Dhingurpani, our New Mission in India

By Fr. Felix Kujur, M.SS.CC.

Dhingurpani is one of the forty parishes in the Diocese of Simdega in Jharkhand, India. It is located in a very remote rural area but is truly blessed with nature’s gifts of lush forests, mountains, streams and fertile valleys. The parish has nearly 500 Catholic families spread among nine substations. Generally the people are poor but content. They depend upon agriculture, animal husbandry and medicinal herbs, fruits and honey from the forest for their livelihood. There is no local public transportation or electric facilities. The people must depend upon private vehicles for transportation and solar or battery operated devices for lighting.

The Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts began their mission here in 2013 and are actively involved in pastoral and educational ministries. The parish lacks its own church and Mass and liturgical celebrations are conducted in the local school. The parishioners are deeply devoted to their parish community and their Catholic faith. Their attendance at the Sunday Eucharist is testimony to this. They actively participate in the Sunday Liturgy which is quite long and very creative with traditional dance for the entrance hymn. At the Offertory, every family offers something; a few grains of rice, vegetables or fruits from their hard work. Though most of the elders are illiterate, they recite the prayers and sing enthusiastically during the Eucharist.

Our parish priest, Fr. Felix Kujur, M.SS.CC. directs a number of Associations like the Legion of Mary for women, Krusveer (Soldier of the Cross) for youth and catechism for the children. He also regularly visits the families in the evenings as they share their struggles and problems. Fr. Felix works with them to discover better methods for farming and how to receive

Prayer is offered to begin the school day. Left to Right: Sr. Vineetha, Fr. Subash, Br. Suresh and Fr. Ranjit.

Fr. Felix and Fr. Subash visit with a family in the evening.

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better government aid. He is also making an effort to bring electricity facilities to the villages and provide housing sanitary facilities. The dream of the people is to have their own church for which they will sacrifice what they can give and freely offer their physical labor for construction. The CMC Sisters in the parish maintain a small health care program to provide basic medical treatment and first aid and they also collaborate with our priests in the education of the children.

The local school under the direction of Fr. John Subash, M.SS.CC. serves students from grade one to ten with 550 students. There is some government aid for the elementary grades, but the high school (grades 7 to 10) is maintained through private contributions and support from our Congregation. Fr. Subash is working to obtain government support for the high school as well if possible. He believes that the standard of the living depends upon the quality of education of the children. Therefore Fr. Subash is dedicated to improving the school and he dreams of adding a library and a computer lab.

Although naturally beautiful, it is a most difficult place to live but our Missionaries are deeply happy to serve and be of spiritual and moral support to the innocent, faithful people living there. It is a place where the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts face many challenges and obstacles to overcome, but are committed to serve diligently with the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fr. Felix gets to know one of his youngest parishioners.

Jubilee Year Announced Celebrating Bicentennial of Ordination of St. Gaetano Errico

On July 14, 2015 by mandate of Pope Francis, the Apostolic Penitentiary granted the celebration of a Jubilee Year from September 23, 2015 to September 23, 2016 in celebration of the Bicentennial of the priestly ordination of the Founder of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, St. Gaetano Errico.

In each of the Communities of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts around the world special celebrations will be planned for the coming year. Those who join in the special functions where possible and complete the spiritual obligations set forth will obtain a Plenary Indulgence. It is hoped that these activities of this special Jubilee year will help the faithful to know and grow closer to our beloved Founder, St. Gaetano.
Prayer for the Year of Consecrated Life

God, throughout the ages you have called women and men to pursue lives of perfect charity through the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. During this Year of Consecrated Life, we give you thanks for these courageous witnesses of Faith and models of inspiration. Their pursuit of holy lives teaches us to make a more perfect offering of ourselves to you. Continue to enrich your Church by calling forth sons and daughters who, having found the pearl of great price, treasure the Kingdom of Heaven above all things. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Fr. Michael Messaro, M.SS.CC.
Retires as Pastor of St. Mary’s and St. Rita’s, Fairfield, Pennsylvania

On June 30 after 17 years of dedicated leadership, Fr. Michael Messaro, M.SS.CC. retired as Pastor of St. Mary’s parish, Fairfield, PA and St. Rita’s parish in Blue Ridge Summit. Fr. Michael, a native of Camden, NJ entered the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts in 1961. After completing his studies at the Propagation of the Faith Pontifical University in Rome, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1968. Fr. Mike also attained a Master of Divinity and a MA in Biblical Studies at St. Charles Seminary, Philadelphia, PA. He previously served as Associate Pastor, Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Linwood, NJ, and Our Lady of Fatima/Mt.Carmel in Camden, NJ. He was appointed as Spiritual Director of the Jornada Movement in the Camden Diocese from 1981-1991 while also serving as Pastor of Our Lady of Fatima/Mt.Carmel.

In 1992, the Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts assumed the staffing of the two sister parishes. Although retiring from full time ministry as Pastor, Fr. Mike will continue to serve in substitute ministries. The Missionaries are now staffing St. Joseph’s in Bonneauville and St.Andrew’s in Waynesboro. Fr. Robert Malagesi, M.SS.CC., former Associate Pastor, has been installed as Pastor of St. Mary’s and St. Rita’s parishes.

Fr. Michael Messaro, M.SS.CC.

Message from Fr. John . . .

This June I celebrated my 25th anniversary of ordination and many of my friends and Confreres along with their best wishes asked me how I felt about my 25 years. I guess this question drew me to think about what I had been taught by the day to day experiences in working with the faithful, sharing in their happy times and in their difficult times. I have spent many of those 25 years in parish work and in Chaplaincy work in facilities for the aged and infirm. For sure, working with the physically challenged reminds me daily of the blessing of good health, especially as I am now older. For without good health and mobility, life can bring many crosses. It also tells me of the importance staying ‘right with the Lord and one’s brother’ throughout life. For life can end quickly, unexpectedly and the opportunity might not be there to ask for forgiveness and make amends. I have witnessed the profound sadness and regret in the eyes of those who at the end of life, let those moments slip by unacted upon. I pray this lesson will remain vivid in my own heart and mind as I move forward in my life. I know I will need the grace of God to keep “right with my God and my brother” but I want to work my hardest to do just that. As I hopefully begin my next 25 years of serving God, I offer my heartfelt thank you for His guiding hand on my shoulder.


Father John Perdue, M.SS.CC.

Father John, M.SS.CC.