

“LET US ALSO GO, THAT WE MAY DIE WITH HIM” John 11,1

APOSTLE

Newsletter of the SSPX; #1 Marcel Lefebvre Place, Annie Nagar, Sivalaperi Rd , Palayamkottai, 627002

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Once again the India Mission sends you a report on the activities and happenings of our humble apostolate on the Deccan peninsula. It is certainly true that not a day passes here without the noticeable presence of God. Whether it be in the miracle of grace working upon the soul of pagan or some new cross which is to be borne by the Catholic faithful, God is glorified and exalted. There are times of profound consolation and unspeakable trials which encompass the life of the faithful and priests in this mysterious land.

You can see the pages to follow a few notable events at the priory of the SSPX in India: The starting of a traditional Catholic

school for the hostel boys and the orphanage children, the boys from the orphanage moving into the priory hostel (leaving only girls and women at the orphanage), the pre-seminarians going to stage two of their training, the construction of the Nagercoil and Trichy churches making some headway. We have also had several volunteer helpers coming from Ireland and the United States.

As always, we continue to keep all our friends and benefactors in our prayers and we beseech the same from all of our readers.

In Maria,

Fr. Patrick Summers



Veritas Academy: June 2006.

Much to the dismay of the priests, the fledgling school begins on the ground floor of the priory due to delays in the leasing of school building. Finally, in its fourth week, the school was ready to be occupied.

St. Francis Xavier in South India

His First Encounter with Hinduism

Tuticorin had a mixed population. A good many pagans lived here among the Christian Paravas and Saint Francis for the first time came into close contact with the pagan beliefs and practices of India. One could only enter a temple barefooted. There in the darkness of the sanctuary and in the dim light of an oil lamp could be seen grinning down at the visitor an ugly, black idol, ill-smelling from the coconut oil with which it was smeared. There were numerous images of the gods in the temple and wayside chapels, on the borders of the streets, and in the fields. These were made of wood, clay, metal and stone in every possible form. Frequently they were only heaps of sand, earth, or stone shaped like little pyramids. Those who passed by them tossed upon them as a sign of respect a handful of sand, a stone, or the twig of a tree so that the devil living within them might not harm them. Besides these, there were stones with the fearful portrait of a cobra with either one or seven inflated heads, or of a reclining, stone bull, the sacred mount of Shiva, or of a peacock, the mount of the god Subramanya, and representations of gods and goddess with many arms and all kinds of symbols, and especially that of the bloodthirsty Kali. Among these were Hanuman, the ape-god; Puleyar, the fat-bellied god with an elephant's trunk, frequently placed at a street crossing so that he could watch for a mate who would be more beautiful than his mother, a devil in the form of a crow; gaily painted horses, cows, and elephants made of a clay, the mounts of the protecting god of the village and his companions when they set out at night to drive the evil spirits from the fields; and statues of temple guards with raised, menacing clubs.

The Brahmans were the priests of the temples and lived off of their revenues.

Twice a day a trumpet made from the shells of tritons, gongs, and drums announced the offerings that they brought to the gods; rice and curry fruit, melted butter, palm sugar, flowers, and incense. When the aroma of the food had been dissipated, the priests ate the offerings, using banana leaves as plates. They never tasted meat. On feast days, the idol was adorned with precious ornaments and led in solemn procession through the streets with loud music. The priests, who were held in the highest esteem by all the people, could tell many ridiculous and even filthy stories about their gods. The Brahmans bathed every day and scrupulously avoided any contacts with the lower, and especially the unclean castes. They took careful note of the distinction between good and bad days, between favorable and unfavorable omens. When a child was born, an astrologer was called to take its horoscope in order to see if the infant had seen the light of day under a favorable or unfavorable constellation; and countless were the ceremonies which had to be observed from dawn to dusk and from birth to death.

The religion of the pagans was, especially for the common people, a religion of fear. If one died a violent death, his spirit found no rest and wandered about as an evil demon. In fact, the whole world was full of evil spirits, of bloodthirsty devils who had to be pacified with sacrificial offerings. When the Brahmans lacked provisions, they threatened the people with the wrath of gods in order to obtain what they needed. When a woman was expecting a child or when someone fell ill, a Brahman was called to pronounce his *mantras* over them and to tell the people what must be offered at the pagoda that their prayers might be heard. Before a suppliant brought his offering, he anointed himself with oil, washed his body, cleaned his teeth, rubbed his body with fragrant sandalwood, cooked a mess of rice, killed a goat, or some chickens, and had a meal with his companions near the temple.

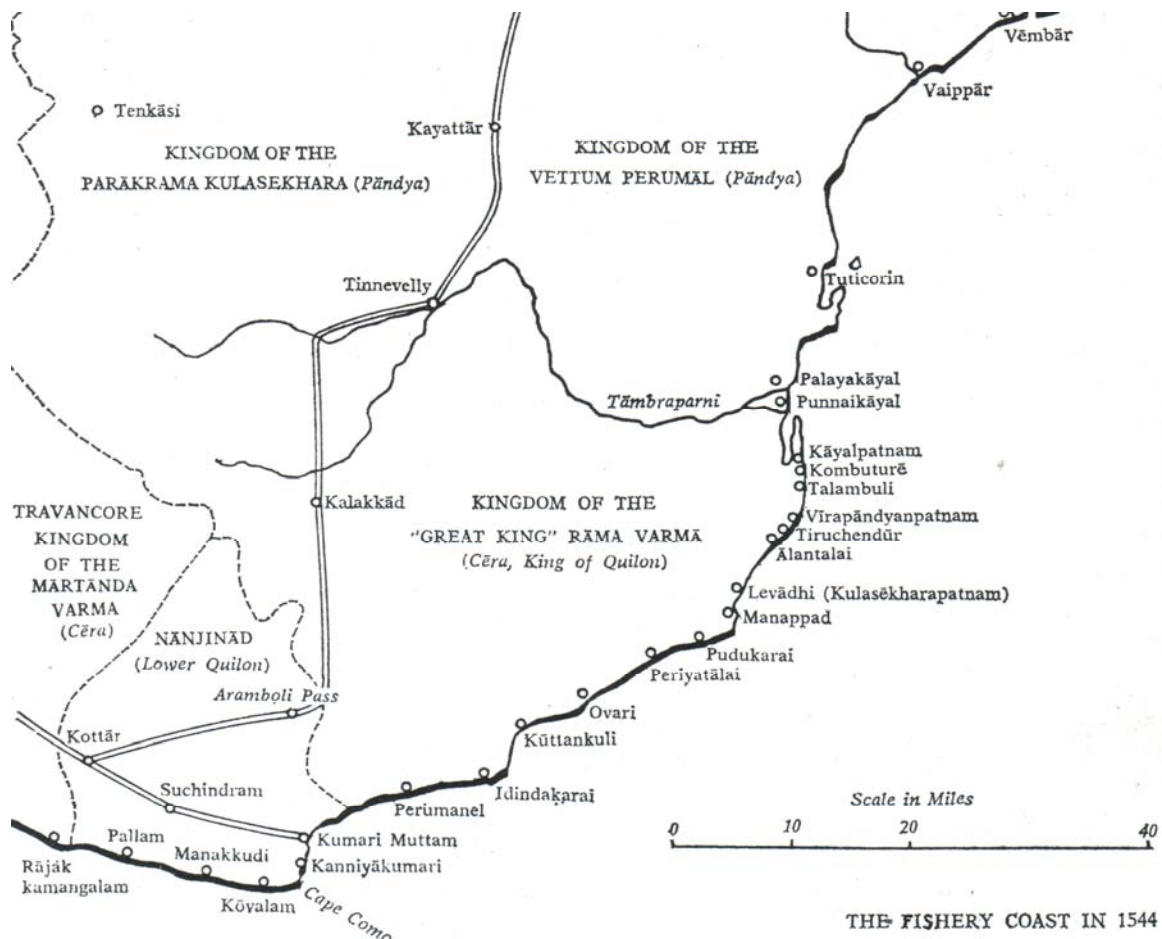
At other times a reunion would be held in the house of the house of the sick person at night. Animals would be slaughtered, for the demons who caused the illness longed for blood. Palm wine was passed around, and while the reveling was going on to the light of oil

lamps, a devil-dancer, a man from a lower caste, came into the cottage fantastically tricked out as a demon with brass bells and ankle bones. The musicians kept time with drums, cymbals, and bells. The dancer moved slowly at first with irregular, convulsive gestures, as all watched in silence. Then the music and the dancer's movements increased in tempo, his leaps became wilder and more frenzied as the musicians, in the room reeking with the smell of blood and arrack, whipped him into a state of madness with their instruments and cries. Suddenly the dancer stopped. His glazed eyes stared through the darkness. The spirit had taken possession of him and now spoke through him. All present threw themselves as if dead upon the floor and prayed to the demon within him. He answered their question, gave the name of the devil that had caused the sickness, and indicated how many *fanams* [ed. *old south Indian money*] and how much cloth should be given, and how many goats or hens would have to be sacrificed to him so that he would not slay his victim.

When a man died, his body was burned, and his widow had to follow him into the next world. A great funeral pyre was kindled in a trench and the wife was brought to it dressed in festal garments, her neck and arms adorned with golden ornaments. As the village musicians played their instruments, the widow's relatives danced with her about the pyre, removing her jewelry and clothing piece by piece. After she had been made drunk with palm wine, her closest male relative danced once more with her about the ditch and then shoved her into the fire, which, being fed with oil, consumed its victim within a few moments so that not even a bone remained of her. If a widow refused to allow herself to be burned, she was repudiated by her relatives and condemned to a life of shame.

(Excerpts from: *Francis Xavier; His Life and Times. Vol II.* by Georg Shurhammer. S.J.)

Below: The Southern Tip of the India. The SSPX has five Mass centers in this region where St. Francis Xavier worked almost 500 years before. The priory is located in the center of this map, the city of Tinnevely.

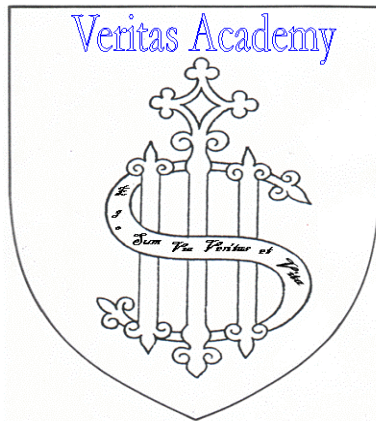


The Launching of Veritas Academy

June 12th is a day to remember for the priests, faithful and children in South India.

Without much fuss or fanfare, the first day of classes at Veritas Academy began for al-

most 30 children. There has long been a need for an integrally Catholic school in Tamil Nadu. All the priests posted here have remarked upon the sad state of the Catholic schooling which is seen across India (and elsewhere in the world). The bureaucratic obstacles have always been a deterrent to the creation of a traditional Catholic school. Recently, an unforeseeable event occurred which provided the stimulus for the launching of a school. The transfer of an entire orphanage from another state to be closer to the priory and tradition (*see APOSTLE XI*) brought some serious and far reaching questions to the priests. Almost 20 young children have received Baptism and superb catechetical instruction within the past year. The question arises then, "Do we send these impressionable and pure souls to the local apostate Catholic schools, or even the government schools, both of which teach lies, propaganda and everything except the true faith?" On



the supernatural level they are totally deficient and also on the natural level these schools are a man-made disaster zone. Considering all these points and constant experience, there seemed to be absolutely no option except to begin our own Catholic school, however modest. After gaining permission from the District Superior, the prior sat down to take a hard look at the obstacles that must be overcome to make the school project happen. Legally, the obstacles could be sidestepped by calling the school a "Tuition Center" and using the school of a close friend to "register" the children officially.

The other obvious problems which had to be faced were teaching and curriculum. A small description or summary of the problem should be helpful to our readers. Aside from a few exceptions, the method of teaching which is found here does not follow the true principles of pedagogy. It must never be forgotten that most schools here are an investment, a business venture, and as such, the actual learning and understanding of the students is always going to take second place after the bottom line. Since the financial considerations are of utmost importance, the teachers are compelled primarily to do whatever is necessary to make the school a business success, not firstly to make certain that their students are learning and comprehending the subject at hand. If the students of a school obtain high marks on the government exams, the school prospers financially, since more students are enrolled in the school the following year by parents eager to have their children get high marks. Finally, therefore, it behooves a school to order the curriculum towards the constant review and memorization of innumerable facts, figures, and essays which will appear on the government exams. Although this is not the only problem with the education system here, it is certainly a large part of the problem. Added to this problem is that the common curriculum is full of liberal propaganda, irrelevance, and gravely negligent in subjects that are truly important.



Above: Dr. Sunil introduces the older girls class to the rudiments of the beautiful Latin language.

A Catholic curriculum was provided to Veritas Academy by the good graces of Our Lady of Victories in Idaho, USA. Most of the children cannot speak or read English, but it was still decided to make it an English medium school. More than 20 teachers were interviewed from a local Catholic teaching college and only several were found to be potential candidates. From that group one teacher was hired, two were hired from within the parish and for the rest of the teachers the priests looked inside our small house community. The six pre-seminarians had recently finished one year of classes and it was decided that they could now help with the teaching of the children. The prior would teach a Bible History class to the older students and the pre-seminarians would teach



Above: The desks and chairs stacked after classes in the corridors on the ground floor of the priory in the difficult first few weeks of operation.



Above: The boys anxiously awaiting dismissal.

basic English, Latin, Tamil, Hindi and some mathematics. Utilizing the helpful books sent by Our Lady of Victories (and C-Link), the children (spread from grades 1 – 7) would be given two separate English classes each day (English grammar and speaking English). Further, they have a Catholic science class, Bible history, Latin, Hindi, Tamil, and Mathematics. Once a week the girls are given a sewing class and the boys are given a singing class.

As mentioned on the cover page, the first weeks were spent on the ground level of the priory, since the school building was not able to be rented until July. The boys vacated their bedrooms each morning after breakfast and unstacked the desks, arranging them in each classroom. Then at 4 pm, the

process would be reversed, stacking the desks in the corridors and reclaiming their bedrooms.

The first quarter of school was recently completed and the progress of the children is a source of consolation to the teachers and priests. All the children and teachers at Veritas Academy continue to beseech your prayers for the continuance of this humble school which is trying to forge a new path within the Indian education system. It is not by chance that the name and motto “*Ego Sum Via, Veritas et Vita*” were chosen. Truly, it is in this country that we have such need of Our Lord and His truth. “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”



Above: The girls lineup before the first class.

News from the India Mission



Top: The girls piously prepare the flower petals for the Corpus Christi procession at the priory.

Bottom Left: Miss Ora teaches the basic English class at Veritas Academy. She came from Ireland to spend her work holidays in helping at the orphanage and did very good service to the fledgling school as well.

Bottom Right: Sister Maria Jovita (originally from Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu) in Switzerland after making her profession as an Oblate of the SSPX. Ad Multos Annos!





Top: Kelly O'Neill and Daniel Moats help Fr. Summers play the most beautiful sport this side of heaven. Everyday at 5:30 pm sharp the boys exchange their school books for soccer boots and head out to the field. The boys can expend their frustrations and learn teamwork at the same time.

Right: Deo Gratias! The disassembling of the former shed "chapel" at the priory. For more than two years the parish Mass was held in this primitive structure. All the faithful and especially the priests were happy to see it demolished.



Bottom Left: "Father, what do we do during recess?", complained the girls. Five minutes later the girls were playing "Go Fish" and "Blackjack" while the priest supervised and made certain that they spoke only in English.

Bottom Right: The children certainly seem happy to be at Veritas Academy.



#1 Priority = PRAYER

The boys are trained in the traditional liturgy of the Catholic Church and are taught reverence and respect in the house of God. Here they serve the Missa Cantata for the Feast of the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord. It is especially necessary in these modern times to impress upon the youth an awe and reverential fear of the Divine Presence. All Catholics know that "Fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom. "



#2 Priority = WORK

The children also have a weekly schedule of chores which need to be completed each day. Here three boys move dirt for leveling the porch in front of the house. One of the greatest problems faced by parents and educators is trying to keep the children busy and occupied. How true is dictum, "Idle hands and mind are the devil's workshop".

#3 Priority = PLAY

Certainly the easiest priority for children to accomplish. By watching the boys play, the priests are able to determine much about the character of the child.

Nota Bene:

**USA donations for the work of the India Mission in can be sent to to Regina Coeli House, 2918 Tracy Avenue. Kansas City, MO 64109.

** **European** donations can be sent directly to the General House, Priorat Mariae Verkundigung, Schwandegg, 6313 Menzingen ZG, Switserland. Simply mark it "For India".

Or donations can be sent by check to **India, written out to "Bright Social Services Society".

** The new fax number of the Priory is: **18665308582 (USA number)**

