

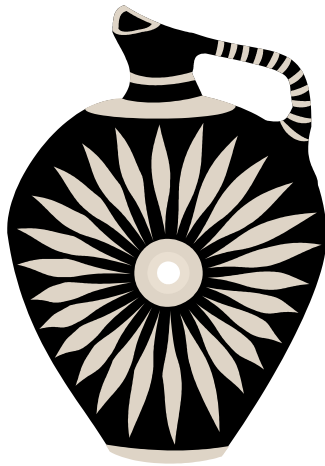


GUYJEST

Guyana Jesuit Newsletter, September 2006.

Congratulations Fr Peter Britt-Compton !

70 years in the Society.



Regional Superior 'hangs out' with the younger ones.....

REGIONAL SUPERIOR'S PROGRAMME

23-25 August	Trinidad
25-27 August	Barbados
28-1 September	London (020 7493 7811)
1-9 September	Johannesburg (011 618 1390)
9-16 September	Cape Town (021 685 3465)
17-19 September	London (020 7499 0285)
19-1 October	Burnley UK (01282 427269)

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

➤ The POPE has appointed:

Fr. Gregory O'Kelly (65) Auxiliary Bishop of Adelaide, Australia.

Fr. Federico Lombardi, (64) Director of the Press Room of the Holy See.

➤ The French Jesuit Review **ETUDES** celebrates 150 years of its existence (1856-2006) Bravo! It's old subtitle was "OF GENERAL INTEREST". Yes, it discussed and continues to discuss history, theology, philosophy, political theory, literature, media...

➤ Transfers:

- **Marlon Innis** to Heythrop College, UK for theology.
- **Ronald Fernandez** to Heythrop College, UK for theology.
- **Raphael Gonsalves** to London College of Communication.
- **Felician (Medino) Abraham** to study in Brazil

Please Note: send all your news items on or before 28th of every month.

➤ Regional Superior....

While I am away from Guyana, **Fr Bob Barrow** will be Acting Regional Superior. In my absence **Fr Malcolm Rodrigues** will be Acting Superior of the Brickdam community in particular. Please refer any routine matters of government to them in my absence. Thanks to both Bob and Malcolm for being willing to take on these extra responsibilities.

During the time that I am away I will be regularly intercepting e-mails through the regsupguy@gmail.com address, so feel free to drop me a line.

- We give thanks that Fr Harold Wong has returned safely from his journey to London and Canada.
- Please remember in your prayers Fr Joe Dias who started his long return to Bombay.

NEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITIES...

From St. Pius..

It still being the holiday month, with schools only re-opening tomorrow, there was a lull in Church activities. However one of our senior altar-servers, was chosen to be an Assistant Presiding Officer, at our recent Regional and General Elections, and there were some challenges. He had to even take the decision not to allow someone to vote, whose face did not match the photograph against his name on the list. He was scared. During the coming week, we begin Baptism classes for parents, RCIA classes for adults, Bible classes at Holy Spirit and St Pius parishioners and preparations for our Parish BBQ and Mini Fair. Hope you and all readers of Guyjest, will support us on Oct.28th esp., Fr. Wong!. Keep the day free. Will send you more news each month. Bye now.

Fr Tony

From Berbice: Guyana Human Development Center (GHDC)

Summer Programme



GHDC was filled with laughter when children from varying backgrounds and different age groups, gathered together during the month of August to celebrate the summer programme. The main objective of this programme was not only to educate the children but also provide some thing more than

what the regular school curriculum offers. We call it Complementary Education.

First week was for the age group between 5-12 years. There were more than 130 children participated in it. Each day they were trained in various activities like Reading, Writing, Clay making and Drawing, coupled with lots of fun-filled games. At the end they were being trained to conduct cultural programme, managed by children themselves. **Mrs. Patricia Khan and Mrs. Brenda** were the resource persons.

The next week was followed by the age group 13-15 years. There were more than 40 children responded to our invitation. What is surprising is that the numbers kept on increasing day by day. They had much advanced training in activities including Understanding themselves, Sexual education on the emotional point of view not biological, Building healthy relationships and Community building and conducted various games related to their self development which generated more laughter. This was a much more comprehensive programme. **Mrs Ingrid** was the resource person. There was a cultural programme organized by them was indeed an eye opener for the outsiders.

The last group was between the age group 16-25 yrs. It mainly focused on the youth of the locality. There were more than 40 of them responded to us. The topics dealt with for them were based on social issues, understanding their sex from relational point of view; how to handle and cope with stressful situations, having positive out look for life in a realistic way. These were divided into various groups for discussion. **Fr. Joe Chira** was the resource person.

Vikram was the Programme organizer, responsible for collecting children and organizing it and **Fr. Kuru, who is in-charge of the Centre**, was the back bone, the man behind the scene, working silently on the back drop. Thanks to **Fr. Chira** for finding benefactors who generously contributed sweets and drinks for the programme.

The eyes of the participants were filled with tears as they moved out of the campus, still memories ringing in their minds, as they held their certificates.

Vikram

From Barbados

Greetings from St Francis after the first Blair-free weekend in a month. It is a bit of a strain preaching with Tony B & family in the congregation. The first Sunday I spoke on global warming and send you as an attachment the sheet I handed out. Cherie told me Tony B hadn't read Al Gore's book so I offered to lend him a copy for vacation reading. Before leaving I checked whether he had looked at it (he had) and asked what chance of him taking up this issue seriously on leaving office. A non-committal answer but he is definitely interested. Two Sundays ago Tony B did one of the readings but looked very surprised when I included a prayer for Fidel Castro in the intentions (rapid recovery & 80th birthday). On the lawn afterwards I said to Cherie I was glad he accepted to do a reading. She replied without hesitation: "Oh, he loves hearing the sound of his own voice". Last week we had a wonderful French wedding here. The bridegroom was from Reims and is finance director of Piper-Heidsieck. Since they decided to have the reception in my little garden, they not only produced some super snacks but 4 bottles of excellent champagne one of which is now in my fridge waiting to be shared with the next visitors from Guyana. Love & Peace to all. MCJSJ

Electoral Assistance Bureau (EAB)

WHAT PRICE, DEMOCRACY?

Guyana has just had its most peaceful, fair and free elections since 1968 – even though fair and free elections were held in 1992, 1997 & 2001, they were all marked by post-election violence by those who lost the elections. Thank God, in 2006, we were able to hold fair and free elections and to prevent any violent protests whatsoever. I write this from the perspective of a civic organization, the Electoral Assistance Bureau (EAB), of which I am the Chairperson of the Council of Management. The EAB has been in existence since 1991, when through the efforts of the Carter Centre, we were able to register as a Local Observer Group with all the rights of an observer. This time round, we restricted ourselves to carrying out in-house computer checks and Field checks of the Preliminary Voters List (PVL) and the Revised Voters List (RVL), and to field at least one observer in each of the 1999 polling stations. In fact we trained over 2000 volunteer observers, but due to interference by the Elections Commission (GECOM) we were only able to place 1400. The field checks of the lists consisted in generating from the data base of the

electors a random sample of 1200 and then sending volunteers to locate the persons and check their data record. As you may know the results of the poll on Monday 28 August showed that the ruling People's Progressive Party (PPP) was returned to power with a 53% take of the votes cast. However what is of significance is that a new multi-racial party, the Alliance for Change (AFC) with a vision which has captured the imagination of the youth has emerged with 5 seats in parliament. No other party has been able to do this since the return to fair and free elections in 1992.. Reading the signs of the times, we may be at a significant turning point in the political life of the nation – peace, trust and inclusiveness may be features which we must nurture and demonstrate in all walks of life, especially the religious bodies, who easily pronounce on peace, trust and inclusiveness; they must now ensure that they match their words with corresponding good practice. The EAB is now considering expanding its mandate to keep its doors open and monitor the promised good governance of the politicians. Civic society seems prepared to grasp the opportunity of the current social and political ambience to take a strong role in helping to shape Guyana's future. Our youthful human resource base, over 2000 strong, can play a pivotal role in supporting this enterprise. The youth, who clearly now have experienced that they can make a difference as the Alliance for Change (AFC) has shown, must grasp this opportunity or should I say this “kairos”. A different Guyana may be in the making – we must continue to work and pray for this end.

Malcolm Rodrigues

From Fr. Joe Chira

The Reunion Committee of the Corentyne High School invited Fr Joe Chira to give the keynote address at Woodbine Convention Center in Toronto on August 12, 2006.

Fr Chira was a teacher of Corentyne High School, Berbice, from 1970 to 1975. The Committee paid for Fr Chira's passage and took care of his needs while he was in Toronto for the occasion. What amazed Fr Chira was that the Committee was able to bring together over 550 former students and teachers of the school at their 7th grand reunion. This has been the first time the committee was able to gather such a large number. All of them have such fond memories of their school days. They came from

different parts of USA, Canada, and UK. Four came from all the way from Australia, Japan, Indonesia and Hong Kong. The gathering enriched their lives and left them with memories to last a life time. Although keynote address praised them for the love they cherish for Guyana, their motherland and the deep concern they have for its peaceful development. Fr Chira dwelt on the theme of being a global citizen and how to live with some satisfaction their identity of having been a contribution to the public life of the countries of their adoption.

The Reunion Committee thanked Fr Chira for honouring them and that he found it possible to come and deliver the keynote address.

Paul Martin, SJ - Return to the Sources

I was very grateful for the opportunity to spend some time over July and August back in the UK. My first contact with the Society was through Young Adult retreats at Loyola Hall, Rainhill. It was therefore a great joy and privilege to be able to spend a month there helping to give the Exercises. I hope the three people I accompanied found the experience helpful. It was certainly a very graced time for myself. Being at Loyola Hall also gave me the opportunity to meet up with a good number of Jesuits from the "British Region" both on the team and passing through. It was particularly good to work on the Exercises with Mathew Power and to celebrate the 10th anniversary of my ordination with Rob Marsh who was ordained on the same day.

Being at Loyola Hall also gave me the chance to spend a good bit of time with my father. My mother died in 1996 and my father later remarried, however, his wife June suffered a stroke at Christmas and had been in a coma ever since. On 14th August June died. I was in France at the time with my sister but returned to participate in the funeral and to spend some time with my dad afterwards. I saw it as very providential that things should work out like this.

I return to the Region ready for whatever the Lord has in store.

Fr Joe Menino Dias from INDIA

Let me begin by thanking you very much for your kindness to me each time I met you at Brickdam and for giving me a patient hearing. I am writing to inform you that I had a safe and pleasant journey back to Mumbai. Only at Barbados, a Filipino and I

had to spend almost 4 hours in the waiting room inside the Immigration Office and were then accompanied by a special officer all the way to get our baggage checked-in by British Airways, all the way back to Immigration and on to the departures lounge. The flight to London, the bus-ride from Gatwick to Heathrow, and the flight from Heathrow to Mumbai went off very smoothly. The Superior of the Holy Family Parish was at the airport to receive me. The plane touched down at 0030 hours on Friday, 25th August, the formalities were completed by 0115 hours, and I was at home at Holy Family by 0130 hours. I spent the day, resting, unpacking and meeting many of our Mumbai Jesuits. My thoughts do keep turning back to Guyana and especially to Port Mourant where I had such a wonderful time for the last 3 years. On Sunday, 3rd September, Auxiliary Bishop Percival Fernandes will be coming here to install me as the new Parish Priest, at the 9.30 a.m. mass. This is a growing and vibrant parish of over 6,000 parishioners, situated in the heart of Greater Mumbai -- a city of about 15 million people -- and, during the last 3 days, I have been spending a lot of time meeting various groups in the parish. However, my thoughts still keep turning back to all the wonderful people I met in Guyana and the unforgettable beauty of that lovely country. Yesterday, Sunday, 27th August, I went to see my mother at Mira Road -- a distant suburb -- where she lives with my youngest brother's family, traveling by the same Western Railway trains which had seen those 7 bomb blasts on 7/11! They were as packed and overflowing as usual and it was virtually impossible to get in or get out safely except for a trained Mumbaikar like myself!



*Happy Birth day to you **Ronnie Fernandez**(1st Sept) & **Michael Campbell-Johnston** (27th Sept)*

PRAY FOR THE SICK

- ❖ Lets continue to pray for **Fr Robert Chadwick (Chad)** who is still very frail and presently in the Mercy Hospital.

ABIDE WITH THE LORD

- ❖ Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Norman Maitland**, Derrick's brother, who has died. May he rest in peace. Norman was very active in the St Vincent de Paul Society.

Happy Amerindian Heritage Month !!



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