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YCS/YSM National News Letter

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Vol: 2



NEW LIFE

BHOPAL CALLING...!
1st YCS/YSM
National Convention
18-21 May 2014



ASIAN YOUTH DAY
Daejeon, S. Korea
10-17 Aug 2014



Bhopal Calling !!!

Changing of one's views which are integrated in one's life is not easy. We, the YCS/YSM diocesan directors had a tough time at USM Indore in this regard where we had gathered for a Christo-centric Leadership Retreat. Understanding Jesus' view point of pluralistic spirituality was difficult to accept because we have been trained and used so far in so called religiosity. It was challenging for us to accept this Jesus who was true to the reality at his time. The challenging question to us was 'What would Jesus do if he were here at this situation?' This question holds good even today and most challenging for all those who want to follow Jesus in truth.



Hope you all have done well in annual examinations. Your efforts will bear you much fruit. Don't worry if you haven't got what you expected. These days many of our youngsters like you have ended their life due to various silly reasons. But YCS/YSM members are different. We are not cowards. We Face life as it is, as it comes, however difficult it is. Facing difficulties, problems, tensions and challenges is our hobby. We are here to stay for whole of our life and forever too. We are born to live and not to die. We will live to the full.

Bhopal calling!!!! Are you ready for the YCS/YSM National Convention? You will have a wonderful and life changing experience at Bhopal. It will be a serious deliberation on the student and social issues as well as fun and frolic. Just make it. Read through the preparatory document sent to you in the previous Search issue and prepare yourself. Don't miss it and don't regret later. This may be the only chance you get it in your life. Make a choice to attend it. Rexco of Bhopal is working hard to make your stay a memorable one. At the same time remember to contribute your might for the success of this program.

Easter is time of grace. Let your dreams come true and may the Risen Lord bless you all for a best future.

Many of you will move out of the movement, though once an YCS/YSM member always remains so, wherever you go and whatever you do. But live up to the spirit of the movement all through your life and MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN LIFE.

Just do it. God bless you all.

*- Fr. Charles Menezes
National Animator*

WILL YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE ?



(YCS/YSM works on the National theme ‘**Students education in the modern era**’ and in the second year we deal with the thrust ‘**Religious Plurality**’. Here is an article from Fr. Varghese Alengaden, Indore which explains that it is not Religious plurality but Pluralistic Spirituality which needs to be understood and lived accordingly to be a normal human being).

Pluralistic spirituality is inclusive and does not exclude anyone on the basis of caste, creed, colour and language.

India is proud of its unity in diversity. This unique feature is projected as one of the strengths of our country. Despite the diversity of caste, colour, creed, climate, culture and geography language and many other differences India stands united as a country. There is hardly any other example on earth with so much diversity yet united as one country. Indeed it is unique gift from God to us. It is a sacred national heritage which we have inherited over the centuries: ekam sat vipra bahuda vadanti, the truth is one and sages call it differently.

In times of external threats the people of India have stood behind the government irrespective of the party that ruled. Everyone has held the national flag with pride and sang the national anthem with unison. In times of internal conflicts prophetic personalities stood differently yet defended unity in diversity. The media has always highlighted the importance of this sacred heritage of unity in diversity.

“ Pluralism is also a sacred heritage we have received from Jesus Christ.”

The internal conflicts we witness in the name of language, religion, caste and region are due to lack of understanding of this unique and rich heritage. We are taught from our school days that India is a tolerant country. This term ‘tolerance’ is used to convey

the positive aspect of India where people of all castes, creeds and cultures can live and work with full freedom and equality. However the term ‘tolerance’ communicates negative emotions. One tolerates another person out of helplessness or necessity. This cannot be called pluralism. Pluralism becomes spirituality a way of life, when we understand it as acceptance, appreciation and promotion of differences. This makes a big difference in our perception of the other.

Pluralistic spirituality is inclusive and does not exclude anyone on the basis of caste, colour, creed and language. One who is led



by a pluralistic spirituality does not tolerate the other instead accepts other as he or she is with all his or her differences. He will look for positive qualities with him or her, appreciate the differences in him or her and promote these differences in all possible ways. Difference here is seen as enrichment not as an obstacle.

Education in pluralistic spirituality means to take interest to learn the language of the other, enjoy the songs and art of other regions and cultures, join in the celebration of the other, appreciate the food habits of the other and take part in it whenever possible. People with a pluralistic spirituality will break walls and cross over to the other side extending hands of friendship.

Science and technology have made the big world a small village a global family. In dress

and food habits people have manifested much openness. The Punjabi dress or salwar kameez has become the common dress for women all over the country; South Indian snacks like idli, dosa, wada and uttappam have become popular dear food for many in the north; the western dress of suit and tie has become the international style all over the world. Yet the mindset of the people remains exclusive and even blocked without any possibility of opening up.

Frequent communal violence which breaks out in different parts of the country, the anti



north India crusade on the streets of Mumbai, agitations and counter agitations of different groups for and against separate states, violent protests by different castes and religious groups for exclusive rights, threaten our very sacred national heritage. Accepting differences, appreciating and promoting them alone can bring peace and harmony in the country. Any effort of imposing uniformity on people will only bring conflicts. Accept, appreciate and promote different identities and create awareness that these different identities alone can enrich the whole world. In

the process 'the good of all becomes good of one and the good of one becomes good of all'. It creates a win-win situation and no one loses.

Pluralism is also a sacred heritage we have received from Jesus Christ. The criteria which he used to select his apostles, his attitude to tax collectors, Romans and Samaritans manifest, how Jesus accepted, appreciated and promoted pluralism. Even the whole of creation manifests the pluralism of God. There is not a single man or woman in this world similar to another. Not even a petal in a flower is similar to another petal. Yet Church history is full of stories of conflicts and wars to preserve uniformity: uniformity in thinking, dress, rituals, terminologies and every aspect of life. The eternal truth, that God has innumerable names, shapes, faces and colours are forgotten. The numerous dogmas, laws, rituals and devotions further suppress all diversity. Uniformity is limiting God. It is an insult to God.

We have greatest responsibility of promoting and protecting the pluralistic heritage of the country. Pluralistic spirituality is not just promoting inter religious understanding. Inter religious dialogue, seminars or prayer meetings highlight only one aspect of pluralism. It is a fragmented approach. Promotion of pluralistic spirituality has to do with the way of life. This sacred heritage can be preserved only by educating our future generation. Schools can do much in this direction. It is the permanent way to peace.

-Fr. Varghese Alengaden, USM Indore

CAKE OF LIFE

Take a glass of education
Add the sugar of merit
Boil it with pleasure
Mix it with flow of success
Add the nuts of friendship
Add the cream of happiness
Bake it in an oven of peace



Cool it in refrigerator of work
Finally enjoy the cake of
'PERFECT LIFE'

*T. Jose Milton, Church of Holy Eucharist,
YCSYSM Chennai*

PRAY FOR FR. PRAVEEN & RUKI FERNANDO

Ruki is the former IYCS Asian Coordinator from Colombo. He is a respected award winning Catholic human rights defender and was the facilitator of the IYCS World Council 2011 in New Delhi.

YCS/YSM India is deeply concerned about the harassment against Mr. Ruki Fernando and other human rights defenders based in Sri Lanka.

On March 16, 2014, at around 10.30 pm, Mr. Ruki Fernando and Rev. Praveen Mahesan, OMI were arrested by a specially appointed unit of the Terrorist Investigation Division (TID) as they were visiting the heavily militarised area of Kilinochchi, North of Sri Lanka, in order to investigate into the arrest on March 13, 2014 of human rights defender Ms. Balendran Jeyakumari and her 13-year old daughter Vithuskaini, who have been campaigning against enforced disappearances.



YCS/YSM India expresses its deepest concern about the judicial orders against Mr. Ruki Fernando and Rev. Praveen Mahesan, which seem to aim at further harassing and silencing the two human rights defenders, and recalls that freedom of expression is a fundamental right recognised by the Constitution of Sri Lanka and enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We understand that the government does not want the true situation in the northern part to be known to the rest of Sri Lanka and the rest of the world. The government does not want any different story than their own version to get out, and the government is particularly clear that no information should be provided to the UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva.

Action requested: April 11th marks the anniversary of Blessed John XXIII's encyclical 'Pacem in Terris' (1963), which outlines a strong commitment to human rights as the foundation for peace in the world today. So let us join together in prayer and action for all those working for human rights. This Lenten Season, we particularly think of Ruki Fernando and Father Praveen Mahesan, OMI, two human rights defenders who are under investigation by the Sri Lankan government for their actions in defense of human rights.

Let us all pray for repeal of judicial orders issued against Mr. Ruki Fernando and Rev. Praveen Mahesan OMI and the legitimacy of the work of human rights defenders.

-YCS/YSM INDIA

My Personal Experience at USM

I believe that God has called me and he has called me for a special purpose.

Things I've Learned

Now that life is disturbed in me. The inner fight has started to change my life. The working zeal has increased in me. The conflict between good vs bad, easy vs difficult, escapism vs challenges, love vs hatred, selfishness vs generosity and for all these changes USM is responsible.

I came to USM without much knowledge but with expectations. From the first day till the last day I have been learning not only in the classes but in the USM atmosphere. There has been a family atmosphere where each one is concerned of other persons.

These five days helped me to think about myself, my diocese, my ministry and my society.



The movie Jesus of Nazareth has made a tremendous impact on my life. When I analyzed it, I need to change a lot of things in me in order to become a good animator in the society. It changed my thinking pattern and taught real values in me. The various topics on socio – political scenario opened my eyes and made me to think deeply on my life. I felt that the religiosity has covered us. I feel that the religiosity and spirituality should go hand in hand.

The movie Dharam and Goal changed my thinking pattern on youth and society. I learned to systematize my whole life and my

ministry. I understood that while systematizing lots of thorns prick me, but one day I will see the fruit for my effort.

In order to bring changes in my life and work I have taken some resolution which will help me to discipline my life.

- I will give time for my personal prayer and meditation in order to have a close contact with God.
- In order to be competent with the present world I will update my skills and knowledge by reading as many books as possible.
- I will try to improve the standard of education by making students to understand the important of education in the present society.
- I will follow five paths, in order to bring personal and social transformation.
- I will strengthen YSM and youth movement in my diocese

This training program has increased my knowledge on the present situation and helped me to work systematically among students and youth.

- Fr. Victor Anil Vas, DYD Gulbarga Diocese

PROPAGATING RELIGION

Search

AT THE COST OF SPIRITUALITY

Fr. Varghese Alengaden, USM Indore

The increasing religiosity in any religion is not a sign of deepening spirituality. Multiplication of rituals, increasing number of worship places, large crowd which gather in pilgrim places do not prove that to people.

In the past people believed, rather they were taught that material prosperity and wealth will distract them from God. The world outside the worldly wealth were considered to be big blocks which prevented human beings from realizing God/. Those who abandoned wealth and worldly comforts were held in high esteem. The more the austerity, the more the reverence.

It was my belief that the economic development of the people of Europe alienated them from the practice of religion. I thought that prosperity and wealth would make human beings proud and they would give up their religious rituals. Reading Meena Nanada's book *The God Market* was very revealing. With the facts and figures the author proves his point that economic liberalization and globalization have made people more religious. She points out the increasing number of pilgrims at different worship places and the rise of revenue collection from these places. It is a proved fact that educated Indians in cities and small towns are becoming more religious than less educated villagers. This is true of people of all faiths.

The increasing religiosity can be seen very clearly from the growing number of worship places and religious institutions in the country. Pavan Varma in his book 'Being Indian' reports that around the turn of the millennium,

the country had 2.5 million places of worship, but only 1.5 million schools and barely 75000 hospitals. People offer gold and silver worth crores of rupees to temples and churches. It is startling to know that half of the 230 million tourist tips every year are for the religious pilgrimages. People travel from one end of the country to the other in search of God. The NRIs who come for a short holiday to India will make time to visit at least one pilgrim centre. The distance, money and climate do not prevent them from making these pilgrimages.

“ The increasing religiosity in any religion is not a sign of deepening spirituality. Multiplication of rituals, increasing number of worship places, large crowd which gather in pilgrim places do not prove that to people.”

Meera Nanda makes a specific study to gauge how religiosity and the revival of Hindu religion are carried by the state- temple corporate partnership. She fearlessly exposes how the government and big corporate families spend large amount of money for promotion of religious functions, rituals and honouring god-men by constructing ashrams and temples for them. Politicians and government officials take pride in sponsoring these religious functions and find time to be present while they are performed.

The book clearly states the following examples to prove the state-temple-corporate partnership in promoting religiosity. Rajasthan government spent 260 million rupees for the temple renovations and training of priests; Gujarat gifted 85 acres of land to establish a privately run rishikul in Porbandar; Art of Living ashram in Bangalore is built on 99 acres of land leased from the state of Karnataka; the Akshardham temple acquired 100 acres of land along the Yamuna at a throwaway price from the Delhi and UP governments.



The government was generous to allow godmen and gurus to establish universities and deemed universities. They were given large acres of land and money from the government treasury. Swami Ramdev the popular tele-yogi, who has created massive Rs 4000 million empire selling yoga and ayurvedic medicines, is building two universities on land gifted to him by the state governments of MP and Uttarakhand. Jharkhand has gifted him another 100 acres of land recently. Businessmen both in India and abroad have been generous patrons and promoters of this. Orissa government gave 200 acres of land on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar to set up a Sri Sri University of Art of Living. Rajasthan government gave 2300 acres of land to set up Keshav Vidhyapeeth Vishwavidhyalaya and RSS affiliated university. Many other gurus and trusts receive the patronage of government and business groups. Rastriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandana Sansthana, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi etc are only a few of them. Nanda is fearless to accuse the ministers and bureaucrats who see themselves in the mould of Hindu kings of yesteryears who considered in their duty to protect dharma.

The increasing religiosity in any religion is not a sign of the deepening spirituality. This does not prove that people are becoming more

honest, forgiving, sensitive and generous to the poor and the hungry. For many, religiosity is often escapism from the social responsibility of working for justice and human rights. Why do people refuse to give some help to the poor in their neighbourhood before they set out to go on a pilgrimage and offer gold and silver to lifeless statues in temples, churches and other pilgrim places? Why do government officials and ministers not ensure primary education to millions of children who are out of school before donating land and funds to the religious gurus to establish universities? How seriously these popular gurus and preachers teach their followers to work for peace and reconciliation in the society as a means of getting God's blessings?

In this context, I want to mention the uncompromising attitude of Jesus in the practice of spirituality. For Him religiosity was only a means to become spiritual. He rejected and criticized all religiosity which did not make people spiritual. Hence, he insisted "When you come to offer your gift to God and if you remember that your brother has something against you, go and reconcile with your brother and then come to offer your gift". That is spirituality. Religion cannot be propagated at the cost of spirituality, the very soul of religion. ♣

Leading like a leader

Leading like a Leader
With the correct mentality
I dreamed but pleaded,
For God is my Savior and
Pride has retreated.
Knowing ignorance can't win
But shame will blame the system,
Of needing and knowing what's right
Or what's wrong, better saying.
As a leader not a follower
My strides have been set
To live my life with honor, no regret.



I push myself using all of my tools.
Physically I strive, mentally I'm better
But deprived from attitude is not too clever.
Leading with love and heart to play
With bullets or balloons they go the same way
I don't think I just do it, I choose it.
I'm me and you're you,
So you can follow but I will lead
You are you and I am ME...

- Bernadette.T,

Arokia Madha Aalayam , YCSYSM CHENNAI

Christo Centric Leadership

Training Programme for YCS/YSM Animators at USM

- Gautami Priya, Hyderabad



“Light a candle instead of cursing the darkness” is a quote that touched each of the YCS/YSM Directors and Animators as we entered the premises of USM. Universal Solidarity Movement has proved to be a tremendous instrument in imparting Value Education and promoting peace, all across the World.

A warm welcome by the USM family won our hearts instantly as we started our journey with USM on 7/03/14. It was a great start as we admired the entire ambience, the quotations and the positive environment around. The introduction and dynamics of the USM Programme indeed captivated our interests and increased the thirst for this new way of being the Church, a new Paradigm in Evangelization.

The first session started with the Pilgrimage with Jesus of Nazareth. These film sessions proved to be a new way of learning from the Life of Jesus, pondering on each and every episode in His life and more importantly drawing great insights from His reaction towards the Political,



Social and Religious context of those days. It was a very Enriching experience to learn from His Life through Observation, Reflection and Application.

We started our day here with the Holy Eucharist thru which we learnt not only to celebrate the

Eucharist but also to live the Eucharist in our day-to-day life. Also the Prayer for Peace was the most Amazing and Peaceful moment of the entire programme. It indeed fills our hearts with peace and gives the Joy of forgiving as Christ did.

We discovered Jesus in a whole new dimension and understood the dream of Jesus to establish a New Way... the Way of Love, far beyond the boundaries of religion and status. It was a great Joy to learn the art of Living through the Pilgrimage of Jesus.

The session on Christian Response to the current socio-political scenario was very thought provoking. It dawned on us that the need of the hour is a change required to bring out the new solutions (New Wineskins) for the new problems (New Wines) of the current society. This consciousness of the changing requirements of the Church and the society has brought about a tremendous drive in us to adopt a new paradigm in order to make the mission of Jesus possible. And also every day Evaluation sessions were very enriching as each one of us shared striking observations and learnings for the day. Another strong topic which made an impact was “ Call, Vision and mission” This was a beautiful and very inspiring input session as it made us realize that we are called to be a Prophet to the NATIONS and to bear Much Fruit and Fruit that is lasting. It motivated us to respond passionately to the mission of Christ and make our lives more competent and committed to work for the Kingdom of God.

As Fr.Varghese rightly quoted, “When in Crisis, be sure that God is at hand” our next session was all about Crisis Management in realizing the Vision and the mission of one’s

call. It helped us to understand one's call and vision. The valuable practical tips given for personal Spiritual Growth encouraged us all to face the crisis with a strong spiritual mindset. Another area that made a great impact was learning that Pluralism is a Heritage that we received from Jesus himself as seen through His choice of apostles, and His attitude towards the Samaritans, Romans, Tax collectors and prostitutes etc. It brought our attention to the fact that Pluralism exists from the beginning in God's Creation and hence gives us understanding that God made us absolutely Unique and different.

Holy Eucharist and homilies every morning all through the training days have been a great source of discovering a new spiritual Treasure. The striking differences between Religiosity and spirituality provided a great clarity in our ideologies. The movie "Dharam" and the reflections on the film made it clear that even religion could be a hindrance to reach God, but true spirituality liberates us from every ritual bondage.



Also the miracle of possibility thinking was highly encouraging with the concepts of "Why not I" and "Ho Jayega" gave an amazing boost of positive energy to the group and brought a certain driving force of Unique decisions and re-affirmed energy. The Journey of getting into oneself and re-discovering yourself to formulate your vision, goals, policies & priorities provided a method of strong preparation to face the challenges of today.

And the Evaluation group discussions at the end of each day made the programme more meaningful and enriching with various practical questions on the above discussed



topics. These discussions helped us to come up with some practical action plans to make a difference in our personal lives, church and society at large.

The movie "Goal" was extremely powerful and thought provoking and its teachings on the competent leadership, unity in diversity was an Unmatching experience. Presentation of vision, goals and priorities by the whole group was very enriching.

USM has not only revived our spirits but also has awakened the Leader in each one of us. Now we know that we have laid a foundation to be the new wineskins for the church and the society. So we are very grateful to the USM family for making us feel at home and for the cheerful smiles on their faces.

The Christo-Centric Leadership Programme has been a very meaningful & fruitful module making us the change agents of the society. This Programme has indeed been a blessing for us all. May God bless all the efforts of USM Family. Thank You! ❀

REPORT

National Chaplain's activities

Search

1. Meeting with Fr. Alex to finalize National Convention at Bhopal on 25-26 Feb 2014
2. Meeting with Archbishop Leo at Bhopal with regard to National Convention on 27th Feb 2014
3. Visit to Hyderabad in view of purchase of land from 28th Feb to 5th March 2014. Purchased a piece of land at Medchal for our National Training Centre.
4. Participated in the Animators training – Christo-centric Leadership Training – Journey with Jesus at USM Indore from 7 - 14 March. 15 YCS/YSM animators took part in it which included 3 RYDs, 8 DYDs and 4 lay animators. Altogether 22 took part in it.
5. Participated in Student training program at USM Indore from 16-21 March 2014. 30 took part in it.
6. Participated in ICYM National elections at Nagpur from 22-24 March 2014. A day's spiritual program at ICYM Yuvagram.
7. Office work at Delhi from 25 March to 10 April 2014
8. Annual accounts at Chennai from 11-15 April 2014
9. Easter ministry at Mangalore (Omzoor, Farla, Katipalla, Belle) from 16-21 April 2014

Forthcoming programs

1. ICYM Pentecost (V) and Cross Feast - 2014
A pilgrimage and mission experience program at Yuvagram, Padri Thana, Nagpur from 26 April to 4 May 2014
YCS/YSM NEXCO and others are cordially invited.
Contact DYD/RVD/ICYM National Office for participation
Tel: 011-23340773 Mob - 09013905078
2. Chaplains and Animators Training (CAT 2014 from 1-10 June 2014 at KROSS, Bangalore, for YCS/YSM Animators - Reg. Fees Rs 3000
Contact your DYD for more information
3. YCS/YSM 1st National Convention
St. Xavier School, Barkhera, Bhopal
18-21 May 2014
4. Asian Youth Day
Daejon Diocese, South Korea
10-17 August 2014
Register your names before 15 April 2014 with ICYM National Office
5. NATP – CAFÉ (Asian Animators training program, Delhi) - Proposed
28 Sept – 5 Oct 2014
6. Christocentric Leadership Retreat for YCS/YSM Directors, at USM Indore
27 October to 3 Nov 2014
7. NSLTP – National Student Leaders Training Program (English), Nov 2014
8. 4th NTA/EXCO meeting, at USM Indore
22 – 24 Nov 2014
9. NSLTP – National Student Leaders Training Program (Hindi)
USM Indore, 25 – 30 Nov 2014

OR RETREAT...???

Fr. Charles menezes



This was a journey to the unknown land. Someone asked me whether it is a training program or a retreat, but I had no answer. I myself did not know what was in store for us. But I said it is going to be something different and it was. To get a positive nod from everyone that it was worth coming here made me very happy and at times I make some good decisions. I will be a frequent visitor to this place in the future whether it is to learn something or to relax and spend some quiet moments.

The journey of Christo-centric Leadership began within me when I had visited USM last year and came to accomplishment through this life experience under the guidance of Fr. Varghese Alengaden. Gathering the chicks under hen's feathers was quite a daunting task. It was different, that's why I was not sure of how many would make it to this special place for a new experience.

YCS/YSM is an empirical movement where the members used to experiment new things by exploring the reality of society. But it was not required at USM because the place itself has that atmosphere. The invite, the enquiry, the preparation, the welcome, the hospitality and the living style here tells of it all. Finally 15 from YCS/YSM and 7 others from various parts of India made the group quite spicy, mixed with fun and frolic. As Nitu says it was a special group unlike Priests, rather young ones with lot of energy. We all enjoyed each others' company and family atmosphere over here.

The Journey began with Jesus of Nazareth. Realization of the context in which Jesus lived and worked, preached and performed, enlightened and challenged, rebuked and blessed was a new experience of a life time for me. His process of choice, training, preparation, contemplation, animation,

leadership, guidance, team work, suffering, victory was a lesson for us to make our life more meaningful as youth animators. We do not need any other life examples rather life in HIM itself is a way to lead our young brethren in the right path. Fr. Varghese unveiled every facets of Jesus' life as a supreme animator about which we were blinded so far. This journey helped me to understand the various persons involved in this salvation history and made sense while dealing with the animation process.

When we look behind the influence of Christianity in India which worked like a leaven in the society seems to be losing its effect now. It may be due to our lethargy, compromise, easy going and indifference, not understanding the mission and not having a clear vision. Our monopoly in the field of education, social service, medicine has been grabbed by others and communal bandits, which we are neither able to understand nor able to face and for which we need real animators in the example of Jesus. The reality of competition, rejection, alienation, harassment and elimination is frightening and we can never overcome this problem without Jesus like effort. Jesus' understanding of plurality and inclusiveness taught us through the simile of new wine and new wineskins. Understanding of the new problems and our preparedness to handle those problems was an eye opener for me.

The clarity of our call, vision and mission was the prime motive we were here and it was very well explained and clarified through the Gospel and Prophets to us. To be called and commissioned to bear lasting fruit is the main aim of any animator and it was made very clear to me. Practical tips for my spiritual growth posed a challenge for me and made me to accept it, making a new beginning in my life.

Paradigm shift from religiosity to pluralistic spirituality is the need of the hour according to the statutes of our movement. Working for the children of God, whichever religion they belong will make me more close to God than any of my other activities and it was drilled into my mind and heart. The language of the heart and mind has to be merged together to make my life worthy before God is the crux of this teaching.

Module of USM helped me to look for new methods and avenues to reach out to the needy young with the methodology of YCS/YSM and it prompted me resolve to work together in the near future.

The power of Possibility Thinking enlightened me to rise above my petty feelings and reasons and radiate positive energy in the process of Jesus' plan of action in liberating the humankind even at this moment of my life. It is late but still the awakening of this truth



will enable me to work efficiently for the young generation in the days to come.

I understood the process of vision formulation by the simple game of drawing pictures and the need of contemplation and being in the constant presence of God will help me to set my goals clearly in my ministerial life.

Dharam movie was a textbook for me look into myself as regards my religiosity and spirituality. I resolved to work for the realization of true spirituality in my life. The Goal movie helped me open my eyes as regards my animation

style and made me to strive for the real process of animation by various methods so to reach the maximum young brethren all over India which only will make my life meaningful and worth presenting to my God when I look up at the end of my life.

Archbishop Leo Cornelio, Archbishop of Bhopal and Chairman of CBCI Youth Commission visited us on 8th March and participated in two sessions in Journey with Jesus and gave his message to the participants which were an icing on the cake. He was happy about the flow of the program and prompted us to put this animation experience into practice while working with the teenagers. Bishop Chako Thottumarinkal, Bishop of Indore graced us on the concluding day and blessed us with his message as to work with vigour in accompanying the teenagers.

I am not happy for those who could have made it to this program, but there is hope and they will be told as the true animator says, YOU SHALL GO. Many things are so common with USM and YCS/YSM, but we need to put them into practice. Plunging many religious minded people in a new atmosphere in a sudden may disturb some, but they will be made to understand, yet free to accept it in a spiritual sense.

The work force at USM and the sharing of its members during the program was amazing. Thanks to the Almighty for having given us this opportunity and my brothers and sisters in making them to serve our young ones wherever we go and however we work. The life example of USM and the plurality of vision will continue to shine in the world like a star and the man behind it in the person of Fr. Varghese will continue to work within me as long as I work here as per his saying that he feels and emanates positive energy in and through us. I pray God to provide us many more animators to serve our movement in the example of Jesus our Master.

- Fr. Charles Menezes

Things I've Learned

I was asked by Fr. Sabu, Patna Youth Director to attend this program. He had given me no details regarding it. I was in a dilemma as my mother suddenly fell sick and secondly, I hated long sessions of workshop, I had enough reason for calling it off. Yet somewhere I had been searching for a meaningful ministry. I wanted some renewal and refresher. So I took the plunge, I couldn't explain to my Superior nor others what this program was all about.

Now that I attended this program I believe it was God who directed me to it. I am used to Jesuit program and had been saturated by them. Listening to Varghese other than a Jesuit was a fresh breeze for me. It was like Pope John xxiii who said "Open the doors and windows of the Church let fresh breeze enter in" I needed the fresh breeze. I had been suffocated within myself and my ministry.



The clarity with which Varghese speaks on issues shows the man has done a lot of critical thinking. I mean, one who has gone through crisis only can do critical thinking. A broken leg, a serious fall or failure or rejection only can evoke the hidden spirit within us. And Varghese is an example before us. Interestingly he kept a faithful record of his life journey and probably that helped him to see the thread of his life. I was amazed at the easiness with which he talks, how clearly he puts his thoughts across without hurting unless one needs to be hurt. Books are a storehouse of his evolutionary thinking and there are

many. Besides what amazed me is his musical talent- that he composed these lyrics which have become the much needed music for the future pluralistic church.

One thing I always questioned to myself is the future shape of the Church. With the dwindling vocations and the qualitative change of present clergy and alienation and attack on the church I was left to conclude that only God can save us.

USM helped me in this regard. Now I can see a dream the future church and an integrated and holistic life. The church will merge into the fabric of Indian society and the Kingdom of God which is within us will come forth embracing the whole of India and spilling into the whole world. India will lead the world and unite all human beings into one family of God. There will be no differences – all will become the children of God and brothers and sister to all. Thanks to USM for the holistic and integrated approach both in word and example. The USM community is the evidence.

- **Fr. Deepak SJ, Patna**

JUNK FOODS

Pizzas, Burgers, Sandwiches and fries
Brings smiles, when the stomach cries
They may be later eat up our lives, the rise
Rise about the present
Look up the future
Say No the Fries
A lot many diseases and disorders are born
With digestion of these foods in you, O dear One,
Today you stop,

Tomorrow you live
Ah! Believe me Junk Foods can kill
They affect our brain, they affect your heart
They affect every one of our parts
Let not be the victim of this lot
Let's prevent and protect our body
From Birth till Last

- **A. Punitha Priya, YCSYSM Chennai**

Every person and movement (Association/ institution) needs to have a vision for ones effective functioning in life. The vision is broad that it becomes inclusive and long lasting. It gives a purpose in life and one's life becomes meaningful. To understand this and to prepare this vision formulation in life these basic things are to be followed:

We start with an exercise:

1. Draw a picture (Symbol) depicting Indian Society – It is done with one's own understanding and personal experience of Indian society.
2. Draw a picture (Symbol) depicting your movement (Association) – One who is involved in the movement who needs to have some personal experience of working in that movement for some time.
3. Draw a picture (Symbol) depicting yourself – This is based on the daily life experience of self.

Analysis of the symbols:

Is it a routine symbol or something creative?

Eg: If you draw a candle, tree, heart, flower it is routine symbol that which we see every day. If you draw something unique that becomes creative. Children/ students are good at it.

Is it a copy or original?

Eg: If the symbol is drawn from some items seen it will be copied; like flower, candle etc. If it is something different and unique that becomes original.

Is it a confused one or depicts clarity?

Eg: If you can explain your symbol with simple words which could be understood by all, then it has clarity. Otherwise it will be confused. The things attached to that symbol are unconnected to each other.

Are the three symbols integrated or not related to each other?

Eg: Are these three symbols somehow connected to each other, like flower, bush, tree etc. Then it is integrated. If not the experience is not very deep rooted and hence the symbols do not match.

Are they drawn out of Deep Experience or superficial?

Eg: If you can explain the symbols with ease and clarity, then it comes from the deep life experience. If not, symbols do not depict your life and ideas.

Process:

Awareness – It comes from seeing something, Observing, feeling, reading, interaction, TV/film, etc

Reflection – Done in silence, prayer, discussion, analysis and research

Conclusions – Conclusions need to be repeated until they become convictions

Convictions – These need to be sustained for a long time

Vision – From sustained convictions vision emerges. It should be Lasting, Broad and Inclusive

Goals – It leads to goal setting with clear Objectives

Policy making – To achieve these objectives we need to make policies, which is the approach. It means my action as regards my decisions, like reading news paper daily, writing letter to the editor to share my opinion, spending time effectively, reading books, spending time in prayer and contemplation, saving pocket money and helping others, saving earth resources etc.

Action Plan – Set priorities and prepare projects. Option for earth resources, poor, teenagers etc

Targets – Work effectively and put utmost efforts to achieve your results.

Deadline – Set a deadline – personal and communitarian which is time bound.

Evaluation – Evaluate regularly to set it in right direction and motion. ♣

RETREATING TO RENEWAL

Things I've Learned

- Fr. Isaac F. Arackaparambil, SDB

I am privileged to have been a participant at the Christo-Centric Leadership Retreat for YCS/YSM Youth Animators which was preached at USM Indore under the inspiring mentorship of Fr. Varghese Alengaden.

The retreat began with the screening of Franco Zeffirelli's 'Jesus of Nazareth' through which the preacher helped the retreatants make a pilgrimage with Jesus, and guided them with practical life applications of Jesus' method in ministry for our times, while also making a critique of how we seem to be repeating the mistakes of the Scribes, Pharisees as people in authority today.

Following the pilgrimage with Jesus, the preacher took us through another very informative, thought provoking and insightful session entitled, "Christian Response to the current socio-political scenario." Here he led us on through a very logical and step-by-step revelation of how in spite of our tremendous contributions to the country, we as Church are facing anti-Christian propaganda so much so that from an initial acceptance of our presence and works, we are progressively regressing from being challenged, to being rejected, to being alienated, and now even being eliminated. On analyzing the reason for this anti-Christian campaign we realize that we as Church have ceased to be relevant and are greatly insensitive to the new and changed situations within which we exist as a Church in India today, and are still viewed as foreigners with our links to the colonial exploitation that accompanied the propagation of Christianity.

While we have received a command from the Lord to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples, the question is HOW? It is in this context that we were introduced to a very convincing and original interpretation of Jesus' discourse on the

need for putting new wine into new wineskins. If we consider wine to be the problems and issues of our context, and wineskins to be the solutions or methods employed to address these problems and issues, then the problem with us as Church is that we are using obsolete methods or old-wineskins to contain these new problems, and our experience is often one of frustration. This calls for a new paradigm. We are challenged with the task of creating new wineskins or rather being new wineskins. For this we need new formation, we need to develop personal spirituality, self-discipline, and be self-educated.

The Christo-Centric Leadership retreat was steered in the direction of helping us participants see the gravity of the situation we are in and of creating in us a sense of urgency in addressing our very survival which is at stake. Hence creating new wineskins is not a matter of choice but of necessity. It becomes an imperative. So the task before us was to understand how to become new wineskins within the framework of being faithful to Jesus' own method in ministry.

This enterprise of knowing how to become new wineskins was situated within the context of our Call, Vision and Mission. Reflecting on God's word in Jeremiah 1:5 "I have called you to be a prophet to the nations" the preacher drew our attention to our privilege of being called by none less than God Himself for the mission of being prophets, by owning a global vision of addressing this mission to entire nations. Our mission and vision outlined in the gospel of John 16:15, is to go and bear fruit, not just fruit, but lasting fruit. So our mission is to bear fruit, but our vision is to ensure that the fruit is lasting. We were guided to the insight that most often, we don't have lasting



fruits because we don't have a **LASTING VISION**. How are we supposed to formulate a Lasting Vision? We can do this once we understand what it takes to become new-wineskins.

Becoming new wineskins is a process of making a paradigm shift from being religious to being spiritual. While religiosity holds on to rituals and beliefs, spirituality promotes values and truth. Beliefs divide us, while the truth unites us. Hence religiosity leads to fundamentalism while spirituality adopts a scientific temper. Religiosity insists on uniformity while spirituality encourages pluralism. These ideas of the preacher were further corroborated by a powerful film 'Dharm' which helped the participants grasp how religiosity fits in with the old wineskin and being spiritual is the blue-print for becoming new wineskins. Another insight not to be lost sight of is the fact that Jesus was not against religiosity, but rejected a religiosity that did not make people spiritual. Pluralism is an element of spirituality. In fact Jesus left us with a heritage of pluralism which is key to helping us face the situation of antagonism and suspicion against our endeavors of establishing God's kingdom in India today.

Having outlined the road-map to becoming new wineskins, the stage was set for us to understand how to formulate a lasting vision. With this in view, the preacher expounded one of his latest discourses on the 'Miracle of Possibility Thinking'. The key here is to become aware of Divine within us, and maximizing this divine in us to achieve what is normally considered impossible. The magical formula is to keep asking the question 'WHY NOT?' and setting about the awakening of the divine potential in us to achieve whatever we want to.

Since the stage was so wonderfully prepared for us to understand the process of vision formulation, the preacher dived into exploring with us the principles involved. In a nutshell, we need to begin with indentifying our deep experiences in life. Deep experiences lead to

Awareness which leads to Reflection, which in turn helps us come to certain conclusions. When conclusions are repeated, we come to Conviction. When these convictions are sustained, what emerges is **VISION**. The test to see if our vision is good is to ask whether it is **LASTING, BROAD and INCLUSIVE**. Once I test my vision, I need to



set goals, outline policies to achieve those goals, and select priorities to focus on implementation by setting targets, committing to deadlines, and following up with evaluations.

I thought this entire process was very enriching, informative and profound. On the basis of this exposition we were asked to prepare our own Visions, Goals Policies and Priorities. The film **GOAL** helped us to reflect on our role as animators, and gave us fruitful insights for youth ministry itself.

Since, this retreat was addressed to a specific target group, that of youth animators, I appreciate the fact that the preacher's talks were amply substantiated with inputs about the Universal Solidarity Movement which in my opinion is a vibrant and relevant paradigm for youth ministry. I have been associated with the USM since the last six years, and even though most of the ideas shared in this retreat were known to me because of my prior association, I nonetheless feel refreshingly enriched, energized, and motivated to grow in vision while maximizing the divine in me for greater relevance and deeper impact. ♣

SL. NO	DATE	NAME OF THE EVENT	THEME	NO.OF. PARTICIPANTS
1.	03.11.2013	Year of Faith Orientation at the Vicariate Level	Introduction to YCS/YSM and Impact of Values in Individuals Life	200
2.	30.11.2013	Founders Day	Study on Life of Cardijn along with Talent Exposure Competitions	300
3.	03.12.2013-07.12.2013	FREE DENTAL CAMP	Oral Health and Anti-Tobacco Awareness along with Free Dental Check-up for the School Students .	1000
4.	21.12.2013	Inauguration of YCSYSM at a Low Level Settlement in Chennai	Introduction of YCS /YSM and Importance of ROL	200
5.	19.01.2014	“Jaithu Kathuvom” (We will Win)	Introduction to YCS/YSM and Impact of YCS/YSM Values in Individuals Life along with Career Guidance Program	250
6.	27.02.2014	Motivation for Personal Growth	Impact of YCS Values in Individuals Life. And how one can change through it?	80

-Kamal Francis, Full-timer, YCSYSM Chennai



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YCS/YSM is organizing its 1st National Convention in Barkhera, Bhopal from 18-21 May 2014. Around 600 student delegates along with their Animators and Diocesan Youth Directors from all over India are participating in it. During this convention we are bringing out a Special issue of The Search. We kindly request you to sponsor this issue and assist us in our endeavour in accompanying the teenagers in Building a New Society by becoming a change agent.

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Contact Address:

Fr. Charles Menezes

Delhi Archdiocesan Youth Office, Yusuf Sadan, Gole Dak Khana, 1 Ashok Place,
New Delhi - 110001, Mob: 09448331894 , Email: ycsysmindia@gmail.com
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