

Knots

Kolkata News Of The Salesians

binding communities together

Vol. XXXI No. 3

APRIL 2003

Golden Jubilee

FR. ALBERT RECALLS THE GOLDEN YEARS

“Know your age not by the number of years, but by the number of friends”, is a popular saying. That Fr. Albert Thottunkal, the Asst. Principal of the Primary section and Incharge of the Night School, of Don Bosco Park Circus (DBPC), has completed a long period of 50 years of Religious life, was very evident just by the number of friends who had gathered together to celebrate the event.

It was on 16 April 1953 that Fr. Albert Thottunkal sdb began his Salesian life making his first Religious Profession. The community of DBPC expressed its joy and gratitude both to God and to Fr. Albert for the 50 Golden Years through the various levels of celebrations that were organized as befitting the oc-

casion and the person of Fr. Albert. On the Golden Jubilee day of his religious profession, the 16th of



Fr. Albert Lights the Jubilee Lamp at the Eucharistic Celebration, 27th April

April, 2003, the religious community of DBPC gathered around Fr. Albert for a Eucharistic celebration to thank God for His blessings upon Fr. Albert himself and on thousands of people through Fr. Albert. This

celebration truly became an opportunity for the community to thank Fr. Albert as well as for each one of the members to express his love and appreciation towards him.

On 25 April 2003, a celebration was arranged around Fr. Albert along with teachers and students by the parent of one of the pupils of the school. He sponsored a grand lunch for all the teachers and ice cream for all the students of Don Bosco, inclusive of Day school, Technical school and Night school. Fr. Albert

found time to meet each section of the students separately.

The climax of the Jubilee celebrations was scheduled to be a two-day mega event. A cultural

programme with well prepared items was held on 26 April, 2003. The Past Pupils of Don Bosco put their heart and soul into the stage preparation, the seating as well as the light and sound arrangements. Stage decoration was a contribution of one of the teachers. The programme which started at 5.30 PM was beautifully organised by the teachers with the help of Past Pupils and the Interact Club of DBPC. The invitees included Salesians, religious and priests, present and past students, parents and friends of Fr. Albert. The participation was so numerous that the seating capacity of 6,000 became insufficient.

The items were performed by the little children of the primary section, students from the high school, technical school and night school, and Salesians. The items, in one way or another, expressed the various group's love and gratitude towards Fr. Albert. Of all the items the Power Point Presentation on the life of Fr. Albert procured special recognition at the gathering. Towards the end of the programme

Fr. Albert expressed his gratitude towards all with emotions that overpowered him. His throat was choked and eyes filled with tears as he said again and again: "Thank You!"



Felicitation by students, staff, parents of DBPC, 26th April

The Grand Finale of the Golden Jubilee celebration was on 27 April 2003. In the presence of Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Gomes, sdb, the Bishop of Krishnagar, many Salesians, priests, religious and friends of Fr. Albert, there arose hymns and prayers of gratitude to God the Father in a very solemn Eucharist. Fr. Albert celebrated the thanksgiving Eucharist in the Don Bosco Park Circus auditorium along with 60 concelebrants. Fr. John Berger, sdb, the Provincial of Salesian Province of Kolkata preached the homily. The introduction to the Mass by Fr. Albert became emotional moments of his sharing about meaningful events, moments and persons in his life. Many a time his words were interrupted by tears of joy and gratitude. A well decorated auditorium, a rhythmic entrance dance, the offertory procession with special prayers, the melodious singing of hymns of praises, etc. created a prayerful atmosphere of two hours of true "Eucharist".

The collaboration extended by the various groups like the Sisters of Mary Immaculate (Nati House), the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians

(Auxilium Convent), Sisters Adorers (Nazareth Villa), the Salesian pre-novices and the Salesian Brothers from Kalyani, was recalled at the end of the Holy Eucharist.

The Jubilee Celebration came to an end with an Agape after the Holy Eucharist. Most. Rev. Lukas Sirkar, SDB, the Archbishop of Kolkata, and Most. Rev. Henry D' Souza, the former Archbishop, made the occasion graceful with their presence.

A colourful brochure published for the Jubilee, added to the importance of this auspicious occasion: Remembering the 50 Golden Years of Rev. Fr. Albert Thottunkal, sdb, as a Salesian of Don Bosco. The Brochure highlighted the significant milestones and gleanings from Fr. Albert's life. It also contained the overwhelming expressions from the hearts of many and varied people on Fr. Albert.

All these celebrations and expressions of joy and gratitude revealed an underlying truth about Fr. Albert Thottunkal, sdb: Fr. Albert is a "Compassionate and Kind Father" - walking in the Master's footsteps after the heart of St. John Bosco. We wish him many more years of faithful and fruitful service in the footsteps of our Father Don Bosco.

~ Cl. Thaikadan L. Joseph, sdb

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Printed by: MediaFx, Kolkata 700 016

Publisher: Salesians of Don Bosco,
52 A, Radhanath Chowdhury Road,
Kolkata 700 015

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FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

ORDINATIONS AND THE MYANMAR EXPERIENCE



The Vice Provincial with the Newly Ordained priests

I reached Yangon on 27th March, 2003 and was warmly welcomed by the Delegate Fr. Joachim Ye Maung, the two deacons Bosco Zeya Aung and Leo Nang Hkam Mang and other friends there. I had the privilege of directing the retreat of these two young and enthusiastic Salesians, in preparation for their priestly ordination.

On 2nd April evening I joined them for a seventeen-hour trip to Mandalay by bus. Fr. Michael Tuling, the Novice Master, came to pick us up from there and we had another two hours by car to Anisakan where we have the novices, philosophers, aspirants all in the same campus.

THE PRIESTLY ORDINATION: Under the able leadership of Fr. Michael, Fr. Francis Dass and Fr. Charlie Saw, the brothers, novices

and the boys worked very hard to get the place ready for the ordination. They worked in close collaboration with confreres come from all over the delegation, FMAs, Bishop Charles' Sisters and other friends. A very joyful and helpful spirit reigned there.

The ordination itself was on the 6th of April. Bishop Charles Bo presided and was assisted by Bishop Philip of Lashio. Many diocesans and other priests concelebrated. The very pleasant and welcoming approach of

Bishop Charles, Fr. Joachim and the confreres of Anisakan and the neighbouring communities made the whole celebration particularly memorable. The ceremonies under

the able direction of Fr. Mariano Soe Naing, the singing conducted by Fr. Francis Das and the all round arrangements by Fr. Michael and Fr. Charlie provided that truly Salesian touch of quality and dignity to this event. Relatives and friends from the villages of the two ordinandi, some in their traditional attire, added colour to the setting.

WITH THE DIOCESAN CLERGY: Bishop Charles and Fr. Joachim arranged for me to visit the Bishop's House in Mandalay and Pathein and to participate with the diocesan clergy in the Chrism Mass and the Palm Sunday celebrations. The diocesans on both sides went out of their way to make me feel at home.

(Contd. on page 4)



The newly ordained Fr. Bosco Zeya Aung and Fr. Leo Nang Hkam Mang pose with Rt. Rev. Charles Bo and Fr. Jose Chunkapura, the Viceprovincial in the centre.

Vocation Promotion

YE SHALL BE FISHERS OF MEN!

A Vocation Camp was conducted from 6th to 12th April, 2003 at Savio Bhavan, Azimganj. Fourteen boys from Nadia, Murshidabad and Hooghly districts attended the Camp. The new provincial Vocation Promoter, Fr. Jude Sebastian, with the help of Br. Peter Topno, Fr. Dominic Kolpurath, and the Savio Bhavan Community animated the Camp.



In High Spirits: Savio Bhavan inmates with their Rector, Fr. KJ Dominic

From its conception, the organisers wanted to give the campers an experience of normal routine of the formation House: thus regular classes on prayer, English and Maths were held. Of course competitions, quizzes, camp fires, walks

etc. were also organised to make the experience interesting and further enriching. These activities helped also to avoid monotony. Daily pep talks were given by different resource persons, including lay people, covering various angles of the vocation process. The Fathers from nearby Don Bosco com-

munity helped out in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

This, no doubt, was a unique camp. It was unique because it was conducted in a pick and choose basis. Unlike other years we did not have any selection camp at regional level. Br. Sushanto Biswas had shouldered the whole responsibility of going around the par-

ishes, contacting and collecting the names of interested youngsters. He also willingly took up the pain of making a final round before the camp to inform the selected boys personally. The selected boys will join the community of Savio Bhavan from 1st may, 2003.

- Br. Anil Kr. Toppo

MYANMAR... (from page 4)

IMPRESSIONS: Burma is really a beautiful country in its scenic variety, in its enviable degree of calm and casualness and especially in its 'extravagant' spirit of hospitality, so abundantly reflected in the caring way our Salesian confreres take care of every one. The most encouraging sign is that several young people have gifted themselves to the salesian life. And from what I could see, the delegation has grown in every respect un-

der the leadership of Fr. Joachim Ye Maung and his council. Myanmar has a bright future of Salesian love and service for the needy.

Fr. Jose Chunkapura,
Vice provincial.

**HEARTFELT
CONGRATULATIONS TO
BOSCO ZEYA
&
LEO NANG**



NEW CATECHETICAL TOOLS FROM NITIKA

Nitika brought out two new products this year: Lenten Poster and Mysteries of the Rosary poster. "These catechetical tools have been a total sell out," said the director Fr. C. M. Paul, "in spite of the fact that we did not place any advertisement in The Herald weekly, nor in our Catechetics India journal. While a handbill promoted the Lent 2003 posters, we relied on email IDs of Bishops to bring orders for the Rosary poster."

The nine bi-colour screen-printed Lenten Posters developed the themes of the Sunday and Holy Week liturgy. Black and white outline designs with a scripture extract and a brief suggestion of its practical application, the posters were provided with convenient plastic

folder to preserve them for future use.

The Rosary poster released to



mark the Year of the Rosary ending in October 2003, consists of the four mysteries of the Rosary: Joyful, Light, Sorrowful and Glorious with their respective five decades all neatly arranged in one single poster.

The 25 x 17.5 inches multicolour poster is available in eight languages: English, Bengali, Hindi, Kannada, Konkani, Kokborok, Marathi and Nepali. For a small fee of INRs. 3,500/- we print in the language of their choice and reach 500 copies of the Rosary Poster anywhere in India for free. Individual poster costs Rs. 15/- plus postage while an order of 10 or more copies costs only Rs.10/- per copy and postage and handling absolutely free in India.

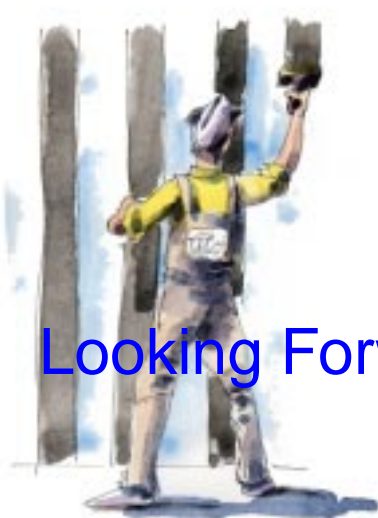
- A Nitika Knotter

Youth At Risk

An evaluation of the Ashalayam Project has been undertaken by Rev. Fr. George Kollashany, Secretary of YaR (National Salesian forum for Youth at Risk), and Mr. K. V. Thomas, Director of *Familia*, a well-known NGO in Kanchrapara. It is the first time that a serious evaluation of the 16-year old project is being undertaken. The expected result is a clear vision for the fu-

This is part of a serious preparation for the Silver Jubilee of Ashalayam that Fr. Mathew, the Director, had announced in January 2002. To quote Fr. Mathew: "We wish to prepare for this event with a Novena of years focusing on how we want to see Ashalayam and our children at the Silver Jubilee celebrations. We want to prepare for the silver jubilee with a definite program of action".

Looking Forward To Renewal



ture that Ashalayam must take after serious reflection by the community with the Provincial Council.

The evaluation that has been spread out during a period of 3 months has been concluded during the end of April, but the final report is still awaited. It will be taken up by Provincial Council towards the end of June.

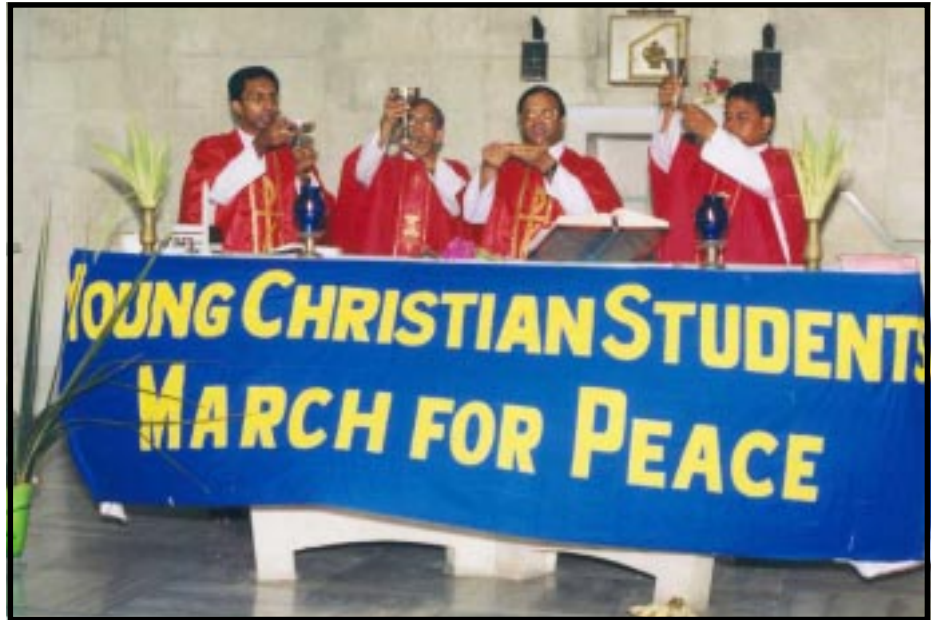
YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

The Young Christian Students (YCS) of Kolkata and suburbs observed the 18th World Youth day on Palm Sunday, 13th April 2003, joining with the whole Church the world over. The day's programme was animated by three Salesians - the YCS Chaplain for Kolkata Archdiocese, Fr. Thomas Pathiyamoola, Fr. Joseph Manipadam, the Provincial Youth Delegate, and Fr. James Mathew, from Don Bosco Ashalayam.

The Young Christian students set off early in the morning on a pilgrimage to the Marian Basilica at Bandel, making it a pilgrimage for World Peace. On arriving by local train at Bandel Junction at 9.00 A.M. they started walking towards the shrine, singing hymns and praying for world peace and doing street plays along the way to spread the message of peace.



The young Christian students from the various city schools and from Kharagpur were more than 300 in



Peace Offering: The Holy Eucharist at the Bandel Seminary Chapel

number. The YCS unit of Bandel played host and saw to all the arrangements at the pilgrimage spot. Fr. James Mathew, SDB performed the initial ceremonies at Bandel Railway Hall introducing the young

And they marched with palms in hand crying 'Hosanna, Blessed is he who comes, the King of Peace...

into the Palm Sunday liturgy of the day, and accompanied the young pilgrims to the Basilica.

On reaching the Shrine, the young pilgrims concluded the peace march at the Fatima Gardens and proceeded for a penitential service at the Seminary chapel. The penitential service was conducted by Fr. Moloy, the YCS animator and Principal of Sacred Heart School, Kharagpur. The young students had a wonderful opportunity to make their confessions and begin the Holy Week in the most fitting manner. In spite of the extreme hot weather and the long and tiresome march to the shrine, the young boys and girls found time for private devotions at the Basilica, the Balcony and the Grotto.

The Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. J. Manipadam was the concluding event of the day. During the Eucharist the theme taken up for

(contd. on pg. 7)

TARGETING QUALITY EDUCATION

At the initiative of our confreres working in Dharan, Nepal, a two days' training programme was organized for over 50 teachers working in Don Bosco and St. Joseph's schools, Biratnagar, 7th & 8th April, 2003. Fr. J. Manipadam from the DBYA Kolkata was the resource person who trained the teachers in the basics of managing their life in both personal and professional areas. The teachers were not only very receptive but much appreciative of the programme and went out of the programme determined to make their lives much more meaningful for themselves and for the students.

The programme was a "Reachout Service" undertaken by the Salesian community of Don

Youth Pilgrimage (from pg. 6)

special reflection was the message of the Holy Father for the 18th World Youth Day: "Behold Your Mother". The Marian touch of the message and the Holy Father's special interest in young people becoming agents of peace and social change were highlighted at the homily, as Fr. Manipadam invited the Youth to become agents of peace in the world of today.

After the lunch, sponsored by the Salesians at the Bandel Seminary, the pilgrim group left for the Bandel Railway station to return home.

- Fr. Joseph Manipadam

Bosco Dharan. Their intention is to reachout with similar programmes to the teaching community and later on to the students of the numerous schools spread out in both Biratnagar and Dharan. It is a venture they are planning in order to bring quality into the educational service which at the moment is seen much in a commercial perspective. This commercialization is evident to anyone who lands up in these towns of Nepal and comes across a boarding almost at every four or five furlongs.

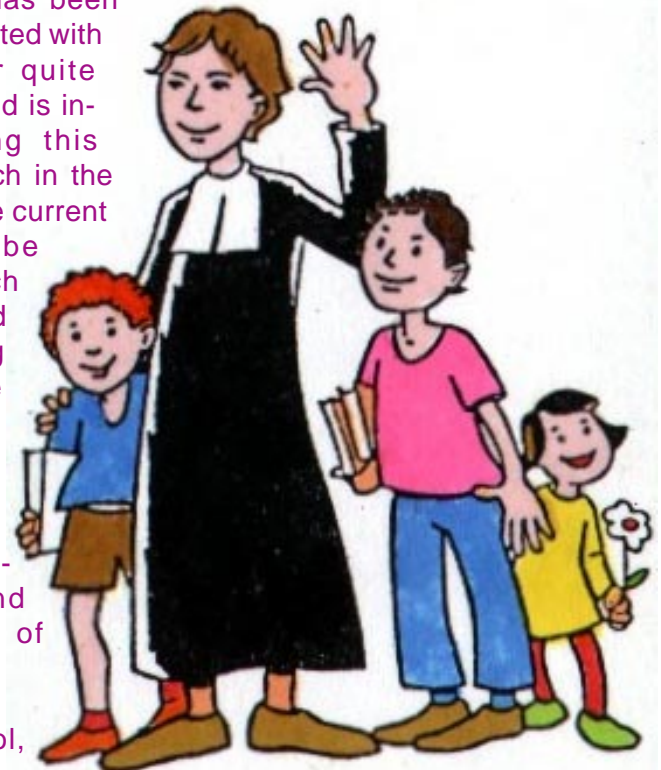
Don Bosco Biratnagar, currently running in a rented two-storey house, is run by a lay Catholic, Mr. Vincent, who has been very closely associated with the Salesians for quite many years now and is interested in taking this school forward much in the Don Bosco way. The current school will soon be shifted into a much larger campus and building that is being got ready with the help of the benefactors who perhaps find working with a dedicated lay person a new experience in this land locked country of Nepal.

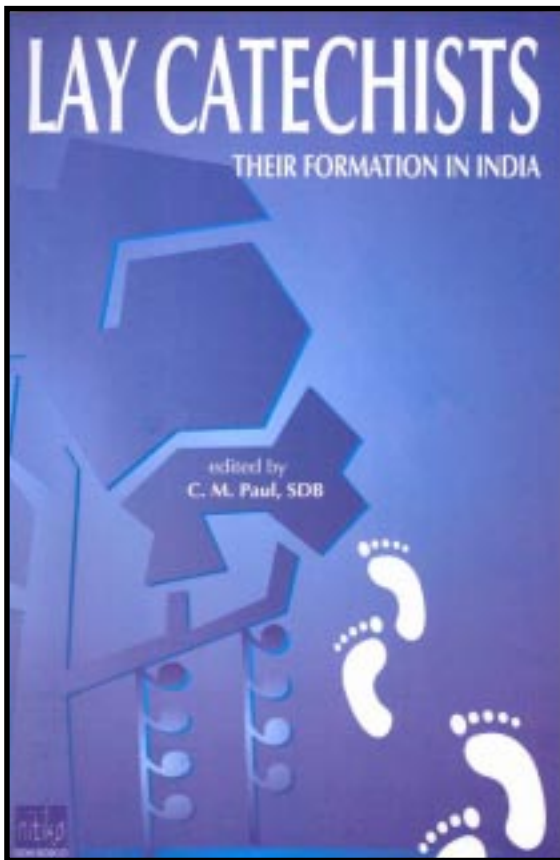
St Joseph's school, Biratnagar, instead,

is a larger and older school quite well known in the town and much appreciated. Mr. Adolf who looks after the school is a fervent Catholic, much appreciated and loved by the people who look up to him for guidance and good education for their children.

This venture being taken up by the Salesian Confreres at Dharan may be the beginning of an initiative to reach out and transform the educative service to the young through the Don Bosco charism and love for the young without having to own a Don Bosco school. It's a new thinking!

- Fr. J. Manipadam





LAY CATECHISTS THEIR FORMATION IN INDIA

Reviewed by Mr. Farrell J. Shah,
Kolkata

*Lay Catechists - Their Formation
in India*

Edited by C. M. Paul SDB
Nitika/Don Bosco, Kolkata 700015
2003, pp.232, Price: Rs.150.00.
USD 10.00

The dedicated and faith-filled lay persons, who work in our parish and mission communities, we call Lay Catechists. Most churchgoers care precious little about this important category of faith workers, their duty to the community and their job description. In fact, the people they serve depend on them for practically all things faith-related. In this context, Lay Catechists -

Their Formation in India, becomes a handy and indispensable reference.

The book has some highly original and seminal contribution on the topic. It contains reflections by 14 eminent people in the field who presented their findings on the topic, during the Nitika Silver Jubilee National Seminar held in Kolkata in November 2002.

The first four chapters present the theme and

its issues. Beginning with a brilliant keynote address entitled: Holding Out Hope to the World, the topic gradually unfolds itself stating the Lay Catechists' identity and role, spirituality, their categories and evolution.

The next eight chapters deal with more practical implications of Lay Catechist's Formation. Besides a sample Manual for the Catechists' On-going Formation, information on Lay Catechist Training Schools in India, and a chapter is dedicated to model Lay Catechist Training schools.

Sharing success stories of Lay Catechists is the *forte* of this book. A chapter entitled Training Women

Catechists for Faith Formation highlights women's role as lay catechists. It tells the charism and catechetical styles of three women religious congregations dedicated to catechesis. A second chapter deals with the Selection and Training of Women Catechists.

True to the editor's trademark, the book has not shied away from touching upon a very sensitive issue: Lay Catechists, Their Status and Remuneration.

In the chapter on Ecclesiastical Role of the Lay Catechist, the author-speaker thinks aloud various possibilities in the context of current theologizing.

As is usual in seminars of this sort, the organizers of the Nitika seminar, too, have issued a Statement on Lay Catechist Formation. This is reproduced in the book - it affirms the great sacrifices lay catechists render to further faith formation at all levels, and calls upon church decision makers to come up with projects which go beyond lip service.

Nine pages of Tables / Illustrations complement this professional production. The book's appendix consists of the list of the seminar participants, day by day seminar schedule, and a brief write up about the contributors and a listing of Catechist Training Centres in India.

For further information:

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INTER-COLLEGE DEBATE COMPETITION 2003

The annual debate competition was held at Salesian College Sonada, a Don Bosco institution, on 3rd April 2003 at 10.30 A.M. Five hill colleges participated. The theme debated this year was "Democracy has Failed in India". The chairman of the debate was Professor Dipankar Basu, recently retired Head of the Department of Political Science, Darjeeling Government College, and a well known educationist. The participating colleges were St Joseph's North point, Loreto College, Cluny Women's College, Kalimpong Government College and the hosts Salesian College. The adjudicators were Mr. Mosharraf Khan, Lecturer, Department of English, Kurseong College, Mr. Debnath Lecturer, Department of History, Sonada College,



The Venue: Salesian College, Sonada, Darjeeling

and Miss Roma Zimba, St. Joseph's Higher Secondary School Kurseong.

The participants were welcomed by the Principal of Salesian College, Fr. (Dr.) George Thadathil sdb who also set the debate rolling with his words



that "we need to debate whether this ought to be a debate topic", because he said, "Democracy is our life breath and is it really true that we are running short of it?" The debaters were Sweta Sharma and Bhaskar Lama (St. Joseph's), Bernard Bhutia and Nisha (Kalimpong College), Felix Jojo and Sanjay Soreng (Salesian College), Komal Rai and Shreyashi Chettri (Loreto), and Smitha Rai and Marina Chamling (Cluny Women's College).

The adjudicators took into consideration the content, communication skills like voice, diction, comportment and rebuttal strategies. The lively thought provoking speeches were followed by an interactive session where the participants stood their ground in response to the queries fielded by, chairperson and the lecturers from the house. The rules and regulations regarding the event were highlighted by Br Jose P A, the dean of studies. The chairman, Professor Dipankar Basu, enumerated the history of Inter college debate in Darjeeling, and the evolution it un-

derwent from being a calculated competition to an extempore speech before it saw a natural death with the Gorkhland agitation of the late eighties. It was then revived in the late nineties under the leadership of the staff of Salesian College. Last year it was hosted by St. Joseph's College as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Professor Dipankar also noted that "unlike in the late 60s or 70s, the present day participants are all local students."

Fr. (Dr) Nirmol Gomes SDB announced the results at which the host team Salesian College Sonada and St Joseph's College Darjeeling were declared winners and Loreto college the runners up with Kalimpong Colleges jointly becoming the third. He commented that the debaters have given enough information regarding the status of Indian democracy and what we need to get on with is performance. The chairman gave away the trophies and certificates of participation while the first year student Bikram Benjamin gave the vote of thanks and concluded yet another day of democratic and peaceful sharing of views and values by students and staff of the hill colleges.

- Fr. George Thadathil

(As appeared in The Statesman)

HOSANNAS & ALLULUIAS

Holy Week in Israel



Easter Joy: Raymond Tudu(2nd from R) with batchmates

The curtain of the Holy Week opened on Palm Sunday with the singing of "Hosannas" from Bethfage, the place where

Jesus got on a donkey to begin his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. There were participants in this ceremony from all possible countries with their traditional songs and cultures. There must have been about 2000 people. This year there were less participants, they say, due to the on-going war in Iraq. It was an enthralling experience to re-live the experience of Jesus.

On Holy Thursday, after the community celebration of the Solemn Holy Eucharist and the memorial act of the Washing of the Feet, we went to the garden of Gethsemani to stay awake with the "sorrowful one" for a while. The Church in there was packed to its capacity. There must have been around 3000 people, all on their feet. The ceremony of the betrayal of Judas was wonderfully presented, and one could read on the faces of people that they felt that what Judas did was absolutely wrong.

From Gethsemani we accompanied Jesus through our prayers and

a candle-lit procession to "Gallicantu" (Cock-crowning), where St. Peter denied Jesus three times. There we had our personal prayers and adoration of the Blessed

Sacrament in the Basilica.

On Good Friday, with penance and abstinence, we walked the way of the Cross, which Jesus had walked 2000 years ago, carrying his Cross to Calvary. You could feel the pinch in the paunch and the hot Sun above the head. We participated actively, singing passion hymns though our throats were simply dry. We could only imagine, how much Jesus suffered walking on this way with the heavy load on his back! Moreover, the chaos and commotion of the *Muslim Bazar* reminded us of the confusion of the ranting Jewish crowd that wanted to nail Him to the Cross. He had suffered silently for our Salvation!

At sunset there was the ceremony of taking down the Body of Christ from the Cross. This meaningful event was re-enacted by the whole community of the Franciscans marching up and down the Calvary and carrying down the Body of Christ, which was laid upon the stone for the performance of the

last rites before the burial.

The Body was anointed with alabaster perfume. It filled the whole ambient with a magnificent scent, which I had never smelt before. Though remaining in the midst of an innumerable crowd, everyone could have an experience of it. Then the Body of Christ was carried in procession and laid in the Sepulchre.

After the whole crowd had dispersed to their own homes and the main door of the Basilica was sealed, 13 of us from Cremisan and few other people remained back for keeping a night vigil. During the whole night we were walking about all over the basilica lest we should fall asleep. The night seemed to be pretty longer than usual. It was a wonderful moment to pray for different intentions. The Orthodox priests got up at midnight with a loud gong of the Bell, to carry out different moments of their prayer. Their unending chanting and singing kept us awake the whole night. At 6.00 am, we went back to Cremisan.

On Easter Monday, we had a memorable procession to Emmaus, to commemorate Jesus' apparition to the two disciples. We had a beautiful Eucharistic Celebration with the community of Jerusalem. The Church was packed with people!

This was indeed a wonderful experience of Easter for me. ALLELUIA! Praise the Lord! is all I can say in thanks.

- *Cl. Raymond Tudu, Cremisan*

FEELINGS FROM THE HEART

On the occasion of Fr. Albert Thottunkal's Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession here are a few simple and frank thoughts he shared with KnotS - his feelings from the heart.

KNOTS: What are your strongest feelings as you look back at the past 50 years of your life?

Fr. Albert: Just feelings of gratitude: 'Thank you, Thank you, Thank you'. These are the two words that ring in my heart and in my mind at all times. That's all. I thank God, our Blessed Mother, my superiors.

KNOTS: Who has been the strongest influence in your life, among the people you have come across in the past 50 years?

Fr. Albert: Fr. Bacchierello has been the strongest influence in my life, especially in the early years. He was the one who led me on during the troublesome days of growth, the aspirantate days. Then I would like to mention also Fr. Sheehy who was of great influence in the latter years after I became a priest.

KNOTS: The happiest moments of your life?

Fr. Albert: My ordination day. My first Mass, when I held Jesus in my hands for the first time.

KNOTS: What is the thought that has sustained you, given you power and energy especially in difficult moments?

Fr. Albert: The thought of Our Blessed Mother. I just cry to her like I used to cry out to my own mother

"Ente Maatave! Ente Ammacchio!" [My Mother! My Mummy!]. And I know she is there to help.

KNOTS: If you were given the chance to re-live some of the moments of the past, which would you choose?

Fr. Albert: My Ordination. My first Mass. The moments of consecration of the first Mass.

KNOTS: The period of your life you would have been happy to be without?

Fr. Albert: Certainly there have been certain periods or events which have been very painful. Even certain people, my superiors whom I had loved, had misunderstood me. All these have cut me to the core. But I have accepted them. I have cried to Jesus and Mary, and have trusted that one day things would be all right. So everything was OK. So I wouldn't say I would have preferred not to have those painful periods.

KNOTS: How would you like your next phase of life to be like?

Fr. Albert: Thank God, that's all. What ever comes, whatever He sends, I'll take. I just want to reach heaven without troubling others. I want to die peacefully like Br. Charlie, working till the last minute. I want

to work till I die. I don't want to give trouble to anybody.

KNOTS: If you were given a "golden wish", what would it be?

Fr. Albert: Let me die in peace without giving trouble to any one.

KNOTS: Brief comment on Education - "then" and "now".

Fr. Albert: There have been lots of changes. We are Don Bosco's children. We have grown with the times. I find the boys very sincere and receptive. They imbibe good values

that are proposed to them. The teachers are also by and large very cooperative. There is of course a change in certain attitudes due to changing times in the educational field. For instance the old idea of "Gurujji" isn't much there... However the whole educative atmosphere is optimistic... The Salesians are also progressive after the manner of Don Bosco. The confreres are very sacrificing. We have been faithful to Don Boso's system of education all through these years.

KNOTS: How would you like to be remembered?

Fr. Albert: As a simple Salesian who loved all.

KNOTS: Thank you, Fr. Albert! And *Ad Multos Annos!*



A NUTTY STORY

by Peter Lourdes

I lived in a coconut. The only colour I knew was white. Everyday I made great efforts to stand or sit. (Did you ever try to stand or sit inside a coconut?). But I finally found my own cramped way of standing. Then I got so used to it I actually felt comfortable in that position. Later I convinced myself that's how it should be. I like everything to be as it should be.

I did not have a very good way of walking. but I had a wholistic vision of life. I saw it right there in the coconut. I called it my Nutology. As time went on I developed a rich vocabulary most of which ended in "nut". Take, for example, my Philosonut, my Theolonut and, nuttiest of all, my Psychonut. Since I had heard only nutty words, I thought everyone heard only these, no others. My meanings were the only meanings. I was sure they had the same meaning for all. I felt no need to check this out. I had no "out", you see.

Notwithstanding this highbrow stuff, I invented my own Compunut and Internut. On my compu I wrote great articles. At the end of my articles you should have seen the exhaustive biblionut. But what made me most proud of my work were the footnuts. They were in smallprint, so small they were abusive of the human rights of the visually challenged, but I loved them. They had more value than the whole text. In fact the proportion of text to footnut was 1:10. one part of text thoroughly mixed with ten parts of footnuts.

But none of my works, even after publication, sold very much. Soon they were piling up inside my coconut. I was getting more cramped. But that's how I thought it should be till one day all my works turned into coconut water. It was dreadful without my books. I felt as if my legs had fallen off. .

And then it happened. One morning the coconut tree was shaking in jerks. My coconut bumped against others. Someone was climbing up the tree. I sensed danger. Something dreadful was going to happen. Suddenly a knife cut sharply and my coconut fell from on high. A man picked it up and cut it open. He threw it away with a yell. I fell out and tried to stand. It was terrible. The ground was flat, not as

it should be. When I tried to walk, the man laughed. When he walked away, I stifled a laugh. His gait was so funny. I looked around. Everything I saw was so different from everything I had seen so far. My nutologies began to shake. I felt discomfort all over me.

The man came up : "You seem very upset !"

"I am" I muttered. "I lived in a coconut. That was life. What is this ?"

"Life?" he exclaimed. "What is life ?"

He then went on to tell me things about life. Horror of horrors! Nothing he said made any sense to my nutologies.

Inside my coconut I knew only one colour, white. He was jabbering about black and grey. There's no such thing. Things are either white or whiter.

"How can you talk such utter nutsense "" I burst out.

"White is seven colours"

"Rubbish ""

"Even rubbish is made up of many things."

"You have no nutology. no convictions, nothing, I am a man of convictions. White is white and so it shall be. I am totally dedicated to white ""

"Totally?" he queried parrot fashion.

"Totally! I am even ready to kill for white. That's how strongly I feel about it ""

And I hobbled away. Inside my coconut I had always proved myself right, absolutely. This was the first time someone was proving me wrong. It was too much. I was not going to take it. Nut me.

I saw I had only two choices: dialogue with him or go back to my coconut. I looked around and up. There were still coconuts on the tree. I jumped in and locked myself. This was no dialogue. But my nutshell principle is, "If you want to dialogue, you must first be thoroughly grounded in your own tradition."

I am grounded. But I am worried about my psychologist. He lives in a betelnut.

[Story inspired by a parable by Gustavson entitled "Locked In", appeared in Sunday Liturgy Vol. XXVII, No. 34 - Ascension]

