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*- Roshan Lama, Salesian College Sonada (Batch 2005)*

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## Dear Alumni

As we begin this great month of September, allow me to draw your attention to a very important even for all of us to cherish. That is the Sainthood of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She will be declared a Saint for the whole world as she was a world figure. Let me start with a little thought from her.



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Dear friends (Alumni),

As we begin this great month of September, allow me to draw your attention to a very important even for all of us to cherish. That is the Sainthood of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She will be declared a Saint for the whole world as she was a world figure. Let me start with a little thought from her.

"A sacrifice to be real must cost, must hurt, must empty ourselves.  
The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, the fruit of service is peace."

Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has paid tributes to Mother Teresa, saying "every Indian must feel proud as she has officially been recognized as a Saint." Prime Minister Modi said that despite being not an Indian, Mother Teresa dedicated her whole life serving the Indians. "Mother Teresa devoted her whole life serving the poor and destitute people in India. When such a person is conferred with Sainthood, it is natural for Indians to feel proud," PM Modi said in his "Mann Ki Baat" address on August 28. He noted that Mother Teresa was an Albanian and English was not her mother tongue, [ndtv.com](http://ndtv.com) reports.

"Mother Teresa is going to be canonized on September 4. We are sending an official delegation led by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj to represent 1.25 crore Indians at the ceremony," PM Modi said

Mother Teresa, who arrived in Kolkata on January 6, 1929, won numerous honours, including the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize. On October 19, 2003, she was beatified as "Blessed Teresa of Calcutta"

A second miracle was credited to her intercession by Pope Francis in December last year, paving way for her to be recognized as a Saint by the Roman Catholic Church. Her canonization is scheduled for September 4, a day before her 19th death anniversary.

Dear Friends, let us focus our minds on this great figure and seek God's bounteous blessing on all of us and our families through her.

With much Love and Prayerful Greetings,  
Your Affectionate Father and Friend

Dr. Fr. Mathew Pulingathil SDB  
Rector, SCSC



Dear Friends,

There are lots on your plate for this month. This itself is an indication of the way Alumni is growing and your presence in the world and little actions to make a difference is being acknowledged.

At SCS, on 5 September 16, the gratitude day and the International Charity Day, Mr Robert Lepcha, was felicitated for his 25 years of service in the College, as the Office Clerk and in the earlier years also as the Librarian.

This month will go down in the history of India as a glorious one with the canonization of Mother Teresa of Kolkata. I was recently at the Mother House, the Pilgrim Centre in Kolkata, and it was a touching experience. A place and a city that has brought glory to the country because of one person's daring interaction in the lives of the poorest of the poor.

Let me leave you with her words: "If I had not picked up that first dying person from the street I would not have picked up the thousand afterwards."

Warmly,

Fr George Thadathil sdb

Principal

Salesian College Sonada and Siliguri

"Do not wait for leaders;  
do it alone, person to person"

~Mother Teresa



## Mother Teresa and the Salesian Alumni

Fr. C.M. Paul sdb, Salesian College Sonada

Over a span of almost 50 years of her mission for the poorest of the poor several Salesians have crossed their path with Nobel laureate Mother Teresa. It is quite difficult to list contributions by Salesians to Mother Teresa over the years at the peril of not mentioning all.

### **Father Attilio Colussi: The Preacher**

The Salesian connect with Mother Teresa started on 7th October 1950, in the Cathedral of the Most Holy Rosary at the start of Mother Teresa's mission when parish priest Father Attilio Colussi preached at the first profession Eucharist held for the first batch of 12 Missionaries of Charity (MC) Sisters. Till his death in 1988 at the age of 81 Fr Colussi continued to assist spiritually the MCs. At spiritual retreats and conferences for religious Fr Colussi used to narrate the origins of Mother Teresa's call to serve the poorest and abandoned. The incident that took place when Mother Teresa was Headmistress of Loreto St Mary's School Entally for Indian children situated in the same campus of Loreto School Entally for European and Anglo-

Indian girls was a life changer.

In one of Mother's Geography classes in St Mary's, a girl fainted. On regaining consciousness the girl told Mother Teresa, "I have not eaten since yesterday. If only you come and see our homes in Mothijheel, then you will know poverty and starvation." In the same afternoon, Mother went with her Motijheel students to see for herself the pathetic conditions of her children suffering during the great Bengal famine of 1943 during which at least 3 million people reportedly died from starvation and malnutrition.

### **Father Luciano Colussi: The Catechist**

Father Colussi's nephew Father Luciano Colussi during his stay in Calcutta as founder of the Don Bosco Catechetical and Multimedia Centre (now called Nitika) invited two Salesians from National Catechetical Centre (LDC-Torino) in Italy in 1977 - Father Mario and Brother Guerrino Pera - to take slides of Mother Teresa's works for an audio visual programme entitled "Mother Teresa". Mother Teresa had also entrusted the "catechetical training"

of her junior sisters to Fr Luciano who was also the archdiocesan director for catechetics.

### **Father Joseph Thelekkat: Mother's Son**

Salesians of neighbouring Guwahati province too had interaction with Mother Teresa when Assistant Headmaster of premier Don Bosco School Guwahati Fr Joseph Thelekkat sent a group of his senior students for an excursion to Calcutta in 1977. Father Thelekkat instructed them to visit Mother Teresa who told them of her desire to start a home in Guwahati even in a rented place. Students reported Mother Teresa's wish to Father Thelekkat who mobilized people and in 1978 Dr K.C. Das offered one of his houses in Guwahati to Mother Teresa to start her work, says Fr Thelekkat.

Then Chief Minister of Assam Golap Borbora and civil dignitaries accorded Mother a warm welcome at District Library Guwahati. MC Sisters often refer to Father Thelekkat who later became provincial and currently principal of Don Bosco College Bongaigaon as "Mother's son." Father Thelekkat however recalls

that, though the people of Guwahati loved Mother Teresa, some of them objected to have Mother's poor and suffering people live in their locality. After the initial opposition some 40 years ago, today there are three Mother Teresa homes in Guwahati.

### **Father Strocio Rosario: The Chaplain & Exorcist**

Another Italian priest Father Strocio Rosario, a former provincial of the Calcutta province (1967 to 1972) became a controversial figure during his missionary work in Maliapota (Nadia Dist) when government served deportation order on trumped up 'conversion' charges. Mother Teresa stepped in and requested the government to have him as her chaplain to the MC Sisters at Prem Dan Tengra, a large rehabilitation center for T.B. patients. The authorities relented, withdrew the deportation order, and Father Strocio (now 94 years old) stays put at Auxilium Parish Tengra since 1979. In another instance, late Archbishop Henry D'Souza of Calcutta, asked Fr Strocio to pray over (read exorcise) the 87 year old Mother Teresa who was in the hospital with heart problem. Mother Teresa was suffering from insomnia and acting strangely. The Archbishop said of the situation that, "when doctors said they could not find a medical reason for her sleeplessness, I thought she might be getting attacked by the devil." After Father Strocio prayed over her, she was calm and slept peacefully. That was in 1997 during Mother's final illness.

### **Calcutta Street Children Ministry Collaboration-**

Mother Teresa encouraged Salesians to work for children found in the streets. "We shall take care of the girls, you take care of the boys" she said when Fr Anthony Thaiparampil started Ashalayam in the same room rented by Dominique Lapierre author of The City of Joy in Howrah's Pilkhana slum in 1985.

Former Ashalayam Directors Frs Mathew Parakonath and George Chempakathinal recalls how MC Sisters at neighbouring Shishu Bhavan in Pilkhana came to their assistance in the early stages of hardships. Mother Teresa came for the blessing of the first Ashalayam shelter in 1991 at Belileous Road Howrah and for second Ashalayam shelter at Bhattnagar in 1995. She also came for the inauguration of Ashalayam for girls started in 1993 under the care of Sisters Adorers. Till 1995 Christmas, Ashalayam children would go Carol singing to Mother House to share the Christmas spirit. Mother would come down and be with the children and distribute cakes to all.

### **Father Lukose Cheruval: Heeding the Call-**

Founder director of Snehalaya, home for street children, Father Lukose Cheruval recalls how his desire to work for the street children was born in 1991 as assistant Headmaster of Assam's premier Don Bosco School Guwahati, when he invited Mother Teresa to address students. When he shared his thoughts with Mother Teresa she assured him of her collaboration saying, "My Sisters will give you all the boys." That desire became a compelling call as Father Lukose sat at Netaji Indoor Stadium witnessing the state funeral accorded to Mother Teresa on 13 September 1997. On returning to Guwahati he resigned his job as secretary to archbishop of Guwahati and started his work for street children. Mother Teresa's Sisters took care of Father Lukose's boys for six months at MC Home Baralumuk Guwahati.

### **Salesians and MC Missions in Yemen-**

The Indian Salesians were invited to take up the mission of Yemen in 1987 when Giovanni Bernardo Gremoli O.F.M. Cap., was the Apostolic Vicar of Arabia and have continued rendering their services through priests from Salesians of Don Bosco Bangalore province till 5th March 2016 when the

last Salesian who stayed back in Yemen Fr Tom Uzhunnalil was kidnapped. Fr Tom followed the footsteps of his uncle Fr Mathew Uzhunnalial who was the pioneer in Yemen.

"Mother Teresa's intervention in this mission effort to Yemen is not known much," says former Salesian provincial of both Calcutta and New Delhi provinces Fr Joseph Kezhakkekara.

It was in 1986 that Fr Kezhakkekara, then provincial of Calcutta invited Mother Teresa to address the general chapter of Salesians of Don Bosco at their Generalate in Rome. After addressing some 200 chapter members from over 90 plus provinces representing some 120 plus countries, Mother Teresa made a surprise appeal to then Rector Major Fr Egidio Vignano.

"I would like the Salesian Congregation to help my Sisters working in Yemen said Mother Teresa," recalls Fr Kezhakkekara now in New Delhi. He adds, "Coming out of the Aula Magna of the Generalate Fr Vignano was quick to ask the Provincial of Bangalore province Fr Thomas Thayyil to send priests to Yemen." The Salesians from India were the only Catholic priests working in Yemen and render their services in four centres - Sana'a, the Capital; Aden, Hodeida and Taiz. In all these centres they worked in close collaboration with the MC Sisters present in the country since 1970.

### **Auxilium Parish Calcutta and Mother Teresa**

The Parish priest of Auxilium parish (estd. 1974) Fr John Puthieyathchali says, "our parish boasts of four centres of Mother Teresa including the first shed in which Mother started off her network of institutions since 1950 in Motijheel which today has some 600 Catholic families, Prem Dan and Shanti Dan (Sisters) and Deepshikha (Brothers). Father Kuzhipala Sebastian former parish priest of Auxilium and one instrumental to build the imposing church was a close associate of



**Top L to R: Frs Tom & Mathew Uzhunnalil; Frs Attlio Colussi & Strocio Rosario.  
Bottom L to R: Fr Joseph Thelekkatt; Fr Lukose Cheruvalel, Frs Sebastian Kuzhipala and Champanil.**

Mother Teresa. He established the Hathgachia Christian colony in early 1990s which the Kolkata Municipal Corporation was to demolish depriving poor Christians of their shelter. Fr Kuzhipala had Mother Teresa act in a most dramatic way to stop the Corporation bulldozers that came to clear the colony.

Later Fr Kuzhipala as parish priest of Berhampore also had a life size Mother Teresa statue installed in front of District Magistrate's Office in Bengal's Murshidabad district to mark her 10th death anniversary in 2007 along with a 3-day Mother Teresa international Film Festival hosted at iconic Rabindra Bhavan.

#### **Arunachal Missions and Mother**

Since 1977 Christian institutions were forbidden in the North Eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh. Two young Salesian priests Fr Jose Chemparathy (Itanagar) and Fr Job and George Palliparambil (now Bishop of Miao in Arunachal) were working in Borduria of Arunachal area in the early 1980s. In a chance meeting of Fr Chemparathy with Mother Teresa in Calcutta in 1986 she expressed her desire to send MCs to Arunachal. In 1992 the MC Sisters had their first home at Pappunalla near Naharlagan close to state capital Itanagar and their second home in

Borduria which Mother visited in 1993.

#### **Mother and Archbishop Menampampil-**

Archbishop emeritus Thomas Menampampil of Guwahati recalls Mother Teresa as a cleric in Salesian seminary Bandel in 1958. As former Bishop of Dibrugarh and newly appointed archbishop of Guwahati Thomas Menampampil accompanied Mother Teresa by car from Guwahati for the blessing of the first church in Arunachal at Borduria in 1993. Mother sacrificed Pope John II's invitation to go with him to World Youth Day in Denver to be in Arunachal. On another occasion in 1980 when Archbishop arrived on a delayed flight past midnight from Bombay to Calcutta Mother reached him to Salesian Provincial House Tengra and left only after he was taken into the house. "Mother gifted me seven convents in the dioceses of Dibrugarh and Guwahati," he said. He recalled how Mother Teresa threw the miraculous medal of Our Lady over the Berlin Wall and after its collapse gifted 15 convents (signifying 15 decades of the Holy Rosary) to the former USSR countries.

#### **Other Salesians and Mother Teresa-**

Salesian Provincial of Guwahati and President of Conference of Religious India Fr Thomas Vattathara claims of

miraculous healing by Mother Teresa's favour and has put together a calendar of civic and religious events to mark St Teresa of Calcutta's sainthood in Guwahati. He is leading a team of eminent artistes from Assam to the Rome celebrations. Among frequent retreat preachers to MC Sisters are Frs Sebastian Champanil and James Mathew. Mother and her sisters were frequent visitors to the historic Marian shrine of Our Lady of Happy Voyage at Bandel ministered by Salesians. Headmaster Fr Thomas Kayyalakal brought Mother Teresa to Bandel St John's School for its 125 year celebrations held in 1995 and organized a civic reception for Mother.

Fr Jacob Iruppakatt of Nitika Communications Calcutta had the first CD album of 10 songs on Mother Teresa entitled "Flame in the Slum" composed and released just 60 days after her death in 1997.

For her beatification in 2003 then Nitika director Fr C.M. Paul brought out a 16 minute video from rare Mother Teresa slides entitled "Blessed Teresa of Calcutta." The short film was curtain raiser for MTIFF 1 & 2 (Mother Teresa International Film Festival) which he founded and directed in 2003 and 2007. The short video was dubbed into nine Indian languages.

#### **Salesian Alumni & Mother Teresa**

Among Salesian alumni associated with Mother Teresa are Fr Orson Wells of Calcutta associated with Mother since 1959 and has installed the statues of Mother Teresa in several churches (Bamandanga, Moulali, Park Circus), Chairman of Mother Teresa International Award Committee Mr Arun Anthony Biswas, and CEO of Church Art Kolkata Mr Subrata Ganguly well known for Mother Teresa statues including the life size bronze statue sculpted and installed by him at Archbishop's House Calcutta, 26 August 2016. The statue was unveiled by Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to mark the canonization of St Teresa of Calcutta.



## Events organized by Salesian College Alumni Association

Kuljeet Kaur, Secretary, SCSC Alumni Association  
 Chanchal Agarwal, President, SCSC Alumni Association

On 14th August 2016, the Salesian College Siliguri Alumni Association gathered to celebrate their 1st Foundation Day along with pre-birthday celebration of Don Bosco.

The venue of the event was Salesian college Siliguri campus. Mr. Roshan Lama (Alumni of 2002 batch of SCS) was invited as special guest. Fr.(Dr.) Mathew Pulingathil, the Rector, Fr. (Dr.) George Thadathil, the Principal, Ms. Priyamrita Chaterjee the Coordinator, Mr. Chanchal Agarwal, the President along with other registered members of the association and faculty members were present.

The college campus was beautifully decorated by 'Dhwani' and 'Day' – the event planners which enhanced the ambiance for the event. The emcee of the day, Punit Garodia welcomed

everyone at the beginning followed by garlanding of the portrait of Don Bosco and lighting of the lamp by the Fathers, guest and the President. The secretary Ms. Kuljeet Kaur felicitated the chief guest.

The program continued with encouraging words from Fr. Principal, Fr. Rector and the Chief Guest Mr. Roshan Lama. He explained how strong determination can lead even a small group to achieve its goal. The most important thing for a group is the feeling of oneness and passion.

Further there was a wonderful dance performance by the students of the college followed by a solo performance by Kirit Satyal (Student of SCSC).

In between the performances, the lucky draw coupons were distributed among the members present and a quiz

was conducted by the emcee to just tickle our brain to recollect the events of Alumni Association. The winners were also awarded with special gifts. Awards and m e m e n t o s w e r e presented to those members whose dedication and hard works throughout the year have helped the

Association to achieve success.

The programme was concluded with the vote of thanks by Ms. Priyamrita Chatterjee, the Coordinator and the national anthem. Everyone then joined in for refreshments and enjoyed music followed by a group photo session. The day turned out to be a memorable and special one for each and every member who participated.

On 9th of August 2016 the members of Salesian College Siliguri Alumni Association had taken initiative to distribute lunch among the labourers and poor children of Siliguri market area. It was a delightful moment since all the members came forward to serve food and gave generous donations for this noble work.

The President, Mr, Chanchal Agarwal and the members, Mr. Shekhar Minda and Mr. Akash Poddar attended the Bosco Jayanti celebration of Calcutta Province Level Don Bosco Alumni meet and the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Don Bosco Azimganj Alumni unit on 21st August, 2016 at Azimganj.





## 'SCS Days, most formative years, says founder director of **AIDS prevention & Rehab NCO**



Fr. C.M. Paul sdb, Salesian College Sonada

Joseph Ngamkhuchung believes he spent the best instructional years of his life in training at Salesian College. The faculty and the training schedules helped him to get his priorities right and his determination focused so that he could develop his skills and his objectives in the right direction. He also learnt organization and management strategies that have helped him immensely in the work he now does full-time, the rehabilitation of victims of drugs and substance abuse. He feels he can't thank SC enough and is proud to 'carry the

training in religious and priestly organizations. In fact, his mentors and guides got him into his pre-High School training in Bandel seminary, near Kolkata, where he completed school. He moved on from there to complete his Pre-University in Shillong, Meghalaya. The religious ideals seemed to suit his objectives and he completed his novitiate in Shillong (in 1967), and then went on to complete his philosophy and BA studies [in Economics] in Salesian College by 1970. He returned to the Shillong area, to complete his 'practical training' by 1972. He then followed it up by completing the stipulated three-year course in theology in Bangalore in 1975.

### A 'right' turn

Life then took a sort of a definite 'right' turn, perhaps the appropriate direction, for him. Different events in life inspired him and he wanted to do more for his people. He took the advice of many of his friends and advisors and decided to take up teaching. It was during these gruelling yet exciting 15 years that he was able to do a Bachelor's Degree in Law (1990) and a Master's Degree in Literature (1991) that he believed would equip him for the life of service he wanted to undertake. He achieved both from Dibrugarh University (Assam).

### The SC Trademark

Joe believes that Salesian College planted those seeds of learning and service. The Economics he chose to do at his BA and the Psychology taught by Fr Peter Lourdes were perhaps the strongest pillars of

support he can rely on in his work today. He also benefitted from the caring support of Fr Verzotto and the insights into behaviour and etiquette from Fr Jellici.

He learnt above all from his hours of meditation and analysis that character formation was of the utmost importance, where responsibility and duty were personal goals. He had to strive to stay on the narrow road of commitment and dedication and not be influenced by peer-pressure that often brings on subtle misleading trends even in religious institutions. He feels he was able to stay resolute and to seek counsel from his ever-available counselors on the staff.

Salesian College also taught him the reading habit. He is so fascinated by books that he now has a personal library of over 3000 books. Again he benefitted from the advice Peter Lourdes had given him to 'Choose one newspaper or magazine and read it regularly, and you will develop a culture.' Many other little bits at SC contributed towards making him the personality that he has grown into. The Sunday Oratories (Youth Centre work) was one of them. They were wonderful opportunities to get to know people, especially youth, to prepare them for the youth work and the ministry they would be doing in future. The football matches with Goethals School and other colleges not only sharpened their sports' skills but taught them how to be competitive and how to interact in areas outside study and academic work.

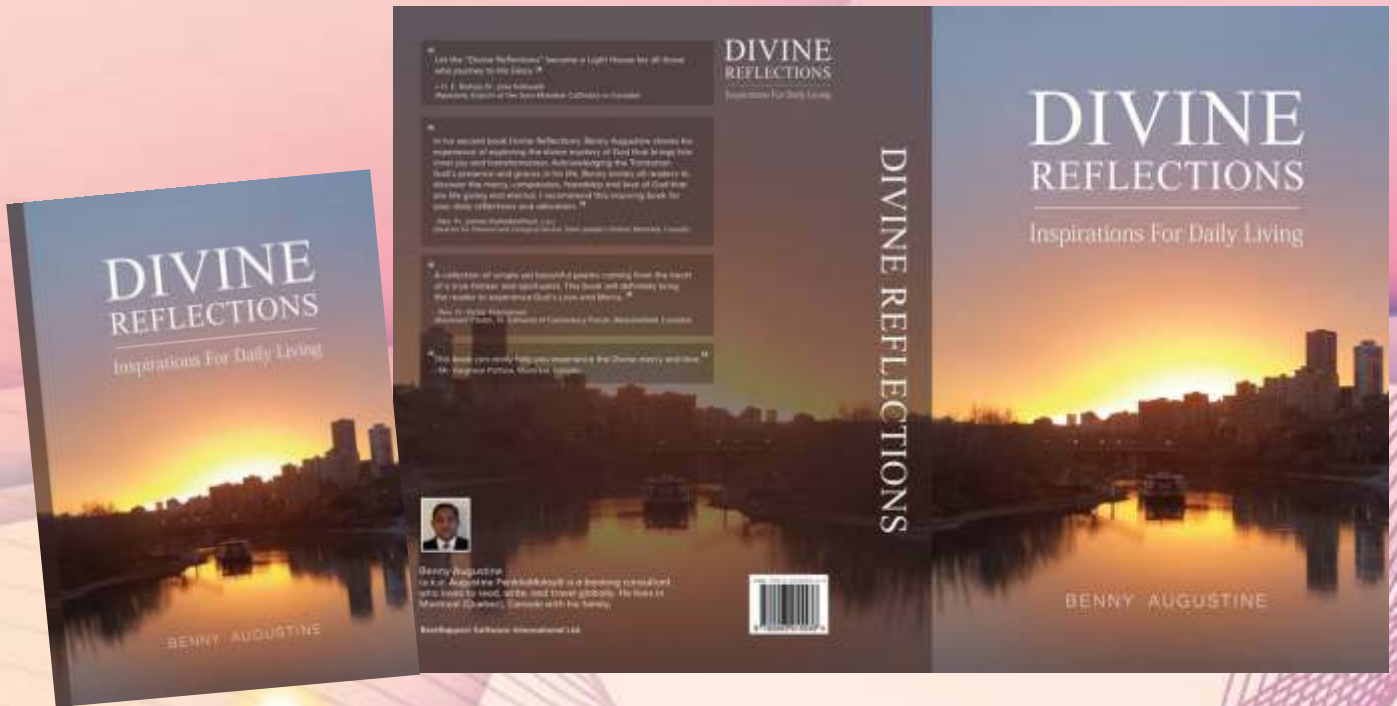


flame' wherever he goes and in whatever he does. The unique work he has done and continues to do with young people in rehab work singles him out as a truly outstanding SC Alumnus striving to be of service with expertise that the times require.

### Early desire to serve

Joe has always had the desire to be of service to people. His initial efforts towards that end took him into serious





## Greetings from Montreal, Canada

to all staff, students and alumni of Salesian Colleges, Siliguri and Sonada.

The last time I visited India for vacation, I was invited by Fr. Joffie Puthuva, SDB who was the Director of a Don Bosco apostolic school in Kerala to give a short talk to the inmates. Fr. Joffie was my classmate in Don Bosco High School, Mannuthy and I readily agreed. I will share with you in brief the message that I gave the students there that day. As some of you may have heard, Fr. Joffie passed away on 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2016 after a bike accident.

This made me reflect on life and death and the shortness of our lives. One week after the publication of my second book, “Divine Reflections”, this came as a big shock to me as I mourned the loss of a dear friend.

I told them that day about MIN, AVG and MAX persons that we can choose ourselves to be. It is all about our choices and attitudes. We can decide to give our best in everything according to our abilities and we become MAX persons and the MIN persons do just the opposite and the AVG people are somewhere in between. I exhorted them to be MAX persons...this is my wish and prayer for you all.

My second book, “*Divine Reflections*” is a good collection of spiritual, modern and contemplative reflections aimed to draw the reader closer to God's Divine mercy and love. These reflections will have an inspiring effect to live a renewed life! In the foreword, Bishop Dr. Jose Kalluvilil mentions, “May this book become a Lighthouse for all those who journey to His Glory”. This book is available on all amazon sites globally – just search for the Author or Title. The kindle and paperback versions are available.

- Benny Augustine (Montreal, Canada)



## *Congratulations*

Our heartfelt congratulations to Fr. Babu Joseph the Head of the Department of History at Salesian College Sonada for successfully completing his doctoral research and defence on Travel and Tourism on the hill station destination of Darjeeling on 19 August 2016. Fr Babu Joseph stakes his claim “to be the first priest to do a doctoral thesis in this mundane area of study.”

## From the Campus



Director of the Salesian College Community Radio organized a 3-day Radio Workshop for 54 students including Mass Communication students and others at Salesian College Siliguri, from 9th to 11th August 2016. Lecturer in the Mass Communication department at Salesian College Siliguri, Mr. Mohammad Johaed was the resource person and facilitator for all 3 days. A former student of Aligarh Muslim University Mass Communication



department Mr. Johaed is former Radio Jockey with BIG FM and RED FM. Radio Misty RJ Samir Chhetri and AD freak Patrick Johnson were also along with him during the session.



Salesian College Sonoda celebrated the fresher's day on 6th August 2016



The Salesian College Sonoda students organized a football tournament for girls at Lower Cedar Youth Centre on 7th August 2016. Four teams participated.



Salesian College Organised a Faculty Orientation and Strategic Planning facilitated by Prof Mark J. Pixley, Hong Kong University, from 17th -20th August 2016 at Salesian College Sonoda for both campuses. This exercise is part of the immediate preparation for the upcoming third NAAC visit scheduled for 2017.



Gaiety and patriotic fervour marked the celebration of 70th Independence Day in the Siliguri campus of Salesian College at 8:00 AM. Unfurling of tricolour and national anthem was followed by a speech delivered by the honourable Chief Guest Fr .C.M. Paul and performances by NSS volunteers.