the place and found all the bodies of the girls who were reported missing from the village. They arrested the man and took him into custody to be brought before the court trial. In the court, it was found that all the girls were killed by him and so the judge sentenced the man to death by hanging. But before they dismiss, the judge asked all the families who lost one of their members to say something before they leave. One

you my man". Tears began to flow from the man's eyes, his heart began to melt and he suddenly began to regret for the things he has done, begging for mercy from all the family's victims. Forgiveness from the old man changed the man completely but still it was the hardest thing for the old man to say "I forgive you", after losing his only daughter.

Forgiveness and Mercy is the hardest thing to act. When we lose a person, forgiveness cannot bring back the life of the person we have lost especially the life of the daughter of the old man, but all things will not go in vain, as the Book of Sirach Chapter 20:10 says " Generosity will sometimes do you no

good, but at other times it will repay you double". God has given us the ray of hope, that nothing goes unheard anything we do for the goodness of other will be rewarded double. We are living in a selfish world, where people are more concern for one-self and compromising on the others. God has taught us that we should not lose hope in being generous, especially forgiving. All will be repaid by Him. So, even when others don't do well to us we should not lose hope, we should do it for the glory of God, as we are His children. Through our living we preach the Gospel to others, proving that the Word of God is alive with us. It is our daily way of preaching in our house, school, work place, among friends, neighbors, and on the road, wherever we can preach we should preach the Word of God, his kindness through our Living. Sometimes, as a Christian Catholic we are ashamed of our behavior because when others see us they immediately conclude that such bad behavior can be done only by Christian Catholic, because it's our living standard that they differentiate from other religions. It is our responsibility and duty to change our attitude, behavior and learn to live a life full of goodness and kindness, then only when others see us they will know by our behavior, that we are Christian Catholic, living the Gospel of Christ in this world. When we preach people don't listen through what they hear but they will surely believe in what they see, through us.

Today, the 20th of August we remember Fr. Otto, a missionary, who gave up all and everything to come to our land to preach

about Jesus the Saviour. We pray for the repose of his soul and without doubt, now he is sitting besides Jesus. We also need to pray for all the missionaries across the world who gave up their lives to serve God and preach His name. All the fathers, brothers, sisters, religious and lay people who willingly serve God and preach the Word of God among his children, they are living the Word of God and need much of our prayers to be able to do God's work.

Our live is a mystery, a mystery to live the Gospel – the Word of God throughout our lives. Being thankful to God who has given me Knowledge and Wisdom to preach His Name, My family for their unconditional support, my friends (Fr L. Dhar & Ms. J. S. Thabah) for their advice and direction and Fr. Alex who has given me this opportunity and platform to be able to preach the Word of God for many more people 🌸

"Let us therefore, not walk that leads to hell but rather the way that leads to heaven! Let us keep in mind the words, The tree shall fall in the direction in which it leans."



YOUTH: “THE TIME TO BE NURTURED FOR THE BRIGHT FUTURE”

“Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity”. 1Tim 4: 12

Life is a precious gift in which all are given a chance for lifetime. God gave us the ability to enjoy our possessions. Does this mean that we don't have any problem in life? Or are we going to be rich in a day? No, rather enjoying life has nothing to do being rich but we must not be



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materialistic and get entangled with possessions. We will never be happy about anything if we are not content with what we have. Therefore, we have to be careful as Christians not to be part of this worldly and its deceitful desires. We are not to live a life of rebellions but we must make sure that God condones our activities and they don't go against God's

word. This will help us to make a good decision instead of bad decision in lives. Hence, be happy and give thanks to God in our everyday lives because he has created us for a purpose. Let's smile and laugh and have fun, for God has blessed us with manifold blessings.

Initial Stage of Youth: As the above theme we introspect ourselves when is our time to be a youth? Many times we hesitate and put conditions because we are not sure the exact time or age to be a youth and this question arises in every human being.

There are different ways of calling a person a "Youth" and this differs from one place to another, one region to another and one country to another. According to the United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Youth is best understood as a person of transition from dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence when one becomes aware of its interdependence as members of a community. However, age is the easiest way to define this stage particularly in relation to education and employment. Therefore, youth is often indicated as a person between the age where he/she leaves compulsory education and finds his/her employment. According to the United Nation youth may be defined from the age of 15 to 24 years and this generalizes the age in the society. But as Christians anyone who discerns to work for the spiritual needs and promotes the faith starting from the family to parish

level and so on can be a young apostle irrespective of age or class.

Purpose of Being a Faithful Youth: Having solved the problem of age limit, there comes an another insight, what is the purpose of a youth? Let us illustrate this problem as given below.

1. **To be an Example to Others:** As St. Paul in his first letter to Tim 4:12 says "Let no one despise your youth but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity". He has made it clear that at every age believers can inspire others. During this stage how impactful a youth could be in their lives when the pressure is so great to confront and a time in life when it seems the most important thing is fitting in, there comes a bravery to stand and decide to be an example as Jesus himself showed us.
2. **To remember God the Creator:** The book of Ecclesiastes 12: 1 says "Remember your creator in the days of your youth before the days of trouble comes and the years approach when you will say I find no pleasure in them". One day we will all grow old and there will be a time when we cannot move around as we like and we will be taken around where we don't want to go. Therefore, we need to build a good youth foundation in order to have a bright future by putting our faith and trust in God just like a fruit tree



where we labor in order to get a good fruit in the same way we put a good foundation in our youth so that we can enjoy the youthfulness we had in the advanced age.

3. **To be Content with what we have:** The book of Ecclesiastes 6:29 says “Enjoy what you have rather than desiring what you don’t have”. In today’s world to enjoy what we have is really unbelievable because we are living in the competing world where there are a lots of competitions with latest fashions, gadgets and so on. With the coming of the latest technology we dream of having one of them but it remains only a dream like chasing the wind. Therefore, we must be satisfied with what we have especially as a true Christian. Heb 13: 5 says “I will never leave you or forsake you”. This verse pricks our consciences and melts our hearts because Jesus our Lord and Master will never abandon us or leave

us alone in our toils and sufferings but helps us to overcome the worldly pleasures and things and “aids us to gain godliness with contentment for we brought nothing into the world and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing with these we will be content” (1Tim 6: 6-8). Thus, these verses are reminding us that we remain content with what we have and seek God who is the master of life and death.

4. **Be Different from others:** To be different from the world is really hard and challenging since we are part of the world. As Christians we are to be different from other, because we are to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect and in Jn 2:15 says “Love not the world neither the things that are in the world”

Conclusion: Youth is the time to nourish and strengthen the physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions of life. When these areas are in check then our life will bear fruits in abundance and this will be reflected in the advanced age when we recall the youth life, hence, bringing contentment with what we have put in and work for. Though the life which we lived is not a bed of roses but thorns too and this made our youth life fruitful and dynamic. Thus, at the end of the youth life we can say along with St. Paul “I have fought the good fight. I have completed the race. I have kept the faith” (2 Tim 4:7)✿

Rev. Fr. G. K. Prakash SDS Celebrating 50 Years of Blessing





Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year



Salvatorians
Otto Hopfenmüller Study House
Mawlai-Mawroh
Shillong-Meghalaya-793008
Tel: 0364 2591976
Email: salvatoriansshillong@gmail.com
Website: www.salvatorians.in

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