

News and Views

Newsletter of the Divine Providence Province



Let us Thank, Appreciate and Celebrate

"I did not change the whole world but I changed the world for a few."

In 1997, St. John Paul II established the special Day of Consecrated Life to coincide with the Feast of the Presentation of the Child Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem (February 2nd). The Pope gave three reasons for his selection of February 2nd as a special day for religious women and men: first, to praise and thank the Lord for the gift of consecrated life; second, to promote the knowledge and appreciation of consecrated women and men by all People of God; and third, to invite all those who have dedicated their life to the cause of the Gospel to celebrate the wonderful ways the Lord has worked through them.

Along with mother Church we thank the Lord as the Divine Providence Province for all the graces we received throughout these years, especially the gift of vocations, hundreds of young men saying "Yes" to follow and serve the Lord in and through the Guanellian Charism and Spirit.

Secondly the Presentation of the Lord invites all of us to appreciate and to assert who we are. What is our identity? In other words we must speak boldly about the goodness of religious life. At times along with the tides of competitive society, people may make a comparison of our religious life with other walks of life and we may fall prey to their calculations saying what is so special in this life? But we all know deep down that this life is the prototype of the heavenly table, the continuation of the early Christian community, the antidote to the divisive world, the real globalization, we go where the Lord sends us and still we own people as our children and others own us as their fathers and mothers. We left one family but we are part of many families around the world.

Thirdly it is a moment of celebration and sharing with others what the Lord has done in and through me. I did not change the whole world, but I changed the world of at least a few people, I was the eye for the blind, I was the hand and leg for the crippled, I was the mind for the intellectually disabled.

At this juncture we thank the Lord in a special way for the special grace that has been given to our confrere. Bro. Praveen, who met with a road accident, has been freed of all charges. We appreciate all those who involved themselves in this process and accompanied our confrere.

Let us celebrate the sacerdotal ordination of eight confreres on February 11th and their first Eucharistic celebrations in the following days. We thank and appreciate all the formators and in a special way the formation team of DGMS for their accompaniment and stewardship in the final phase of their preparation.

Let us welcome and celebrate the presence of the DSMP superiors who are on their Canonical Visit. Let us keep them in our prayers and sustain them.

Fr. Ronald J, SdC

Provincial Superior

February Calendar of Fr. Provincial

- 1 **Dindugal:** Flag Hoisting - St. Antony's Parish
- 2 **Interviews with Diaconal Candidates**
- 3 **Irupukurichi:** Marriage of Fr. Paul Arockiaraj's Brother
- 6 **Chennai:** Marriage of Sr. Pushpa's Niece

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"...a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."

Luke 2,32

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Pain is Inevitable; Suffering is Optional

By Fr. Amal, SdC

When human suffering is understood in its deepest meaning, it ceases to be something that is experienced in a passive manner. Rather, one becomes free to meet suffering with courage, seeing it as an opportunity for active and positive collaboration in the work of human redemption. Suffering, whether physical, spiritual or psychological, is often an opportunity when many question the existence of God, or at the very least whom this God is who allows suffering, in particular the suffering of the innocent.

This year we celebrate the 27th World Day of the Sick on February 11th. In 1993, Pope John Paul II instituted this annual commemoration as a way to bring compassion and greater attention to the sufferings of humanity, as well as the mystery of suffering itself. Don't waste your suffering, Feel fortunate to suffer, Offer it up, I will pray together with you for the redemption of humanity, are all words of St. John Paul II whenever he encountered the sick and suffering.

Charles Spurgeon once said, "Health is a gift from God, but sickness is a gift greater still." Life is a gift from God. St. Paul asks: "What do you have that you did not receive?" (1 Cor 4:7). Precisely because it is a gift, human life cannot be reduced to a personal possession or private property, especially in the light of medical and biotechnological advances that could tempt us to manipulate the "tree of life" (cf. Gen 3:24). God had an eternal purpose in allowing His own Son to suffer. St. Paul taught that this purpose was that we might understand and know God's wisdom and love through His plan to redeem us through the death of His Son. Therefore, if God has allowed even His own Son to suffer to fulfill His eternal purpose, then we must also trust that He is working out His eternal purpose in us in the midst of our suffering. God may use our suffering to redeem someone else's life by our testimony and example. But, how can we be sure that something good will come of our suffering? St. Paul taught, "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28). Note that Paul does not say that all things that happen to us are good, but that God takes all things and works them together for good in order to fulfill His eternal purpose. There is a story in the Gospel about Jesus walking along

with his disciples and they see a man begging who was born blind. The disciples ask Jesus, "whose fault is it - this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus says it's not anyone's 'fault' but rather the man is born blind for the glory of God. The apostle Paul tells the Corinthian church that God's power is made perfect in our weakness. When St. John Paul II once visited the sick people he said, "I am here with you to pray with you for all those who trust in your prayers." In its brokenness the human body still reveals itself as a call to make a gift of ourselves in love.

Whenever St. John Paul II had a special intention he went to the sick saying to them, "I am entrusting the Church to you," because in their weakness they have power. Jesus didn't suffer so you wouldn't have to, but Jesus suffered that you will know how to suffer. The Church is not merely a collection of Christians. It is a living instrument of redemption- an extension



of Jesus Christ throughout time and space. He continues His salvific work through each member of His body. When a person understands this, he sees that the idea of "offering it up" is a calling to participate in the salvation of the world.

Suffering is also a place of purification. St. Thomas Aquinas in one of his conferences said, "Whoever wishes to live perfectly should do nothing but disdain what Christ disdained on the cross and desire what He desired, for the cross exemplifies every virtue." In suffering we learn humility, obedience, how to love and be patient as Jesus exemplified on the cross.

You've probably heard the saying, "Pain is inevitable; suffering is optional." Whether we cry or smile the pain does not change but the suffering does. When we accept our pain without resisting it and offer it as a gift, the pain becomes a means of salvation for us and for the whole world.

Boys Home Sports Meet

CUDDALORE - As the great Tamil poet Bharathi says, "Young chaps must be given space to play in childhood," boys of Don Guanella Boys Home conducted sports meet on November 27th. Every boy contributed his utmost support to his team. The real spirit of the boys was apparent during the sports meet; the unadulterated joy on the faces of the students when they won the events was noticeable. All the fathers and chief guests encouraged the students to bring out their various



talents. Sr. Josephine, DSMP; Fr. Mathias and GLM member Mr. Bosco were the judges for all the events. The sports meet came to an end by announcing the winners.

A New Beginning

CHENNAI - On January 4th, all the brothers of Don Guanella Major Seminary returned after their Christmas vacation. It is the custom of the House to begin the New Year with High Mass celebrated by the Provincial Superior. On January 5th Fr. Ronald, Provincial Superior, presided over the Mass and imparted his blessings to be prosperous in the holy ministry of the Lord. Fr. Samson



took the opportunity to thank the Provincial for his support and prayers for the community. He also wished every one God's choicest blessings and gifts in the days to come.

Pongal Traditions Shared

KULITHURAI-Once each year we express our gratitude for the season of harvest that is boon for the farmers. That evening the celebration began at the substation Kattuvilai. People showed their gratitude by offering cooked rice to the Almighty and distributing it among



the people. Though we live in urban areas we celebrated with the same enthusiasm. In a time of video games and gadgets we have almost forgotten traditional games, in order to keep the games alive, we conducted traditional games at Cherukol

Karumputhottam parish and awarded the winners.

Final Preparations

CHENNAI - As part of their formation program, the brothers from Don Guanella Major Seminary who are preparing themselves for Final Profession participated



in a course for final vows preparation organized at Don Bosco Renewal Centre, Bannerghatta, Bangalore January 6th-25th. In this time of intensive preparation for perpetual vows, this course really helped them prepare on a deeper level. The content of the course included consecrated life, community life, prayer, discernment, psycho-sexual integration & celibacy, and group counseling. The information from the sessions and the fraternal moments with participants from the Salesian congregation fostered an atmosphere to deepen their knowledge about religious life and motivated them to be more committed to this way of life.

Pongal Feast and Paddy Harvest

CUDDALORE - A remarkable Pongal celebration was celebrated including paddy harvesting on January 11th at St. Joseph's Seminary. It was truly a thanksgiving feast as we reaped the paddy and celebrated the Tamilan's feast. The St. Joseph's Seminary confreres and staff toiled to gather the harvest from the fields. Holy Mass



was also celebrated for the welfare of all the farmers in Tamilnadu. We shared the precious Pongal feast with one another, increasing the joy and excitement. Afterwards, everyone tasted sugarcane and entered the fields to collect the paddy bundles one by one. As Jesus says, "The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few," was well understood on that day. By the grace of God we collected about 40 sacks of rice for the pantry. We truly thanked the Lord for His abundant blessings and graces showered upon us.

Second Plenary Council Meeting

CHENNAI - The second plenary Council meeting of the Divine Providence Province took place at the provincialate house from January 11 - 13th. Fr.



Satheesh and Fr. Dennis Weber joined the meeting from the US. It was a moment of prayer, fraternity and discernment. The agenda and the schedule was prepared in advance by the provincial secretary and sent

to the council members. The meeting gave the council the opportunity to look at the future of the province from different aspects through the prism of the XXth General Chapter. The council appreciated the hard work of the individual communities and confreres and concluded on a note of hope and surrender to the Lord.

Dance Competition

KULITHURAI - The dance competition held in the parish is not just about trophies. It is highly rewarding and a worthwhile activity to make youth take part in the liturgy. Our neighboring parish Swamiyarmadam celebrated their annual feast, and on the 8th day of the feast the youth of the parish conducted dance competition. Our youth participated and won first prize, RS 10000. To double their joy we arranged a tour to Ramesahwaram during Pongal holidays.



Month Begins with Blessings

CHENNAI - The Tamil festival of harvest, Pongal, was celebrated at Don Guanella Special School on January 12th infused with Indian culture and tradition. On this special day, the entire DGSS community celebrated Pongal by sharing Indian traditions. The children participated in the program with their parents. The staff and children dressed up in dhoti and saree creating a complete festive mood on campus. The celebration began with traditional games and competitions for the parents. Then some traditional games like pot breaking, musical chairs and Rongoli competition were



organized for the children. Traditional dances were performed and singing resounded. The program ended with a thanksgiving prayer. God, nature and all those who helped organize the festive were recognized and thanked in a meaningful way.

Pongal Celebration

MYSORE - A long awaited celebration at the evening school took place on January 14th to encourage school going children who frequent Don Guanella Evening School in Harohalli. All the villagers and the panchayat leaders were invited for this simple New Year



and Pongal celebration. The program began with a prayer song and followed by a variety of cultural and traditional amusements presented by the children. The celebration was really an opportunity for them to exhibit their talents. Parents were happy to see their kids performing dances, skits and singing. To encourage the children, gifts were distributed. Fathers were honored with a small gift for their service. The teachers who help the kids in their academic career were also honored. The Pongal feast ended with a dance performance by the brothers and evening school kids.

A Traditional Pongal Feast

CHENNAI - On January 15th Don Guanella Evening



School celebrated Pongal, a festival that is very popular in Tamil culture. This harvest festival unites all people. The teachers prepared them to celebrate the Pongal with traditional cultural programs. The students were very happy in their colorful dresses of Tamil Culture and eager to express their talents in celebration of Pongal. All the tradition preparations were made: colorful Kolam, the decorated pot for the pongal meal and sugarcane sticks beside the pot brought forth the neutrality of the festival. Fr. Ronald, Provincial Superior, Dn. Paul Dhinakaran and the chief guest Fr. Adaikalam were presented for the event. Fr. Ronald began with a prayer, blessed the Pongal meal and it was distributed to all in a traditional way. The cultural programs of the children were performed very well, gladdening everyone's heart. Prizes were distributed by Fr. Adaikalam to the winners of the event. His speech was very inspiring and the event was ended with a final prayer.

Parish Celebrates Pongal

VADAPATTI - On January 15th the Pongal feast was celebrated at St. John de Britto Church. That morning the Pongal was cooked by the parishioners and the Pongal ceremony was blessed by Fr. Vanathaiyan SdC,



and Pongal holy Mass was celebrated. Pongal special games were played for everyone on the parish campus, many people actively participated. The whole event went well with games, yoga, and various competitions for the various age groups of people. Prizes were distributed for the winners of the games. The chief guest of the program was Fr. S. Periya Nayagam, SdC the parish priest and Mr. Ignatius. The following day Pongal was celebrated at St. Paul's Boys Home, Krishnaperi. Pongal Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. Vanathaiyan SdC in the morning and then according to class, the games were conducted for the boys. The boys very actively and enthusiastically played all the games. At the end Fr. J. David, SdC, Director, distributed prize to the students. The boys were encouraged and elated by the programs.

Festival of Farmers

CHENNAI - The month of January remains ever-special and unique for many, in particular for farmers because it is the month where the state gratefully thanks



all the farmers. It is the day of celebration of harvest known as Pongal in Tamilnadu. This is the three-day celebration where each day has its significance and history to be felicitated. On January 17th, Don Guanella Major Seminary celebrated the feast by cooking Pongal, and gratefully recalling the hard work done by the farmers who cultivate crops for the nation. The sweet Pongal is a symbol of happiness to sustain life and sugar cane to have a life of success. The Holy Eucharist was celebrated by Fr. Samson and he highlighted the importance of Pongal. He invited the brothers to gratefully thank the farmers and pray for them for their support and care towards the world population. During the homily Dn. C. Jesu Doss highlighted the importance and hard work of farmers and urged everyone not to forget the farmers after the celebration of Pongal but to remember and pray for them always. The day continued by playing traditional games of the local culture.

Treasurers Meeting

CHENNAI - The Divine Providence Province organized a meeting for all the treasurers led by Fr. Ronald, Provincial Superior; Fr. Dennis Weber, Provincial Treasurer; and Fr. Francis, Treasurer In-charge of India. Nineteen members participated. The first day began with a prayer service animated by Fr. Bernandes and Fr. Arulraj. Fr. Francis welcomed the gathering with his introductory message. Fr. Ronald made his presentation on the aspect of economy in the XXth General Chapter. After this session, Fr. Francis invited Mr. Charles (Province Accountant) to share the details of the audit



and of the government dealings. Fr. Francis welcomed Fr. Dennis Weber for the third session in which he invited all the confreres to recite the prayer to St. Louis Guanella. His talk was on the topic, "The spirituality of Don Guanella and the office of the Treasurer". Fr. Xavier Packiam, Sdb, the Provincial Treasurer of Salesian Province, Chennai; presented the topic, "Governance and Financial Management". He also gave a quick glance at: TDS (Tax Deducted at source), EPF (Employees Provident Fund organization), ESI (Employees state Insurance) and GST (Goods and Services Tax). The final session was the submission of budgets from each community. Each community's treasurer discussed their



annual budget for the 2019-2020 academic year with the Provincial and the councilors. Fr. Ronald thanked the DGMS community for their delicious food, fellowship, kind hospitality and their generous treatment for the treasurers meeting. The meeting ended with a short prayer.

Ministry Gives Bread and the Lord

DINDIGUL - A new ministry of giving bread and the Lord to the poor, elderly & differently-abled personalities began on January 20th at Guanella Illam, Kallathupatti. The ministry of giving a midday meal on Sundays for the poor began with fifteen people from the area irrespective of religion. People were given space to spend time with one another and share joyous moments with each other. A few moments of prayer and worship was conducted by Fr. Lawrence. The meal was offered by a volunteer. The people were very happy and went home satisfied.

Making Merry

CHENNAI - In an era when everyone feels bound to compete for survival, sometimes it is easy to forget that we are with fellow companions.

Amidst a tight schedule the DGSS staff, students and parents allotted January 23rd as a day for the amusement of the special children, taking them to a nearby theater for a film screening. The event was organized by the of DGSS director, Fr. S. A. Lourduraj. It was a time of making melody to the children.



Flag Hoisting

Vadapatti - In the evening on January 25th St. John de Britto Church feast began. The main celebrant of the ceremony was Rev. Dr. Fr. J. Jaya Raj V.G of the Archdiocese of Madurai. He hoisted the flag of St. John de Britto, followed by the celebration of Mass



for the first day of the novena. The concelebrants were Fr. S. Periyannayaga Samy, SdC; Fr. J. David, SdC and Fr. Vanathaiyan, SdC. The parishioners happily and actively participated in holy Mass. After Mass, Fr. J. Jaya Raj released the Novena Book and Parish Family Card. It was a remarkable and joyous day because it was the first year of the parish feast. By the grace of God and the cooperation of the parishioners the event was a success.

Scholastic Gathering

CUDDALORE - St. Joseph's Seminary held a scholastic fraternal gathering on January 25th. The event was organized under the topic "Mercy and Compassion" by Fr. Vincent, SdC. Pondy- Cuddalore Minor Seminarians, SultanPet diocesan minor seminarians and St. Joseph's Seminary students participated in the event. The spiritual session nurtured the hearts of the young chaps to march forward in their call. The sacrament of reconciliation was available to help the seminarians to become pure and holy.

After the tea break, there was a friendly volleyball match.

Therefore, this gathering boosted the seminarians both spiritually as well as physically.



Annual GLM Meeting

CHENNAI - The Annual Meeting for the Guanellian Lay Movement and Guanellian Cooperators was held at Don Guanella Major Seminary on January 26th-27th.



There were 40 participants from all over the Indian Communities. The program included sessions to ignite the participants to become more involved in the service of God through the Congregation of the Servants of Charity. The program included talks by Frs. Ronald, Adaikalam, Benson, Francis and Samson. It was a well organized meeting where everyone was given a chance to share the works they carry out in the different states of India and also given input to further the work for the ministry of God. After the meeting all the participants joyfully went home ready to mobilize their ministry.

Traditions of India Honored



CUDDALORE - St. Joseph's Evening School celebrated the Pongal feast and Republic day on January 26th. Children from four different branches gathered for the fruitful and memorable event. All the children had very joyful moments throughout the day. There were around 120 together with the children, teachers and parents. The national flag was hoisted by Fr. Mathias, SdC, chief



guest of the day. Afterwards he encouraged the children to always be happy, kind hearted and talented persons in their accomplishments and to aim for a bright future. Then the Pongal Celebration started. Games and sports were organized for the students, teachers and parents like pot breaking, rangoli for parents, musical chairs and many other competitions for the children. Then children from each branch presented their programs. Fr. Mathias, Fr. Anandhan and Fr. Amalraj distributed gifts for all the ninety students. Then they also distributed prizes for the winners of different competitions. Finally, Fr. Arockia Raj, the in charge for the evening school thanked the gathering and encouraged the new branch students and teachers to make use of the opportunity for a better future. At the end, everyone enjoyed the sweet

pongal, Sugarcane, tea and puffs. Thus the day went on happily and successfully.

Honoring the Republic

CHENNAI - Being citizens of India, every Indian takes pride in recalling the struggle that India endured to become a free and democratic nation. On January 26th, Fr. Samson, the superior, hoisted the national flag

and gave a message recalling the soldiers who worked for the nation. There was a parade organized by Br. Rajesh, Third-Year Theology student. The event also included patriotic songs and messages.

India and Alumni

CUDDALORE - On the great celebration of Republic day in India, Don Guanella Boys Home also celebrated Alumni day, with 29 former students participating. This is a day in which the history of DGBH was reviewed and refreshed. It is a meeting of the past and present for the future. The program was organized by Fr. Peter Sebastian, the superior and director, with the community and it was presided over by Mr. Durairaj, the HOD. The testimony by the Alumni was mind-



blowing and inspiring. The key points were: renewal of the relationship among the alumni; being grateful to the institute and memories imprinted on the minds of the Alumni. The younger brothers (the present students) honored their elder brothers with their performances. The Alumni inspired the younger ones with their eye-opening speeches. Finally the Alumni proved that they are not only made of words but also of actions by their generous hands.

Sisters Renew Vows

LAKE ZURICH - On the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, the Daughters of St. Mary of Providence and Servants of Charity renewed their vows. It was a beautiful way for the sisters to bring the gift of themselves to the Newborn King. Fr. Fortuanto celebrated Mass at Mt. St. Joseph in Lake Zurich. A modest luncheon was served after Mass.



on January 23rd in Dexter. The room was nearly full of people excited to bid quarters for their chance to win merchandise from the vendors on hand as well as mystery prizes. These women dedicate many hours preparing by procuring sponsors, prizes and organizing the bidding paddles and balls. Attendees always have a great time whether they win items or not.



Quartermania

CHELSEA - The Dexter Ladies Auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus host an exciting fundraiser several times a year for St. Louis Center. The most recent event was held

Calendar

February Calendar of Events

- 2 **Presentation of the Lord; World Day of Consecrated Life**
Vadapatti: Car Procession and Annadhanam - St. John de Britto Church
- 4 **Anniversary of the Death of Mother Marcellina Bosatta (1934)**
Vadapatti: Parish Feast Day - St. John de Britto Church
- 8 **Chelsea:** Pasta Dinner with the Priests
- 9 **Chelsea:** Vocational Retreat for Boys
Grass Lake: Prayer and Pizza Girls' Group
Krishnaperi: Birthday of Kanaka Raj
- 11 **Our Lady of Lourdes; World Day of the Sick**
Vadapatti: Blessing of the Sick - St. John de Britto Church
- 12 **Grass Lake:** Mother of Divine Providence Day- PUSJ
- 14 **Krishnaperi:** Birthday of Ramar and Lakshmanan
- 19 **Grass Lake:** Monthly St. Joseph Day at PUSJ
- 20 **Chelsea:** Securing the Future for Special Needs Families Seminar - SLC
- 22 **The Chair of St. Peter, Apostle**
- 23 **Krishnaperi:** Veeramamunivar High School Annual Tour for students
- 25 **Annointing of the Sick of Blessed Clare Bosatta (1887)**
- 26 **Krishnaperi:** Birthday of Sankareswaran

Best Wishes and Prayers to:

- 1 **Fr. George:** birthday
- 2 **Fr. Kannikai Raj:** feast day
- 4 **Fr. John Paul Britto, Fr. T. Anandhan, Fr. Arul, Nov. Arul Pandian R.:** feast day
- 10 **Fr. Kuriakose A.:** birthday
- 11 **Fr. Anthony Lourduraj S., Fr. Lourduraj C.:** feast day
- 12 **Fr. Soosai Rathinam:** ordination day
- 14 **Fr. Amalorpavanathan R.:** birthday
- 15 **Fr. Silvio DeNard:** birthday
- 18 **Bro. Juvie O. Ortea:** birthday
- 19 **Fr. Sagayaraj S.:** birthday
- 24 **Fr. Chandra Nevis, Fr. Aputharaj J.:** birthday
- 25 **Fr. Francis S.:** birthday
- 26 **Bro. Gnana Vijay:** birthday

Have questions or comments about this newsletter? Email the Communications and Community Relations Office at: kellyf@stlouiscenter.org