



FABC
OSC

Communication | N F O

FEDERATION OF ASIAN BISHOPS' CONFERENCES - OFFICE OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

P.O. Box 2036, Manila 1099 Philippines

Tel: (+63 2) 732 7170, 338 7769 Fax: (+63 2) 732 7171

Email: fabc_osc@pltdsl.net

Vol. XXIV, No. 10

October 2009

THAILAND: SIGNIS WORLD CONGRESS IN CHIANGMAI

More than 600 Catholic communicators and media professionals from around the world gathered at the second world congress of Signis, the Catholic association for communication, in Chiangmai October 17-21, 2009. The event, which was themed "Media for a Culture of Peace - Children's Rights, Tomorrow's Promise," was hosted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Thailand, its episcopal commission for social communication, and Signis-Thailand. The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, and Archbishop Claudio Ma. Celli, president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, each sent a special message to the congress. Three strands categorize the inputs by invited experts, who addressed the congress in plenary and in parallel sessions: (1) current global issues on human rights and children's rights, (2) emerging perspectives on media and social transformation, and (3) reflections and challenges of growing up in a digital age. Conference papers and related information are available at: www.signisworldcongress.net

TAIPEI: RICCI INSTITUTE PUBLISHES CHINESE CHRISTIAN SOURCES

The Taipei Ricci Institute has published a collection of 26 volumes with over 15,000 pages of hitherto unpublished Chinese texts about topics ranging from Western science, religion, biographies of missionaries and converts, to Aristotelian philosophy, geography and astronomy. All the 190 texts reproduced were written in the 17th and 18th centuries, before 1820, and were kept at the National Library of France. (CNAsia)

PHILIPPINES: SEMINARIANS' MEDIA TOUR

Fifty-six first year theology students of Divine Word School of Theology (DWST) in Tagaytay engaged in an all-day "Media Tour" on September 17 visiting four media enterprises as part of their formation in social communication. The tour included visits to the National Printing Office, the National Broadcasting Network channel 4, Radio Veritas Asia studios, and the site of the 30th Manila International Book Fair. Divine Word Father Franz-Josef Eilers organizes this tour yearly since he started teaching social communications at DWST in the mid-1980s.

INDIA: 'CATHNEWS INDIA' LAUNCHED

CathNews India, a daily e-mail newsletter especially designed for Church people, was launched on Sept 9 with a promise to enhance the communication efforts of Indian Christians. CathNews India is the newest web publication of the Union of Catholic Asia News (UCANews), Asia's largest Catholic news network. "The free newsletter and website cathnewsindia.com are part of series of country-specific media ventures that UCANews plans to launch across Asia," said UCANews Executive Director Father Michael Kelly. UCANews was launched in 1979 to provide news to Catholic print publications in Asia on Catholic concerns in the region. (CNAsia)

INDIA: FOUR BOOKS BY TWO JESUIT AUTHORS RELEASED

Three new books authored by Gujarati writer Father Varghese Paul, sj and the third edition of "*Khristi Darshan*" by Father Carlos Valles, sj were released as part of the jubilee celebrations of the Catholic Information Service Society (CISS) in Ahmedabad on Sept 28. Fr. Paul's books include a collection of inspirational essays, a collection of editorial articles he has written for the Catholic family magazine, "*Doot*," and an English book titled "How to Make Life Worth Living." Fr. Valles, who flew in from Spain to attend the function, released his book about Jesus. Bishop Thomas Macwan of Ahmedabad graced the occasion together with more than 350 people in attendance. (SAR NEWS)

MALAYSIA: INTERNET BREAKS 'MONOPOLY ON TRUTH'

Internet journalism pioneer Steven Gan said the Internet has helped boost press freedom and broken the hold governments and big media have held on information. "The Internet has exerted tremendous influence on our society in changing the way we work, learn and play," Gan said in an interview. He cited the contribution of *Malaysiakini*, the widely read news website which he co-founded a decade ago, in promoting democracy amid government and mainstream media efforts to censor and monopolize truth. At the Signis World Congress in Chiangmai, Thailand, Steven Gan spoke about "Media for Social Transformation" and "Media in the Internet Age." (CNAsia)

SINGAPORE: PRIESTS-TO-BE LEARN ABOUT THE PRESS

Sixteen seminarians from St. Francis Xavier Major Seminary (SFXMS) together with its Rector Father William Goh and Dean of Studies Father Kenson Koh toured Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) on August 26 where they observed an editorial meeting and exchanged views with SPH Catholic journalists. The seminarians also got a peek into the other media businesses of SPH and a briefing on the operating principles of The Strait Times. The visit is part of the seminarian's exposure to the social sphere and helped them realize that journalists and the press in Singapore seek to find and tell the truth and do so responsibly. (CN)

INDIA: PASTORAL COMMUNICATION PROGRAM HELD

A four-day Pastoral Communication Course was organized by the CBCI (Catholic Bishops' Conference of India) Commission for Social Communications, at the Social development Centre, New Delhi on Sept 2-5, 2009. Some 49 priests and religious sisters attended the program. The topics discussed by experts covered issues like integrating social communications in pastoral ministries for schools, parishes, social and medical work. The participants went through media content analysis from a pastoral perspective. Resource persons included CBCI's national media director, Fr George Plathottam, sdb, and Fr. Jacob Srampickal, sj, communications director of Gregorian University in Rome. (CBCI NEWS)

INDIA: CATHOLIC COMMUNITY RADIO AIMS TO FIGHT SECTARIANISM

St. Aloysius College in Mangalore has launched the FM-community radio facility, “*Sarang*” (harmony of colors) on Sept 23 in a function attended by State Governor H. R. Bharadwaj and Bishop Aloysius Paul D’Souza. The station promises to address various issues affecting local people, and to promote sectarian harmony in the southern Indian town that in the past year had been hit with communal violence. Its director, Jesuit Father Richard Rego, said *Sarang*’s listeners are mostly young people and the programs are produced mainly by the college’s journalism students. This is the second community radio in India managed by an educational institution. Test broadcasts were conducted in June and received positive response from the local people. (CNUA)

POPE GIVEN CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA IN JAPANESE

On Sept 23, Pope Benedict XVI was given the last volume of the New Catholic Encyclopedia in Japanese, the final part of a 30-year project. The gift was given by Archbishop Giuseppe Pittau, director of the administrative council of Sophia University in Tokyo. The university has supported that project, which started in 1981, in view of its 100th foundation year to be celebrated in 2013. The new volume is an update of a 1960 edition, incorporating new content especially from the Second Vatican Council. (ZENIT)

PAKISTAN: RADIO VERITAS ASIA URDU SERVICE SETS THEME FOR NEXT YEAR’S PROGRAMS

The management committee of Radio Veritas Asia (RVA) Urdu Service held its 6th annual meeting on October 10 at the Rabita Manzil Center in Lahore. Father Nadeem John Shakir, Rabita Manzil director and overseer of program production for RVA, told the assembly that next year’s programs will revolve around the theme “Culture of Tolerance” to further promote peace, harmony, brotherhood, love and human respect. From 2010, the problem experienced in program reception will also be addressed with the introduction of a new frequency, the priest said. Radio Veritas Asia, based in Manila, Philippines, is an FABC project. (RM)

SRI LANKA: UPROAR OVER JOURNALIST’S SENTENCING

Rights advocates, including priests, have criticized the decision of the Colombo High Court to sentence Tamil journalist, Jayaprakash Sittampalam Tissanayagam, to 20 years imprisonment. Tissanayagam, a Christian, was arrested on March 7, 2008 but only charged and sentenced on August 31. Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, he was convicted for attempting to cause acts of violence, disharmony and for attempting to cause disrepute to the government. His lawyer, Anil Silva, meanwhile said, his client did not work for himself but “for workers, youths, and parents whose children had gone missing. He even wrote against the LTTE’s (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) recruitment of child soldiers.” (SE)



INDIA: POSTAGE STAMP ON ST. JEANNE RELEASED

Karnataka State Governor, H. R. Bhardwaj, released a postage stamp in honor of Catholic Saint Jeanne Jugan, foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor congregation, in Bangalore October 29. Archbishop Bernard Moras of Bangalore, Chief Postmaster General of Karnataka, M. P. Rajan, and state legislators were present at the function. The stamp marks the canonization and 130th death anniversary of St. Jeanne Jugan who later became known as Mother Marie of the Cross. The saint was beatified in 1982 and canonized in 2009. (SAR NEWS)

HONG KONG: DOCUMENTARY ON CARDINAL ZEN WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD

Doris Law Suk-yi’s documentary on Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kun titled “Zen’s Way” has won an award at the 2009 Religion Today Film Festival. Law, a Catholic journalist working for Hong Kong Cable Television (HKCTV), beat five other competitors in the “Religion and Society” category of the film festival held in several Italian cities from October 14-24. The 46-minute documentary follows Cardinal Zen’s daily life from 2007 until early 2009 and activities with minorities. Cardinal Zen is known for being vocal on social issues, daring to criticize the human rights record in China and the situation of the Church in China. He also fought for the right-of-abode for mainland-born children of Hong Kong residents and for greater democracy in Hong Kong. His efforts to promote religious freedom in mainland China was “hardly a rewarding act, but as a prophet, it is the Way of the Cross that he must walk,” Law said. Cardinal Zen retired in April 2009. (CNUA)

INDIA: MEDIA TRAINING FOR PRIESTS

The social communication commission of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI) has organized a two-day meeting among communication experts and seminary formators in Bangalore Sept 7-8. The meeting refined and fine-tuned a resource book “Communications in Formation” intended to be introduced in seminaries across the country. The book is the result of a year-long effort to tailor formation programs in seminaries and produce priests with effective communication skills. (SAR NEWS)

‘COMMUNICATING IN COMMUNITY, INTRO TO SOCIAL COMMUNICATION’ 4TH EDITION RELEASED

“Communicating in Community, Introduction to Social Communication” was published in a fourth, updated edition in August this year. The 388-page book includes an exposition by author Franz-Josef Eilers, svd on “social communication,” the concept first used at the Second Vatican Council and now, even in non-Church circles. Fr. Eilers explains human communication, all its ways and means including new media, and their use in Church ministries. He also discusses “communication theology,” looking at theology from the perspective of God, the communicating God. Since its first publication in 1994, “Communicating in Community” has been the standard textbook for seminaries and formation houses in Asia and beyond. Fr Eilers is the executive secretary of the FABC-Office of Social Communication. He has taught at the Gregorian and Salesian Universities in Rome. Currently, he teaches at the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas in Manila. For details, contact Logos Publications, Manila at info@logospublishations.com or fax to +632 7322736.

“...the necessary appreciation of new media technologies must be supported always by a constant vision of faith...” - Pope Benedict XVI’s address to the Pontifical Council for Social Communications Meeting Vatican City October 29, 2009