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### **Report of the Ignatian Year (IY) Preparatory Meeting Held On 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Due to Covid-19 travel restrictions imposed around the country, the first preparatory meeting of the Province IY Team was held online using the Zoom technology on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at 8.15pm. All except Ahil Raj, SJ, were present for the meeting: Rashmi Fernando SJ (Ignatian Year Coordinator for the Province), Noel Ajanthan SJ (Ignatian Year Coordinator for the Pakistan Mission), Lawrence Loganathan SJ, Thurairasa Sahayanathan SJ, Alexis Premkumar SJ and Jude Deluxion, SJ.

- ❖ **Rashmi Fernando, SJ** started the meeting with a prayer and welcomed each and every member of the team mentioning their area of representation in the IY Team.
- ❖ As an introductory note, **Fr. Fernando, SJ** shared with the team 4 salient points from the Ignatian Year inaugural webinar of Fr. General held on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2020 with all the Coordinators of the Provinces: a) **Ignatius' conversion started with a failure** - It is a time for conversion, to look into our own cannonball moment, personally and collectively as a province; b) **Centrality of Christ in the Conversion of St. Ignatius** – Conversion of Ignatius moved him from being self-centred to be Christ-centred. During the IY, our focus should be on Christ; c) **What did Ignatius do after the conversion? He helped souls.** – It is a time to think of our collaboration with others, to make the UAPs more effective in our life-mission, to promote more vocations to the society; d) **It's a time for Renewal** – It is a time for renewal of our personal vocations, a time to rediscover our roots, rather than having mere celebrations of Masses, gatherings, etc.
- ❖ Briefing the Team about the IY preparations in the Conference level, **Fr. Fernando, SJ** shared with the Team certain initiatives which have already been taken: IY Calendar (thanks to the Chennai Province); Province Retreats focusing on IY; Web-based and Media-related initiatives on IY; Short Film, Poster, Drama Competitions on parish and school levels, Etc.
- ❖ Speaking on behalf of the Pakistan Mission, **Noel Ajanthan SJ** explained that the IY coincides with the 60<sup>th</sup> Year celebration of the Pakistan Mission and, as a result, they have already planned activities around the same. Accordingly, **Ajanthan SJ** explained that activities such as poster-making competitions in school level, visiting other parts of Pakistan for vocation promotion, organizing the ongoing formation of religious around the IY themes, having a theological seminar organized in collaboration with other Christians and Muslims, are already being planned for this year.

The members of the group then took turns to express their views and suggestions on '**What can we uniquely do as the Sri Lanka Province in this IY?**'

- ❖ **Promote Visibility of Jesuits in the Province during IY** - The IY is an opportunity to make ourselves known throughout the country since we have missions from one end to the other. For example, together with our youth and collaborators in different apostolates, we could organize a Cycling Tour across the country as a way of IY-pilgrimage.
- ❖ **Start a concrete venture in the Province to mark the IY** – Initiating a solid venture such as a school in plantation sector (Hatton), since there had already been a plan on this regard, is something worth considering.
- ❖ **Promote Eco-empathy in all our efforts in the IY** – All our efforts in the IY should be organized taking into consideration ecological dimension and, starting from our own communities, it is good to promote more eco-friendly activities and initiatives during the IY.
- ❖ **Province retreats to be organized on IY themes** - In view of renewing our personal vocation during the IY, province retreats to be based accordingly.
- ❖ **Call for a renewal of the whole province** - IY is an opportunity to look into ourselves as a Province (failures, strengths, weaknesses, threats, opportunities, etc.) and to renew ourselves through PAP.
- ❖ **Organize IY related events in our various apostolates** – The IY is a good occasion to make the life of St. Ignatius, the history Jesuits, etc. known to our parishioners, students, collaborators, youth, etc. and we could make it happened through various competitions and activities organized in our parishes, schools, Loyola campuses, Centres, etc.
- ❖ **Create a forum for young Scholastics to showcase their talents** - As the neo-scholastics are energetic and talented in one sundry ways, the IY can be an opportune occasion for them to showcase their talents in a common forum, be it through writings, or creating video clips on IY themes, or having a debate or two organized based on topics such as ‘Crucial Conversation’ between superior and subject, or having a common platform established for the Jesuit musicians in the Province to come together with their creative talents in composing songs/hymns in Tamil and Sinhalese, etc.
- ❖ **Have a renewal program for the young priests** – It is an opportune time for the young priests to come together as a province, to look into their sacred journey in the vocation, to renew themselves, and to feel together our way forward as a young collective body with a common mission and vision.

#### **Some recommendations emerged from the common discussion:**

- ❖ It is good to share the link of Fr. General's Webinar with all the members of the Province.
- ❖ It is time to change our mission and vision according to the present context of the Province.
- ❖ It is better to widen our forum before finalizing what to do in the IY. To this end, we can have suggestions from all the Province commissions and Teams, before finalizing the events to be implemented concretely as such.
- ❖ To serve the above, this report should be sent to all the Superiors/Commissions/Teams of the Province and with a period of 2-weeks given to them to respond with their ideas, suggestions, etc. for the IY.
- ❖ It is important to finalize a location to launch the IY and it would be meaningful if that place has any historical significance for SJ.

#### **The tentative agenda emerged for the next meeting, scheduled to be on 5<sup>th</sup> of Feb, at 8.15 pm:**

1. Finalizing the concrete plans to implement for the IY as a Province.

2. How do we monitor the implementation of the IY Plans? (Persons Responsible and means/process to follow, and budget for the IY).
3. Finalizing when and where to launch the Ignition Year as a Province.

Finally, **Rashmi Fernando SJ** expressed a word of thanks to each and every member for taking a lot of interest to participate in this meeting. In the same vein of thought he highlighted that this is a time of blessing for each individual Jesuit and for the Province of Sri Lanka as a whole to look into our own sacred roots and to renew ourselves as a Province. While the PAP in the light of UAPs is an invaluable opportunity to begin it with, **Fernando SJ** emphasized that all these efforts would be subjected to the ongoing Covid19 restrictions around the Province.

The meeting came to an end around 9.30 pm with a prayer said by **Jude Deluxion SJ**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rashmi', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rashmi M. Fernando, SJ

IY Coordinator for the SRI Province