

# SCHOLAR VIEWS

4 February 2017

Issue - 3



**JESUIT PIONEERING  
IN NORTHEAST INDIA**

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**"To know the will of God, we need an open Bible and an open map."**

**— William Carey, Pioneer (Missionary to India)**

**B**

eing young members of the Kohima Region, we are always mesmerised by the life and zeal of our senior Jesuits. As Novices, we had the luxury of living in the bamboo house even without electricity; it was luxury because it gave us a taste of the conditions that our early Jesuits lived in. As the years pass, we are drawn more towards imitating their lifestyle. In the words of Peter Kreeft, a professor of Philosophy, the Jesuits of the Kohima Region have realized that "there is one and only one possible road to joy: selfless love." Often our successive Regional Superiors have reiterated that we run our Region with 'two Lacks': lack of money and lack of personnel. But these 'lacks' have never daunted our efforts in reaching out to the difficult areas where no one dares to set foot. Once during the Region Days, while discussing the choice of a mission, a senior Jesuit said, 'If the mission is tough, then we have the obligation to take it up anyway; because if we don't, then no one will.' Who will not be wonderstruck by such a selfless disposition of that senior Jesuit in his late 70's!?

This issue of **Scholaviews** focuses on the theme **Jesuit Pioneering in Northeast India**. We, through this issue, give ourselves an opportunity to go back to the pioneering experiences of our Senior Jesuits and also our own individual experiences. It is our desire to sow the seed of inspiration in order to commit ourselves more fully to the service of Christ and His people. We are grateful to all who have assisted us in the current issue of **Scholaviews**; our special thanks to Fr Learoy Rodrigues SJ who conducted a special crash course on English for the Kohima Scholastics in April 2016. He imparted onto the participants special writing-skills, and assisted in writing articles many of which have been published here. We wish you a pleasant and inspiring reading.

**- Feast of St John de Britto,  
A Jesuit Pioneer of Inculturation in India**

**4 February 2017**

## Friendship Circle

*The Joy of Jesuit Companionship in the Region*

- Thomas Varghese SJ

**W**e live in a globalized world with sophisticated communication devices. For consecrated persons living in such a world, friendship and companionship become a greater need. As Companions of Jesus, we, the Jesuits, draw our inspiration from St Ignatius and his early companions, who set us an example of the ideal Jesuit community. Although, they belonged to different geographical and linguistic backgrounds, they called themselves 'Friends in the Lord' and decided to form a *Company of Jesus*. St Ignatius wrote in the Constitutions that 'the Society of Jesus could not attain its ends unless its members are united by deep affection among themselves and with the head'. A classic example of Jesuit bonding is very well depicted through the life of St Francis Xavier. When in India, he kept a locket containing the signature of St Ignatius to show his belongingness to the Society. Later when the Society was suppressed in 1773, we had St Joseph Pignatelli who gathered the expelled Jesuits from all over Europe and kept the Society alive.

In recent decades we have had various decrees of General Congregations emphasizing the importance of community life. One of the documents that had spoken elaborately on community life was the decree 'Union of Minds and Hearts' of GC 32. Again, GC 35 stated that *when community life flourishes, the whole of religious life is strengthened*. Through all these decrees, the Society of Jesus is particularly anxious to highlight the significant place of community life in our manner of being and proceeding.

The Jesuit communities in the Kohima Region, although they are small in size, scattered in remote areas and wanting adequate infrastructural



facilities, do not lack human warmth, care and support. We hail from different cultural, linguistic and family backgrounds and yet these never become a hindrance to our community life and mission. As friends in the Lord, we support one another in our ministries through our community prayer, faith sharing, community discernment and fraternal correction. Often, our Jesuits are so busy in their apostolate that dinner in the evening may be the only occasion when the entire community comes together; but this dinner time becomes a platform for community discernment, sharing of joys and sorrows, and listening to one another's opinions and suggestions. Often we feel with the psalmist as he says, "How good and pleasant it is, brothers dwelling in unity." Having lived in apostolic communities as well as in houses of formation, I have really felt the support and encouragement of my community members and it has strengthened my Jesuit vocation.

Changing technology and modern gadgets pose a great threat to community life today. They tend to have a more dominant place in our daily lives and their use can easily replace verbal communication and human warmth. We need to be men of discernment so that our life in community is not disrupted by technological changes, but rather is enhanced and strengthened.

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*Community of early Jesuits in Nagaland Mission.*

## Places We Call Home

*An Overview of the Jesuit Mission Centres & Works  
in the Northeast*

*- Reginald Kurkalang SJ & Edbert Marbaniang SJ*

**T**he Northeastern states add greenery and beauty to India. The footprints of Jesuit work are seen in the 'Seven Sister States' in the Northeast. The seven sisters are Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. It is common to find the Jesuits labouring here with love for the people. Though they encounter many challenges and difficulties in the mission, they bloom where they are planted.

The mother of all the Jesuit works in the Region is education ministry, which started in Nagaland in the year 1970. Eventually, the Jesuits were able to impart education to people in different parts of the Northeast, running schools, colleges and training centres. They have been working in Nagaland (1970), Manipur (since 1984), Assam (since 1997), Arunachal Pradesh (since 1997), Meghalaya (since 2001) and Mizoram (since 2016). Bringing education to the masses has been the top priority of the Jesuits. We, however, do not claim an exclusive role of the Jesuits in the educational apostolate in the Northeast.

Many Jesuits are involved in our educational institutions like Loyola school, Jakhama, St Paul School, Phesama, St Xavier School, Palizi, and Loyola College, Williamnagar and Teacher Training College, Phesama. While imparting education to people of different lands, the Jesuits have always laid stress on the formation of a person's spiritual life, character and discipline. While promoting educational activities, the Jesuits of the

Kohima Region have also ensured that pastoral work does not lag behind; although the Region has very few members, it runs parishes in almost all the states. The Jesuits exercise their pastoral ministry even at places on the periphery of the Region such as Maweit in Meghalaya and Didambra in Assam. Many Jesuits are involved in the ministry of spiritual guidance and retreat-giving. Among these, Frs Albert D'Silva, Julian Fernandes, Gratian Carlo and Boniface D'Souza have been prominent in this field. Some Jesuits work in the challenging field of Jesuit formation. They work in Pre-Novitiates and Novitiate, and as vocation promoters and Regional Coordinator for Formation. Fr Anand Pereira and Fr Richard Jarain have a special mandate to guide and train the young Jesuits. The Jesuits are also involved in the social ministry, in works like the Legal Cell of Human Rights (LCHR), collaborating with NGO's in fighting for the rights of the tribals, such as the Adivasis in Assam, and bringing about awareness on issues such as migration and human rights. Frs Ravi Sagar, Melvil Pereira and Alphonsus D'Souza and others are active in this ministry. Fr Hector D'Souza is involved in trying to get funds for the development works of the Region.

Mrs K S Hegde, the then Speaker of the Lok Sabha said, "In the life of a man, one hundred years may be a long period; but in the life of an institution, it is not a long period. It is the beginning of a glorious period to come." The Jesuits in the Northeast, though few in number, are known for their qualitative works among the people, and it is just the beginning.

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**Not a Museum Piece!**



**CYA Camp, Khuzama**

## **They Came, They Loved, They Laboured**

*The Early Jesuits of the Kohima Region*

*- Teilang Kyrsian SJ*

**E**very house has a builder; every journey has a traveller; every work has a labourer; so also every mission has a pioneer. We are familiar with the phrase, “I came, I saw, I conquered”, which comes from the Latin phrase, “veni, vidi, vici” emphasizing Caesar’s great military skills and victory over Pharnaces II of Pontus. But the phrase “They came, they loved, they laboured”, sums up the adventurous beginnings and mission of the pioneers of the Jesuit in North East.

Historically, the Jesuits in Northeast India have three comings. The first trace of them goes back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when two Portuguese Jesuits, Fr Stephen Cacula and Bro John Cabral set foot in Hajo Kingdom, north of Guwahati in 1626. They were on the way to Tibet in search of Cathay. Hajo was just a passage in order to get help from the Tibetans who were in trade relationship with that Kingdom. The second coming was between the years 1915 and 1921, the First World War era. The German Jesuit missionaries who were then working in the Northeast were expelled due to the war. The third coming happened with the request of the Archbishop of Dibrugarh, His Grace Hubert D Rosario SDB and the Education Minister of Nagaland, J B Jasokie. Unfortunately, the nearest province, Calcutta, could not accede to the request due to the shortage of Indian Jesuits, foreigners not being allowed in Nagaland. But the Jesuits of Karnataka took up the challenge of embarking on this frontier mission. Therefore, three Karnataka Jesuits were sent to Nagaland. Two, Fr Ligoury Castelino and



then Brother now Fr Raymond D'Souza arrived at Kohima on the 21 April 1970, and Fr Stany Coelho joined them on 11 May of the same year. Thus with the third coming of the Jesuits, the foundation of the Kohima Region was laid.

"Everything was fine except that we were not wanted!" wrote Fr Stany Coelho. They found themselves as fish out of water; a place in Kohima College quarters was offered to the Jesuits for a temporary stay; but unfortunately, when they reached there, the place was no longer available. This was due to the Baptists who considered the Jesuits antichrists and so forced the Government to deny them entry into their village and to Nagaland itself. In a situation like this, the Jesuits could have easily left the place, saying, "Whose need is it, after all?" But they did not; instead, they searched for a land on the outskirts of Kohima. Their pitiable plight was perceived by the people of Jakhama, who welcomed them with wide open arms.

"What a God forsaken place it is!" remarked one of the young Jesuits who visited the place for the first time. It was a land covered with thorns and thistles. Furthermore, the uninviting jungle bore an eerie reputation of housing deadly reptiles and of being haunted. It was said that even the local people dared not touch a particular tree in the area, where once a dead body had been found hanging. In spite of all these, Fr S Coelho could say, "Frankly, I haven't found a place where God's presence is more tangible than in Jakhama." While Fr Coelho soon accepted that "Beggars cannot be choosers," Fr Ligoury, who was not easily taken up by Fr Coelho's mystical impulses, took two months to realise that "Half a loaf is better than none!" Hence Fr Ligoury, being the minister, decided to take stock of the land. That made a difference. Looking at what Jakhama is today, one can say that the pioneers had found God even in that 'godforsaken' place.

Rome was not built in a day. In addition to the rough terrain of the area and lack of resources, language was another problem to the pioneers. For not a single tone of the tonal Angami language was familiar to them. This gave rise to uncertainties even in those who had welcomed them. Some even regretted having parted with acres of land just for a pittance. “What can we expect from them, they don’t even know our language?” “Let them prove their worth before we do anything more for them.” These were some of the remarks of the people. Thus the pioneers had a tough time in getting help from people for work. In spite of all these struggles, they carried their mission forward. Though slow, the progress they made inspired a lot of people. Even the Baptists, who had shunned the pioneers before, began to beg them to establish schools in their villages.

Thus, the unswerving love of the Jesuits for the frontier people led them to find an opening even in this unwantedness. They gave up their safe haven, and toiled, sweated and overcame all the obstacles and served even those who were against them. As a result they won the people’s hearts. Because of the selfless service of our pioneers, the Kohima Region today has been able to extend services to six states of Northeast India. Who then can deny that the pioneers really came, loved and laboured?

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Stany Coelho  
1920-1990



Liguory Castelinio  
1919-2005



Raymond D' Souza  
1937-

## THE THREE PIONEERS

## A Dream Unfolds

*A Brief History of the Kohima Jesuits*

*Martin Chubatoski Ao SJ*

**I**t takes just a little spark to burn the entire forest. The dream of serving God, the Father, under the Banner of the Cross, captivated the ambitious middle-aged man from the valley of Loyola. Inigo dreamt; and his dream and aspiration of serving Christ and His Church led to the foundation of the Society of Jesus, which surely has made a tremendous impact on the history of the whole world.

India is one of the many places where the companions of Ignatius ventured out into. St Francis Xavier was followed by many more Jesuits like John De Britto, Rudolf Acquaviva, Constance Lievens, Robert De Nobili and Hoffman, from Europe. The Jesuit presence made a very deep impact on the various parts of India spiritually, culturally, socially and intellectually.

Till recent times, Northeast India was little known to the people from other parts of India. This could be one of the reasons why the British and the American Protestant Missionaries easily converted the tribals to Christianity without encountering much resistance from the other major



**Strategic Planning for Chizami Mission.**

religions of India. By the time the Catholic missionaries set foot onto the soil of the Northeast, Protestantism had become the major religion of the whole region. Catholic missionaries began their work only in the year 1889 with the arrival of the Salvadorians, the first Catholic missionaries to open their mission centres. However, Catholic faith began to grow bit by bit; first in Meghalaya, and then in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram.

Nagaland is one of the strongholds of Protestantism. Christianity was first introduced in Nagaland in 1871 by the American Baptist Convention Missionaries. Education was one of the main contributions of the Baptist Missionaries. Catholic missionaries began their work only in the year 1948. The Lotha and the Angami were the first to become Catholics under the spiritual guidance of the Salesians of Don Bosco.

Inspired by the wonderful work of the Jesuits in the field of education all over the world, the Government of Nagaland, in 1960's, requested Archbishop Hubert Rosario to invite the Jesuits; and the Archbishop personally wrote a letter to the then Superior General, Fr Pedro Arrupe. He also put forth the various problems of insurgency in Nagaland and the influence of the Chinese government. This added more weight to his plea, and Fr Pedro Arrupe was deeply convinced of the need for the Jesuits to go to the North East.

Of all the Jesuit provinces in India, the Karnataka Province was the only one that accepted the challenge of taking up the mission. Fr J Cyril Pereira, the Provincial of Karnataka took great interest in the new mission. He personally paid a brief visit to Nagaland in 1969. Later in the same year, three dynamic missionaries Frs Ligoury Castelino and Stanislaus Coelho and Br Raymond D'Souza reached Nagaland on this new mission of Christ

The Jesuit pioneers found themselves unwanted when they first arrived at Kohima. They were looked down upon with contempt. Some even labelled them antichrists. Since the people of Kohima denied them



accommodation, they looked for a place outside Kohima. Then Jakhama, a village with a Catholic community of about 150 men, women and children, offered a small plot of land to the Jesuits below the National Highway 39.

Having established the Mother House in Jakhama, the Jesuits started venturing out to other parts of Nagaland. First they spread to the neighbouring villages; then in the persons of Fr Martin Goveas and Fr Liguory Castelino to the Tuensang district. Fr Goveas became the first priest and the first Jesuit to die in Nagaland-Manipur and is buried at Tuensang. From Tuensang, Fr Castelino came to the areas of Sangtams of Kiphire and then to the Pochuris of Meluri and the Chakhesangs. He went from place to place despite much opposition from some fanatics. Within a span of 12 years, the Jesuits had established seven schools in Chakhesang and Pochuri areas. Eventually, the Jesuits went on to the other Northeastern states as well. (Stanislaus Coelho SJ. *Even to the North East: The Story of Jesuits in Nagaland*)

Many Jesuits have followed the three pioneers and have continued the mission in the Northeast. The Nagaland Mission became Kohima Region in the year 1995. It is the dream of every Jesuit not only to continue but also to expand the mission to the areas where the need is the greatest.

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**Church construction under progress, Kezoma.**

## **A Walk in the Clouds**

*The Jesuit Novitiate at Shillong*

*- Gerald Myrthong SJ*

**F**or St Ignatius of Loyola, the spiritual and emotional growth of a person were very important. The Novitiate is the place where a young Jesuit is provided with ambience and assistance to deepen his spiritual life and to discern his vocation to the Jesuit way of life. The Jesuit Novitiate at Shillong has an interesting history. Fr Michael Marbaniang, the then Administrator of Shillong Archdiocese, offered a newly constructed building to be used as novitiate. Fr Boniface D'Souza was appointed as the first Superior and Novice Master; and Fr Wilfred Kharपुरi, the first administrator. On 2 June, 2002, six novices, namely, Anand, Damus, Dominic, Emanuel, Edmund and Cyril moved from Kalimpong to Pynthorumkhrah, Shillong. On Saturday 15 June, 2002, the novitiate was inaugurated by the Most Rev Bishop Dominic Jala, in the presence of Fr Gregory Coelho, the then Regional Superior of the Kohima Region.

With time, the Jesuits started to build temporary bamboo huts for novitiate at Mawshohroh. Mawshohroh is situated just on the outskirts of Shillong, the capital city of Meghalaya (Meghalaya literally means 'abode of clouds'). It is at an altitude of 4908 feet. On 18 February 2004, the novitiate was shifted to Mawshohroh; and those Bamboo huts were used as the novitiate till the completion of the new novitiate building.

The foundation stone for a new building for the novitiate was blessed by Fr James Grummer, the then Provincial of the Wisconsin Jesuit Province, on 26 March, 2004. The foundation stone was laid by Fr Jerome Francis, the then Provincial of Calcutta Jesuit Province, on 4 November, 2004. Today

the novitiate is known as 'Ka Rympei Arrupe Jesuit Novitiate'. Ka Rympei means 'the foundation'.

Ka Rympei Arrupe Jesuit Novitiate has been blessed with well qualified Jesuits to administer it. In the beginning with Fr Boniface D'Souza, then with Fr Gratian Carlo, and today with Fr Richard Jarain as the novice masters, the novitiate has grown as a formation house. Ka Rympei Arrupe Jesuit novitiate stands as a magnificent building. In summer, the pines, shola trees, shrubs, and grass make the whole campus look green and beautiful. One can get here the real experience of 'Scotland of the East', a name given to Shillong. Birds during the day and jackals in the evening fill the campus with a variety of lovely music. Two ponds have been constructed to provide water in the dry season; constant improvement in facilities is taking place here, the latest being the construction of a new football ground, a basketball court, and the addition of one more storey to the novitiate building.



**SIX BATCHES OF NOVICES IN BAMBOO BUILDINGS OF KA RYMPEI  
ARRUPE JESUIT NOVITIATE, SHILLONG.**

Ka Rympei Arrupe Jesuit Novitiate offers several opportunities for the novices to grow in charity and service in the spirit of the Society of Jesus. The long retreat is the most important of all the activities, when a Jesuit gets immersed more deeply in the spirit and charism of the Society. The begging experiment is another important event in the novitiate. It helps the novices to feel the real pinch of poverty and experience the life of the poor. The one month hospital experiment gives hands on experience in working with the sick. This helps the novices to grow in service and compassion. In addition to this, the Sunday ministry provides a platform for the novices to have a first-hand experience of preaching and catechising the children. Visiting families is another beautiful experience. All in all, the novitiate formation in Shillong can be termed as a life-changing experience.

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**THEN COMES THE NEW BUILDING OF KA RYMPEI ARRUPPE JESUIT  
NOVIATE, SHILLONG.**



## Yesterday Once More

*Rekindling the Ignatian Spirit of the MAGIS  
in all we are and all we do*

*- Gaibirei Phaomei SJ*

**O**n 18 April 2016, after the inauguration of the Jesuit Training College (JTC) building in Jakhama, Fr Aurel Bryss, a Belgian priest who came to visit the Kohima Region, delivered a beautiful message to all the Kohima Jesuits at the time of faith sharing. He told us not to give up our missionary zeal which we have received from our three great pioneers. The history of the Society of Jesus also tells us about many great missionaries. All these heroes of ours were infused with the spirit of the MAGIS, which they received from the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. "I will ask for an intimate knowledge of our Lord, who has become Man for me, that I may love Him more dearly and follow Him more closely." (Sp. Ex.104)

Our apostolate in the Kohima Region offers us ample opportunities to utilize this powerful weapon, MAGIS, be it in the field of education, or socio-economic work, or pastoral ministry. We cannot deny the marvellous service we do render in various fields. However, we still have a lot to learn from our great pioneers. Though they were few in number, their contribution was enormous. Here MAGIS does not mean workaholicism and getting ourselves worn out. The true meaning of the MAGIS lies in giving our best in whatever we do. MAGIS is not necessarily more in quantity but involves bringing qualitative praise to God in what we do.

A spirit of the MAGIS is all the more the need of our time because the world we live in has become more complex and challenging. People, on the

one hand, are becoming more liberal in their thinking and living; and, on the other hand, they are drawn more by money and power than by morals and gospel values. People are now well educated and gone are the days when people rushed to us, priests, for everything. Unless we are well equipped with solid learning and deep spirituality, our contribution will be minimal and we will have little credibility, and our presence might have no relevance.

Therefore, it is high time for us to wake up and change ourselves in order to change the world for the better. Let us not just boast of our past glory, but live out our present calling seriously. Let us also not be bogged down unnecessarily by the petty problems we face with our community members, companions, others and with ourselves. God has much bigger dreams for us. Oh come on, Kohimites! Let us follow the footsteps of Jesus, our Leader. At the end, we will marvel at what we have done.

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*Jesuits and the people of Nagaland attending the Mass celebrated by Fr Peter Hans Kolvenbach establishing Kohima Region.*

## AN OPEN INVITATION

- Goldenstar Dkhar SJ

Come and see the serene and exotic beauty,  
So ancient and so new;  
The mountains and valleys lie in queue,  
Eden Garden in perfect view.

The Northeast may not be as glorious as Taj Mahal,  
Nor as Red Fort,  
It is still embellished with glory unique and natural.

Throw your prejudices and stereotypes;  
Come not with your sophisticated mind;  
Come as a friend visiting a friend  
Not to judge what we lack  
But to appreciate what we are.

Call us not 'jungli' or 'uncultured';  
For, by Mother Nature are we borne and nurtured  
Keep us not as specimens on display;  
For we are not statues made just of clay

Come and see!  
The golden promise still lies unearthed;  
The proud declarations  
Are only dead leaves hanging in the wind;  
Come! Come and see!  
The beauty so serene and magnificent!  
The people so warm and benevolent!

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# Jesuit Education

*A Window to the World*

- P V Joseph Buar Sing SJ

**I**t was the ministry of education that actually made the Jesuits welcome in a hostile land like Nagaland. Earlier, Nagaland was hostile towards the Catholics because many Protestant missionaries painted the picture of Catholics as being anti-Christ. It was, therefore, education that initially helped the Jesuits pitch their tents in the hill regions of Nagaland and then in the whole of the Northeast India.

Since the inception of the Society of Jesus in 1540, the Jesuits have been pathfinders and trendsetters in the field of education. During Ignatius' days, education was very expensive and was available exclusively to the feudal lords and royal families; and Jesuit education was intended towards forming learned and virtuous priests. However, the Jesuits broadened their horizon; they are "the first ones who offered education in a public school system." (Francis P Xavier SJ. *Becoming All for All: Jesuit Global Contribution*)

In 1548, St Francis Xavier opened the first Jesuit College in India. It was St Paul's College in Goa. Today, Jesuits in India have 118 primary and middle schools, 149 high schools, 58 colleges, 22 technical institutes, 16 business administration institutes, and a university. Some of these colleges like St Xavier's in Kolkata and Mumbai, Loyola in Chennai, St Joseph's in Bangalore and XLRI in Jamshedpur, are listed among the "10 Best Colleges in India."

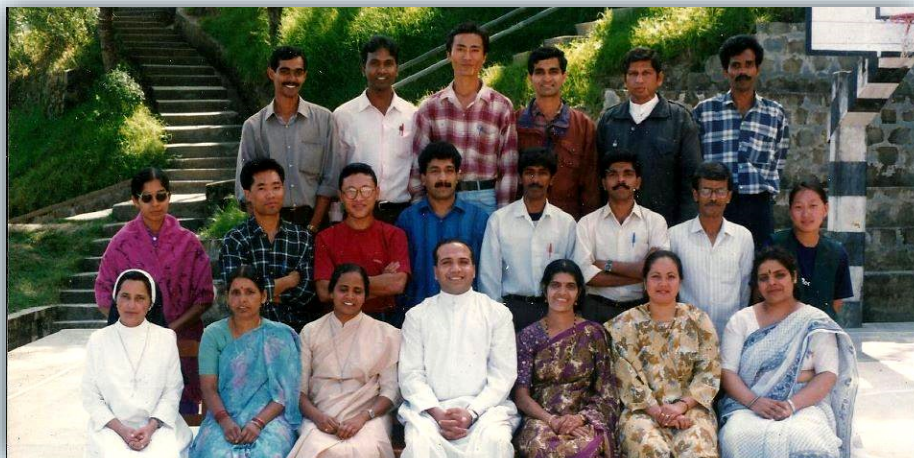


Staff of St Mary's School, Lozaphuhu.



In Nagaland, back in 1970's, the Catholic educational institutions faced great opposition from the non-Catholics. However, it was through the initiative and invitation of Archbishop Hubert Rosario SDB, Mr J B Jasokie, the then Education Minister of Nagaland, and many others, that the Jesuits came to Kohima in 1970. Barely one year had passed since their arrival when they had completed the buildings for Loyola School and for boarding houses for boys and girls, on the hill slope in Jakhama, 16 kms from Kohima. In 1971, Loyola school had 187 students. (Stanislaus Coelho SJ. *Even to the North East: The Story of Jesuits in Nagaland*)

The hallmark of Jesuit education is empowering the people, especially the marginalized. The Jesuits took a universal stand on preference for the poor during the General Congregation 32 (1968). This became the policy also for education. Driven by this spirit, Loyola School in Jakhama was opened to give education to all. Soon, the name and fame of Loyola spread far and wide in Nagaland and Manipur states. In 1975, it had over 600 students. Later, through the invitation of the Baptists and the Catholics, the Jesuits started schools in Phesama, Viswema, Khuzama, Kidima, (Angami Villages) and Meluri, Chizami, Thenyisumi, Kikruma, Zhamai and Lozaphuhu (Chakhesang villages). The common feature of these students hailing from



With the Staff of Loyola School Jakhama, 1997

different tribes was that for the most part they were the first generation to be educated from their respective clans or communities. Today the Jesuits of Kohima Region having a college, a teacher training institute and many schools, in the Seven Sisters States, except in Tripura (and in Mizoram where groundwork for another Jesuit college has just begun) continue to provide quality education to the economically disadvantaged people. Unfortunately, this “preferential option for the poor” has its own drawbacks. Because of low salaries dependent on low school fees to attract more poorer students, and of the location of schools in remote areas, many qualified teachers do not like to work in such Jesuit schools; and when they come, they work for only for short periods of time. This affects the academic progress of the students.

Jesuit schools “strive for excellence in every field.” One special characteristic of Jesuit education in the Region is upholding the value of manual work. Every Jesuit school has a special day in a week when the students do some manual work in the campus. (Unfortunately, this practice is not seen in many schools in India.) Besides through academic performance, excellence is sought also through active participation in school assemblies, skits, quiz, debates, recitation of poems, art and music, sports and games, etc. There are also eco-clubs to promote environmental awareness. Thus, education truly becomes the formation of the head (mind), the heart and the hand.



Early looks of Loyola School Jakhama

There are ample opportunities available for Jesuits to share Christian values and the Ignatian spirituality among the staff and the students in schools and hostels. The Jesuits have regular spiritual activities such as annual retreats, confessions and Masses for them. But are they enough? Can they do more, especially in sharing the Ignatian spirituality? It is not surprising that the students know mighty little about the Jesuits or/and St Ignatius of Loyola, after studying in our schools/colleges even for 10 years. It is unfortunate that even after 47 years of labouring in the region, the Jesuits seemingly have no identity of their own among the people. Creating an identity or brand is important; it is not so much to prove that one is better than the other; but Jesuits do have unique charism to offer, and it can be done only by openly and deliberately taking their heritage forth to people. They could begin it with their students and parishioners. Besides becoming potential leaders in every field of life, being good citizens of the world and of heaven, some of them can be inspired, invited and challenged to be religious, especially to be Jesuits.



Hostellers playing with a monkey at Loyola, Jakhama.

The ultimate goal of the Jesuits is, *finding God in everything and everything in God*. In serving others, especially the needy, the Jesuits find and serve God. It is the spirit of *magis*, ever more and ever better, that propels the Jesuits to move where there is greater need for the people and thus work “for the greater glory of God.” May the Jesuits in the Kohima Region continue to remain true to their call of seeking *magis* and this they may do especially by being committed to their ministry of education, “forming men and women for others.”

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## Headhunting and *Morungs*

*The Fascinating Culture of the Naga Hill People*

- *Avi Abraham Krocha SJ*

**A**fter we visit a new place, what we fondly reminisce is the culture of the people. According to Oxford English Dictionary, 'the term culture includes arts, customs, traditions, lifestyles and habits of the people.' The *Nagas* in Nagaland and Manipur are a culturally rich group. Within the Naga culture we see diverse sub-cultures which are based on the geographical settings and communities.

The tradition of headhunting, *morungs* and *shamshi* was once part and parcel of the Naga culture. The practice was common till early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The last case of headhunting was reported in 1969 by the '*pangshong*' (tattooed face) in the Konyak area. Historically it was practiced when the people of the hills had very little contact with the outside world. It was meant to safeguard the village from enemies, to get land issues sorted out, etc. The heads of the enemies were preserved as trophies. It was looked upon as a matter of prestige. Later, not only the heads of men but also those of buffaloes, deer, wild boars and other wild animals were cut off and hung in front of the houses. A man having such heads was looked upon as brave and meritorious. The spirit of warfare was seen in each man's blood. Zao Angami who has done an extensive study in this matter and has also made the short film, "Last of the Tattooed Head Hunters," says that the practice of headhunting was a symbol of masculinity. She also says that according to some anthropological studies, "the practice stemmed from the belief that the head contained the soul, or life force, which could be harnessed by capturing it. The head as the trophy



would enable the victor to gain some of the slain enemy's power and spirit."

The age-old practice of *morungs* or boys' dormitory, is well connected to that of headhunting because all decisions took place in the *morung*: 'whether to go for headhunting, fishing, or hunting wild animals.' It was a place where men taught the youth to grow up to be men. Women and children were strictly forbidden to enter the *morung*. Only males who had crossed the age of 15 were accepted as members. Arts, craftsmanship and other oral traditional knowledge and philosophy were taught by the elders. There, "they also learnt love songs, folk songs, war dances, reciting poetry, etc. These menfolk were the first ones to extend help to the needy villagers especially in times of death and accidents" (Bijim Konyak. *The History of Konyak Naga Village Organization: People and Their Culture*).

The same was true for the girls' dormitory. It was called '*shamshi*' in the Konyak language. It was a place for the girls to learn weaving, knitting, folk songs, dances, etc. According to the practice of the Konyak community, boys and girls who were engaged got to socialize and know one another at *shamshi*; the fiancé could visit the girl there. 'Lovers were allowed to freely mingle with each other' (Bijim Konyak).

But these practices have vanished at a slow pace ever since Christianity came into Naga areas. The *morung* houses though are still seen in some villages. Besides the practices of headhunting, *morungs* and *shamshi*, there is more to the Naga hill people. Dances and folk songs are performed even today at festivals. Each tribe or community seems to outdo the other. On such occasions, the young and the old dress up in their traditional attire.

One who yearns to learn or get a taste of Naga culture, must come to Nagaland, especially during Hornbill Festival in December at Kisama, the Naga Heritage Village, about 9 kms from Kohima. *Morungs* of various

tribes are built here. Communities come and showcase not only dances and songs but a variety of traditional food items as well. Abraham Lotha in his book, *The Raging Mithun*, points out that ‘the richness and uniqueness of the Naga Heritage can even be a medium to transmit the culture to younger generations. Likewise, the Hornbill Festival could be a perfect platform to prove that Nagas can live in peace and Harmony.’

OUR NEW PRIESTS!

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***Congrats Fr Anto!***



***Congrats Fr Jerry!***

## ARRUPEAN PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG JESUIT

‘AS ST IGNATIUS SAYS’

- W K Pradeep SJ



nce an interviewer asked Arrupe, “What portrait would you draw of the young Jesuit today?”

Arrupe responded: *First of all, he should be, as St Ignatius says, “over his childhood.” He should have had the experiences that every good young Catholic has in normal surroundings: family life, student life, and the like, and even, perhaps, the experience of being in love with a young girl; that is one adolescent experience that, you may be sure, one cannot have in the Society! In other respects, it is important that he be a man of commitment, who can take on a commitment to follow Jesus Christ for his entire life. And also he should be an idealistic man who has the desire to do something great for the Church and for the world. Finally, he is “a man for others”.*

This spontaneous response of Arrupe, surely has its roots in the spirit of Ignatius and of the Society of Jesus. No wonder Arrupe is referred to as the second Ignatius. Their similarities lie not only in their origin, but also in their worldview.

When admitting anyone to the Society of Jesus, Ignatius had clear cut criteria. He says in the *Constitutions* that the Society’s ardent zeal ‘reaches out to every kind of person, to provide spiritual assistance in the Lord to all, helping them on the road to a blessed eternity. But when it comes to admitting anyone to membership, *the Society limits the choice* (my italics), to those who can contribute to the attainment of its objective’ [*Const 163*]. It means Ignatius wants only a certain kind of men to be Jesuits, and Arrupe clearly understood it. Now, we reflect on *Arrupe’s portrait of a young Jesuit*, phrase by phrase, exploring how it is rooted deep in Ignatian

young Jesuit, phrase by phrase, exploring how it is rooted deep in Ignatian treasury: *Spiritual Exercises [SpEx]*, *Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus [FI]*, *the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus [Const]* and Ignatius' autobiography *Testament & Testimony [T&T]*.

### 1. He should be “over his childhood.”

Speaking about the criteria for admission into the Society, in *Part 1, Chapter 2* of the *Constitutions*, Ignatius specifies the age to be ‘more than fourteen years for the first probation, and more than twenty-five for profession’ [*Const 160*]. The person should ‘not be too young in age, nor too far advanced’ [*Const 185*]. His specifying of age emphasizes the importance of determination and endurance, supposedly a characteristic of an adult, lacking which one may conjecture that the candidate will be of little use in the Society’s apostolate. Ignatius is aware that the mission God has assigned to the Society is such that only a person with sufficient maturity could commit himself to it.

### 2. Catholic

Ignatius does not mention this aspect of a candidate perhaps because he lived in an all-Catholic, or at least Christian, world. Nevertheless, he refuses admission to anyone who has ‘left the Church, by denying the faith, or holding erroneous opinions in its regard so as to incur censure by public sentence; having distanced oneself from Church unity as a schismatic’ [*Const 165*]. This prerequisite has a spiritual touch in the *Spiritual Exercises*; he even prescribes the *rules for thinking, judging, and feeling with the Church [SpEx 352-370]*.

### 3. Family

Celibacy is not only a *grace* to be able to relate with the whole humanity, but is also a *sacrifice* of one’s right to expression of love within a family bond. Obviously, one cannot sacrifice what he does not have. Hence, sacrifice here implies one already has an experience of love of family; family may very well be parents and siblings, or guardians, cousins etc. After all, it is the love experienced in the family that the person will be able to share with the people he would serve. However, Ignatius points out that

‘noble lineage, wealth, reputation and the like, is not proper to oneself, nor is it in any way necessary; but it is an added qualification in those who are already otherwise suited, for then there is greater edification’ [*Const 161*].

#### 4. Student

Intellectual ministry is a hallmark of the Society. Ignatius wanted people of high competence to be Jesuits. He himself sat with kindergarten children at the age of thirty-three to learn Latin, and, of course, went on to secure a Master’s degree. Some of the qualities he expects of the candidates are ‘sound doctrine or capacity to learn, prudence in practical affairs, or evident ability to acquire it, a quick grasp, and a firm hold on what is picked up’ [*Const 154-155*]. Ignatius’ concern over this was expressed even before the *Constitutions* were written; the *Formula of the Institute* (1550) had emphasized that the candidates could be admitted only ‘after giving evidence of progress in virtue and learning’ [*FI 8*].

#### 5. In love with a young girl

Ignatius describes how he was in love with a ‘lady’ and performed chivalrous deeds to win her over [*T&T 6*]. But he later sublimated his love for the worldly lady into love for the Heavenly Lady. On the other hand, I have not come across any anecdote about Arrupe’s love affair; but, by the time he joined the Society at twenty, he must have been in love with a girl as a boy of that age would have. So he stresses that falling in love with a girl is part of normal growth. In fact, the sacrifice one makes with regard to conjugal love makes a greater difference in the context of such a preceding experience.

#### 6. one cannot have in the Society!

Having said that the experience of being in love with a young girl is a healthy one, Arrupe proceeds to clarify that such an experience cannot be had after entering the Society. This is founded on our vow of chastity/celibacy. In the *Formula of the Institute* of the 1540, Ignatius had mentioned only the vow of chastity; poverty and obedience were included only in the *Formula of the Institute* of 1950 [*FI 1*]. It indicates that Ignatius



foresaw that chastity/celibacy was a primary requisite of our Institute. In the *Constitutions*, in *Part 2*, his list of impediments to join the Society, includes being *bound by marriage* [Const 217]. *Part 6* gives Ignatius' classical description of chastity: '*it calls for an unambiguous fidelity by our striving to be single-hearted like the angels, wholly limpid in soul and body*' [Const 547].

### **7. Commitment to follow Jesus Christ for entire life**

One becomes a Jesuit not by joining *any* society, but by joining the Society of *Jesus*. After all, one enlists in the cause of God under the standard of the Cross, 'to be distinguished by the name of Jesus' [FI 1]. Jesus is the core and foundation of the Society, just as of the *Spiritual Exercises* [SpEx 104]. So one does not join the Society just for its own sake, but to follow Jesus.

Ignatius does not believe in half-heartedness. His commitment whether to the earthly king or to the Heavenly King, was always *total*. On conversion, he offered himself *completely* to the service of Christ, the King. And he expects the same from Jesuits. While all Orders and Congregations in the Church have only a temporary vow of poverty, chastity and obedience before their final profession, Ignatius insists that Jesuits take a *perpetual* vow signifying that Jesuits do not make a tentative and provisional commitment, but a *wholehearted and perpetual* one – for entire life.

### **8. Desire to do something great for the Church and for the world.**

This is the mission of the Society: 'to serve the Lord alone and his bride the Church under the Roman Pontiff' [FI 1]. The Jesuit takes a special vow of obedience to the Pope, in order to be sent anywhere in the world: 'whether it be among the Turks or others who do not share our convictions, even as far as India, or to any heretics and schismatics, or even the faithful themselves' [FI 3]. Ignatius wants a Jesuit to be anything and everything for the glory of God. This is accomplished by serving the Church and the world. As Vatican II says, 'the Church' implies all people of good will. Moreover, the word 'world' denotes the whole universe with all its elements, planets, stars, plants, birds and animals. It is ultimately *building relation with the human, the cosmos and the Divine* (GC35. D3 No18-36).

## 9. “a man for others”

This is a typical Arrupean definition of a Jesuit. For Ignatius, as for Arrupe, no Jesuit is meant for himself, but for others. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius does not stop with ‘saving one’s own soul’; he leads the retreatant ultimately to serve the whole humanity. Ours is not a contemplative order, rather an apostolic one, i.e., one becomes a Jesuit, not for one’s own sanctification, but to serve. That is why a Jesuit is a *contemplative in action*. Through the *Contemplation to Attain Love*, one reaches the summit of the Spiritual Exercises, by ‘finding God in all things, and all things in God’; ‘all things’ entail ‘all of humanity and cosmos’.

### Conclusion

Both Ignatius and Arrupe were men rooted deeply in the Heart of Christ. Both had the same charisma and vision. So, both portray the young Jesuit in the same fashion. Arrupe read ‘the sign of the times,’ but lived the spirit of St Ignatius - the spirit that every candidate and member of the Society of Jesus must live; the spirit was best expressed in his first interview after becoming the Superior General. A journalist asked Arrupe how he would follow the footsteps of St Ignatius. He replied, “I do not follow Ignatius, the General; but I would take inspiration from Ignatius, the Founder.”

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**Jesuit Companionship!** During the institution of Kohima Region in 1995, with Fr Peter Hans Kolvenbach, the then Superior General of the Society of Jesus.

# THE KOHIMA MISSION JOURNEY

- Norbert Kharumuid SJ

**B**orn from the womb of nature,  
 Grown up in the wild,  
 Struggling to live for the better,  
 Deep in the woods,  
 There are souls to be saved,  
 So not delay  
 The longing for human touch  
 This is our mission journey  
 Through the lovely hills and valleys  
 Lush green and colourful dresses  
 Look attractive but contain a lot of tests.  
 The destination seems near,  
 But the path is so long and unclear.  
 With the curls of the hills and the risky turns  
 Never is there a straight road,  
 Yet! Yes, yet we march on, coz'  
 There are things to be achieved  
 To let them know the gracious God

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*Meet you next with Scholaviews - 4 in July 2017!*