

Youth Ministry

In the period between 1975 and 1980 Fr. George Peter sj, Fr, Irudaya Raj sj and Sr. Christine HC were involved in the youth ministry. Later, Br. Tony Dias sj and Denzil Madhavan sj joined them. The Jesuit juniors from XTTI would join them for any camps and seminars. The Involvement was mainly with the Patna city units of LTS and YCS. The YCS and LTS involvement consisted of weekly visits to the school units with a strong emphasis on Value Education. Camps were organized and representatives were sent from these units. They were organized with much success. During this period there was hardly any parish youth ministry except the work of Bob Grib sj among the youth of the Bettiah parish around 1975.

Fr. Joe Puryadam started the AICUF movement in Patna at Navdeepti Sadan, His work was continued by Fr. Zach Varikamakil sj, EC Sebastian sj, Tony Andrade sj, Deepak V.D'Mello sj, VJ Thomas sj and later by Fr. Jose Muthuplakal, a diocesan priest. They helped to consolidate the AICUF movement in Patna Women's College, Kurji, Barh, Bakhtiarpur, Buxar, Maner, Mokama, Muzaffarpur and Bettiah. A number of college students attended the Regional and National conventions in Kerala and Chennai.

Up to this point, this was a diocesan ministry with Jesuit involvement. Later the ministry was taken over by Jose Muthuplackal and Fr. Jose Chirackal, until in June 1991 it was handed over to the Jesuits as full fledged Jesuit Youth ministry under the coordination of Fr. Gregory Gomes sj. Since then the YCS , LTS and AICUF movements had revived, and camps were being organized successfully with themes like Self Discovery, leadership, personality development, social awareness, Human relatedness, Dalit issues, Unorganized labor, friendship and women issues. In recent times, de-addiction programs with the aim of understanding the psychology of Addicts and counseling them have been initiated. From the experience of the past few years, it is felt that the predominant concern was the organized youth i.e. the AICUF, LTS. YCS and as a result the unorganized youth in the urban and rural areas was untouched.

The new thrust given by the JYMSA in 1994 called for Youth commissions to be set up in the Province.

The first Province youth commission was headed by **Fr. Gregory Gomes sj** with Joseph Anthony doss, Valerian Deepak D'Mello, Donald Miranda, Ignatius Topno, Armstrong Edison, Gabriel Michael, Rajendran Francis, Peter Arokiasamy, Raymond Cherubim, as co members.

The following approaches were considered:

1. Have a full time diocesan priest associated with the organized youth and a Jesuit with the unorganized youth.
2. Train talented youth to assist the Jesuits in conducting camps and sessions.
3. Train lay personnel to assist.
4. Have religious sisters working full time.
5. Involve scholastics and train them to conduct camps and sessions.

In **1997**, the then PCYM, Fr. Gregory Gomes sj sent a letter as recommended by the JYMSA to frame a Vision, goal and objective for Youth ministry in our province.

On the 6 August 2000 the then Provincial, William D'Souza approved the honorarium of Rs. 2000/- for a Youth full timer working with James Shekhar, the diocesan youth Director for a period of one year and if need be for two years.

In December **2000**, Gregory handed over the charge to **Deepak V.D'Mello sj** who continued till July 2002.

Andrew James sj was appointed the next Coordinator in **July 2002** and the new members were Gregory Gomes, Joseph Anthonydoss, Tomy Joseph T, Raymond Cherubim, Augustus Minj, and Dinesh Kumar.

In **2006**, the commission was reconstituted with the new members -Benny Moolan, Vimal Kumar, Rajesh Jacob, Siluvainathan, Raymond Cherubim, and Jesuraj.

Siluvainathan was made the new Coordinator in **2008** soon after the World Youth Day **with** co members Gyan Prakash, Isidore Kerketta, Raj Kumar, Saji Mathew, Stephenraj, and Sushil Bilung.