

SVD-INE Celebrates Platinum

On November 20, 2023, the Divine Word Missionaries of the India East Province (INE) celebrated Platinum Jubilee



of its graceful and fruitful mission existence right from 1948 to 2023. The occasion was observed in two parts. On the previous day of the Jubilee, on 19th November 2023, was exclusively set apart for the confreres of the province for self-introspection and evaluation of SVD presence and mission work in the past



and challenges ahead. Rev. Fr. S. M. Michael, SVD, of the India Mumbai Province was entrusted to present a detailed report of the evaluation of the province's existence and its various missionary activities ever since it

was handed over by the Jesuit missionaries in 1948.

The Admonitor General and the representative of the generalate team, Fr. Xavier T. shared the message of the Superior General, Rev. Fr. Paul Budi Cleden, with all the confreres in the province and highlighted some of the important and memorable moments of the province in his short PowerPoint presentation. The first day also marked with the release of two volumes of well researched books on the Odia missionary literature written by Fr. Ignatius Soreng, SVD. The day one celebration was concluded with a brief video presentation of the mission in INE province prepared by Fr. Dixon Lawrence, SVD.

November 20, 2023, was the day of celebration with the lay-faithful-representatives from different mission stations established by SVD missionaries in the province. More than twelve hundred participants witnessed the event began with a solemn thanks giving eucharistic celebration. The dignitaries who graced the occasion were, the most Rev. John Bawra, SVD, the archbishop of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar, most Rev. Leo Cornelio, the bishop emeritus of Bhopal archdiocese, Most Rev. Telesphore Bilung, SVD, the bishop of Jamshedpur (Jharkhand) Bishop emeritus Lucas Kerketta, SVD, and the most Rev. Niranjan Sual Singh the bishop of Sambalpur diocese, including many priests, religious and SVD lay associates present for the occasion.



The provincials and regional of India SVD sub-zone, Rev. Fr. Paulraj, provincial INC, Rev. Fr. Tomi Thomas, provincial INM, Rev. Fr. Ignatius Santhuraja, provincial INH and Rev. Fr. John Kennedy,

regional superior of ING made the celebration feel more of SVD unity and inclusive.

The major superiors of different religious congregation working in close collaboration with SVDs in the province and also a good number of catechists of the mission parishes were specially thanked for their dedicated service and were honored on the occasion.

The presence of very Rev. Fr. T. Xavier, SVD, the admonitor general from the generalate team, and Rev. Fr. Pushpa Anbu, SVD, the education and formation secretary of the



society of the Society of the Divine Word made the celebration more special.

The messages of Fr. Xavier T., SVD and the Jesuit Provincial Rev. Fr. Jerry Mascarenhas S.J. of Jamshedpur Jesuit province was insightful, encouraging and a buster doze for the INE mission ahead.

The second part of the day-two celebration was very much missionary in nature. The capturing and heart touching moment was witnessed when the senior lay catechists, men and women, and their family members who played significant roles in the mission work with the SVDs were thanked and honored for their dedicated service.

A few dances from various local cultures and languages in the province were



presented by the people. Also a short ballet presentation on the handing over of the INE mission by the Jesuit missionaries to Divine Word Missionaries in 1948 was enacted by the youth of Sundargarh parish followed by a brief history of the mission was read out by Fr. Ignatius Soreng SVD, the

writer and director of the ballet himself. It was a brief but a heart touching moment that made the celebration alive of the historical past among the audience.

The various committees formed for the INE platinum jubilee celebration did their commendable job to make the occasion successful. The team work in the remote and immediate preparations for the entire event was much visible and was appreciated by the participants.



Over all the entire celebration was all inclusive and missionary in its nature. At the end of the program the Fr. Sunil Damore, the vice provincial of INE province thanked all the participants well-wishers, benefactors and the collaborators.