



Our Mother



Our Founder

CLARETIAN MARTYRS DAY



Dear Brothers,

Grace and peace in the Heart of Mary.

As we celebrate the Memorial of the Blessed Claretian Martyrs, we pause as a Congregation to contemplate once again the deepest truth of our vocation: “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (Jn 15:13). The memory of our martyrs is not merely a historical remembrance or a devotional practice; it is a living proclamation of the Gospel written in blood, a luminous testimony that missionary life finds its fullest meaning in total self-gift.

Martyrdom is the most radical form of discipleship. It is the unconditional “yes” to God, spoken without reserve, the faithful echo of Christ’s own surrender to the Father. Our brothers who gave their lives teach us that our vocation as Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is not measured by success or security, but by a love that perseveres even in trial, solitude, and sacrifice. Like the grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies in order to bear much fruit (Jn 12:24), their lives continue to generate life, hope, and apostolic fruitfulness in the Church and in our Congregation.

Their witness does not accuse us; rather, it gently attracts and inspires our hearts, inviting each of us to renew our personal response to the Lord. In a world often marked by fear, mediocrity, and comfort, the martyrs awaken in us the holy restlessness of the Gospel. They question us: Are we still ready to give everything for Christ and for the mission? Their fidelity encourages us to repeat with courage the words of the prophet: “Here I am, Lord; send me” (Is 6:8).

May this celebration rekindle in us the fire that burned in the heart of Claret the same fire that transformed our martyrs into courageous witnesses of faith and love. Through their intercession, may the Lord renew in us the grace of a joyful and decisive “yes,” so that our lives too may become a daily offering, a living martyrdom of charity, and a credible sign of hope for the people entrusted to our care.

Fraternally in Christ and the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Fr. Peter Johnson, CMF
Major Superior, Independent Delegation of Kolkata

Long live Christ the King

May the blood of martyrs encourage us to live and die as true disciples of Christ...

JOURNEYING IN FAITH, SERVICE, AND MISSION

Forge Claretian Renewal Encounter



The ninth English edition of the Forge Claretian Renewal Encounter concluded on 8 December 2025 at Los Negrals, Madrid, Spain. Fourteen missionaries from Brazil, India, Nigeria, and the Philippines completed an 80-day journey of deep formation, representing nine Major Organisms of the Congregation. The program was directed by Frs. Antony Bhyju and Arul Jesu Robin with the collaboration of Frs. Joe Terry, Sebin, and Felix offered a transformative experience through four key phases: *Quid Prodest*, *Patris Mei*, *Caritas Christi*, and *Spiritus Domini*. Pilgrimages to Claretian holy sites in Barbastro and Fontfroide enriched the participants' spiritual reflection and missionary commitment.

During the closing ceremony, the missionaries received their Certificates of Participation and the Forge Cross, a sign of renewed dedication to the evangelizing mission of the Church. They also shared a heartfelt message addressed to the entire Congregation, expressing their gratitude and reaffirming their desire to keep alive the fire of the Gospel. Echoing the sentiments of the participants, they wrote: "We wholeheartedly recommend the Forge to all our brothers, so that our Congregation may continue to grow in the spirit of Claret," entrusting the fruits of their renewal to the Heart of Mary.

ASCLA West Ongoing Formation Program

An ASCLA West-level ongoing formation program for CMF members aged 50-55 years was organized by the Claretian Missionaries of the North East Province from 17-21 November 2025 at the Arrupe Renewal Centre, Mawshoroh, Umbir, Shillong.



Frs. Antonish Lakra, Bijay Kumar Panna, George Nagendran and Telesphor Aind, participated in the program from our Delegation.

The program was designed to offer a meaningful space for renewal, reflection, and integration at a crucial phase of priestly and religious life. Through guided inputs, prayerful moments, and the sharing of lived experiences, the participants were encouraged to deepen their spiritual life and renew their commitment to the Claretian charism and mission. Held in the serene and prayerful atmosphere of the Arrupe Renewal Centre, the program fostered fraternity, inner healing, and renewed missionary zeal, enabling participants to continue their service with greater maturity and enthusiasm.

ASCLA-General Government Encounter

General Government Encounter with the Governments of ASCLA-Major Organisms held from December 3-12, 2025, at the St. Paul Center for Renewal in Cavite, Philippines. Fifty-three Claretian priests from various major organisms of the Congregation participated in the encounter, which fostered a renewed sense of fraternity, spiritual discernment, and missionary commitment inspired by the Emmaus journey. The gathering invited the entire Congregation to walk together in Communion, Mission, and Participation, in response to the challenges and hopes of Asia.



The objective of the encounter was to celebrate the joy of being Claretian Missionaries in Asia and to root ourselves more audaciously in God's dream for the Congregation, which became a lived experience of encounter. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 24:13-35), we shared our hopes and wounds, listened to the Word, broke bread in fraternity, and felt our hearts burn anew with the fire of Christ's presence. This journey of 'Discernment in Spirit' inspired us to move from vision to discernment, from discernment to conversion, and from conversion to shared missionary action.

Laying of the Foundation Stone for New Church

The laying of the foundation stone for the new church at Nishkalanka Bhavan, Sarangloya, was solemnly held on 28 December 2025, marking an important milestone in the faith journey of the local Christian community.

The ceremony was graced by the presence of the Rev. Fr. Peter Johnson, CMF, the Major Superior and the Council members. The Major Superior ceremoniously laid and blessed the foundation stone, invoking God's abundant blessings upon the upcoming church construction and all those who will gather there in worship. The occasion was further enriched by the presence of Fr. CMF, the Community Superior, Fr. Ajitlu, CMF, the Parish Priest, and Fr. Fulgence Kerketta, CMF, whose participation added to the joy and significance of the event.



Paul Toppo, Kumar Kullu, and Fr. Fulgence Kerketta, CMF, whose participation added to the joy and significance of the event.

The event was marked by prayer, thanksgiving, and hope, as the faithful looked forward to the construction of a new house of God that will serve as a center for spiritual growth, unity, and pastoral outreach. The foundation stone ceremony symbolized a strong beginning, built on faith, dedication, and the collective aspirations of the community.

Inauguration and Blessing of the New Church



The grand inauguration and blessing of the newly built St. James Church, Lalpur, were joyfully celebrated on 18 January 2026, marking a historic and grace-filled moment in the life of the parish. The solemn ceremony was presided over by His Grace Rt. Rev. Vincent Aind, D.D., who blessed and consecrated the new house of God.

The parish was entrusted to the Claretian Missionaries in 2004, with Fr. Joseph David, CMF as the first parish priest. For many years, spiritual activities were conducted in the multipurpose hall built by



the Holy Cross Sisters. With the steady growth of the faithful, the need for a proper church became evident. Accordingly, the foundation stone was laid and blessed on 1 January 2020 by Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas S.F.X., Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi. The construction was made possible through the generous contributions of parishioners and well-wishers.

A memorable highlight of the celebration was the ribbon-cutting ceremony by two senior parish members, symbolizing their enduring faith and dedication to the parish. The event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of priests, religious, sisters, parishioners, and guests, who gathered to thank God for this blessing.

The newly inaugurated church stands as a sign of faith, unity, and perseverance, offering a sacred space for worship and spiritual growth. This joyful occasion renewed the parish community's commitment to live their faith with hope and love under the patronage of St. James.

Quinquennium: Nurturing Young Claretians

The Quinquennium ASCLA West-2026 was held from 20 to 24 January 2026 at the Pillar Centre, Madurai, and was organized by the Province of Chennai. The quinquennial gathering was meaningfully centered on the theme "Transitional Challenges," responding to the realities and concerns faced by young Claretians in their formative years.



The program brought together 55 Claretian priests within five years of

priestly life from six Major Organisms of ASCLA West, namely the Province of Chennai, the St. Thomas Province, the Bangalore Province, the Kolkata Independent Delegation, the North-East Province, and the Joseph Vaz Province. Frs. Sonot Murmu, Judeson Abinesh, Abinash Toppo, Sahaya Rajan M., Honest Raj B., Rabert R., and Suraj Tete participated in the encounter from the Independent Delegation of Kolkata.

The schedule of the quinquennium was rich, well-structured, and oriented towards the holistic formation of young Claretians. Expert-led sessions addressed pressing and contemporary issues such as Biblical Leadership, Managing Digital Addictions, and Psychosexual Maturity, helping participants to integrate personal growth with pastoral responsibility. Alongside human and pastoral formation, the program strongly emphasized spiritual depth and vocational commitment. Special sessions focused on the Biblical Understanding of Religious Commitment and highlighted the Importance of Ongoing Formation as an essential dimension of Claretian life and mission.



Overall, Quinquennium ASCLA West-2026 proved to be a grace-filled and enriching experience, fostering reflection, fraternity, and renewal. It equipped the participants to face transitional challenges with greater maturity, faith, and missionary zeal, strengthening their commitment to live and serve as Claretians in today's world.

Formation

Pre-Philosophy Students' Outing to Kharagpur

The Pre-Philosophy students enjoyed an outing to the Servite Community and the Apostolic Carmel Community, Kharagpur, on 29 November 2025. The visit provided the students with an enriching opportunity to experience religious life beyond their own formation setting.

During the outing, the students interacted with the members of both communities, gaining insights into their charism, spirituality, and apostolic commitments. The warm hospitality extended by the Servite and Apostolic Carmel communities created an atmosphere of fraternity, reflection, and mutual sharing.



The outing proved to be a refreshing and formative experience, helping the students to relax, build community bonds, and deepen their appreciation of consecrated life through personal encounter and lived witness.

Anticipated Christmas Celebration

The Claret Nivas Community, along with AC, DSA, SDP, SS.CC., and Fatima Sisters, celebrated an anticipated Christmas on 14 December 2025 at Gandhi Prem Nivas, Titagarh. Around 450 food parcels were prepared and later distributed to the inmates and beneficiaries.



The celebration featured prayers, songs, dances, a skit, a shadow play, and a Christmas message, with active participation from all communities and Barrackpore parishioners. Joyful interaction followed as participants and inmates danced together, fostering a spirit of fellowship and celebration. The event concluded with Vespers and a shared meal, marking a meaningful and grace-filled Christmas outreach.

Children's Day Celebration



The Claret Nivas Community celebrated Children's Day on 18 January 2026 in the community auditorium. The programme was organized by the first-year students with the support of the second-year students.

The celebration began with an engaging ice-breaking session, followed by a value-based talk delivered by the Chief Guest, Rev. Sr. Shanti SDP, which inspired both children and parents. Thirteen children and eleven parents participated in various indoor, outdoor, and cultural activities conducted throughout the day.

Fr. Jegan Venislas, CMF, distributed prizes to the participants and appreciated the joyful involvement and lively spirit of the children. The celebration created a warm atmosphere of joy, learning, and togetherness, making the day memorable for all.

Education Apostolate

Teachers' Workshop on Competency-Based Learning

St. Claret School, Barrackpore

The teachers at St. Claret School, Barrackpore, participated in a professional development workshop on "Using Technology in Competency-Based Learning" on 8 November 2025. The session was mentored by Mrs. Sangita Bhattacharya, a renowned educationalist and corporate trainer, and was sponsored by Harper Collins.



The workshop aimed to equip teachers with innovative strategies to make teaching more competency-oriented and application-based, effectively integrating available technologies into classroom practices. Through interactive sessions and practical demonstrations, the teachers gained valuable insights into designing engaging learning experiences that foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-life ap-

plication of knowledge.

The workshop proved to be highly enriching and empowering for the teachers, strengthening their pedagogical skills and inspiring them to adopt modern, technology-enabled approaches to enhance student learning outcomes.

Jubilee Inauguration Year Celebration

St. Claret School, Barrackpore

The Jubilee Inauguration at St. Claret School, Barrackpore was joyfully celebrated on 16 December 2025, marking a historic milestone in the journey of the institution. The campus was filled with joy, gratitude, and festive spirit as students, teachers, staff, management, and well-wishers gathered to commemorate this memorable occasion. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Rev. Fr. Peter Johnson, CMF, the President and Major Superior of the Independent Delegation of Kolkata, who served as the Chief Guest. With great enthusiasm and pride, he officially declared the Jubilee open, inaugurating a celebration that honoured the school's rich heritage and inspiring future. The programme began with melodious prayer songs, followed by vibrant cultural performances and graceful dances presented by the students. These artistic expressions beautifully reflected the values, creativity, and youthful energy nurtured within the school community.



In his inspiring message, Rev. Fr. Peter Johnson, CMF, warmly acknowledged the humble beginnings of St. Claret School and highlighted the remarkable journey of growth and transformation over the years. He expressed deep appreciation for the dedicated contributions of all principals, teachers, staff members, and the management, whose commitment and vision have shaped the school into a centre of excellence and holistic education. A special moment of the celebration was the felicitation of achievers. Outstanding students were honoured with prizes in recognition of their academic excellence, talents, and achievements, encouraging them to strive for greater heights.

The Jubilee Inauguration was not only a celebration of the past but also a renewed commitment to the future. It stood as a powerful testimony to the spirit of perseverance, collaboration, and faith that continues to guide St. Claret School, Barrackpore, in its mission to form young minds and hearts.

The day concluded with hearts full of gratitude and hope, leaving an indelible mark on everyone who participated in this joyful celebration.

CLA-MAX 2025- 26

St. Claret School, Barrackpore

The Primary and Secondary Sections of St. Claret School, Barrackpore celebrated their Annual Day, CLA-MAX 2025- 26, with great enthusiasm and splendour on 19-20 December 2025. The two-day celebration created an atmosphere of joy, creativity, and festivity, bringing together students, teachers, parents, and distinguished guests.

The programme was graced by the presence of the Chief Guests, Smt. Soma Das, WBCS, and Shri Dr. Debeet Ganguly, WBCS. The Guests of Honour were Rev. Fr. Augustus Kujur, CMF, Prefect of Formation, and Rev. Fr. Peter Johnson, CMF, Major Superior of the Independent

Delegation of Kolkata, added great joy and inspiration to the celebration.

A significant moment of the programme was the presentation of the Annual Report by Rev. Fr. Sony John, CMF, the Principal of the school. In his report, he highlighted the academic achievements, co-curricular activities, infrastructural developments, and overall progress of the institution during the year. He also expressed gratitude to the management, teachers, staff, students, and parents for their constant support and cooperation.



The students captivated the audience with a series of colourful and vibrant performances. The stage came alive with melodious songs, creative dances portraying the rich cultural traditions and heritage of various states, meaningful skits conveying social and moral messages, expressive mime performances, and other artistic presentations. Each performance reflected the talent, confidence, and creativity of the students, making the evenings lively and memorable. Parents and guests thoroughly enjoyed the spectacular programme. A special highlight of the celebration was the felicitation of outstanding students. Certificates of Excellence were awarded in recognition of their academic excellence, talents, and remarkable achievements, motivating them to strive for greater heights.



CLA-MAX 2025-26 was not merely an annual programme but a celebration of culture, talent, and holistic education. The event concluded with a deep sense of gratitude and pride, reaffirming St. Claret School's commitment to nurturing young minds and shaping future leaders.

One-Day Seminar for Parents on Mobile Addiction

Claret School, Sahanagar



A one-day seminar for parents on the topic of mobile addiction and positive ways to help children overcome it was held at Claret School, Sahanagar, on 15 November 2025. The seminar was conducted by Mr. Subankar Ghosh, an experienced resource person in the field of child behaviour and digital awareness. The session sensitized parents to the growing challenge of mobile addiction among children and adolescents, highlighting its impact on academic performance, emotional well-being, and family relationships. Mr. Ghosh offered practical and positive strategies to help children gradually disengage from excessive mobile use, emphasizing parental involvement, healthy communication, discipline, and the promotion of constructive alternatives.

The seminar was well appreciated by the parents, who actively partici-

pated in the discussion and found the inputs both relevant and helpful. The program served as a timely initiative by Claret School to support parents in guiding their children toward a balanced and healthy use of digital technology.

Annual Day – CLA-MAX 2025–26

Claret School, Sahanagar

Claret School, Sahanagar, joyfully celebrated its Annual Day, CLA-MAX 2025-26, on 13 December 2025 with great enthusiasm and festive spirit. The occasion was graced by Rev. Fr. Maria Joseph, SJ, Principal of St. Xavier's School, Bardhaman, as the Chief Guest, and Rev. Fr. Sony John, CMF, Prefect of Education, as the Guest of Honour. The celebration was marked by a vibrant display of colourful cultural programmes, showcasing the talents and creativity of the students, along with an impressive art exhibition and other engaging activities. The performances reflected the hard work, discipline, and confidence of the students.



In his address, the Chief Guest appreciated the dedicated efforts of Claret School, Sahanagar, in providing quality education, especially to socially backward students, and encouraged the staff to continue their commendable mission. Parents expressed their happiness and satisfaction with the steady growth of the school and the high standard of the programmes presented. Overall, CLA-MAX 2025-26 was a joyful and memorable day, filled with pride, celebration, and gratitude, bringing together students, staff, and parents in a spirit of unity and accomplishment.

Charity Day

Claret School, Sahanagar



True to the saying "Charity begins at home," Claret School, Sahanagar, instils in its students, from the very beginning of their school life, the values of compassion and social responsibility. As a meaningful initiative to nurture these values, the school annually encourages students, prior to the Christmas celebrations, to support the poor through the sacrifice of their pocket money. This amount, collected throughout the year, is used on Charity Day to purchase essential items for the needy.

This year, Charity Day was celebrated on 20 December 2025. On this occasion, around 35 very poor elderly people were invited to the school. They were warmly welcomed and served morning tiffin, after which the students presented a small cultural programme as a gesture of love and respect.

At the end of the programme, woollen blankets were distributed to the elderly by the students themselves. The joy and satisfaction on the faces of the students reflected the deep sense of fulfillment they experienced in seeing the poor benefit from their own small sacrifices.

The celebration of Charity Day once again reaffirmed Claret School's commitment to forming students into empathetic, socially conscious, and responsible citizens.

Chef's Day

St. Claret School, Bishrail,



St. Claret School, Bishrail, witnessed the remarkable hidden talents of students from Classes I to IV during the non-fire cooking activity held on 4 November 2025. The students showcased a wide variety of dishes, revealing many young and talented chefs. Through this activity,

the children developed self-confidence and learned to manage simple situations at home in the absence of their parents. They were also introduced to the preparation of healthy food using readily available ingredients. The students participated actively and enthusiastically, creating a vibrant learning atmosphere. This initiative provided experiential learning beyond the classroom and helped students develop practical life skills beyond textbooks.

CLA-UTSAV 2025

St. Claret School, Bishrail



St. Claret School, Bishrail, joyfully celebrated CLA-UTSAV on 20 December 2025, marking a day filled with vibrant, meaningful, and engaging activities. The programme, aptly titled *"Colours of Unity: Celebrating One Family,"* beautifully reflected the spirit of togetherness and harmony throughout the celebration. The school campus came alive with a variety of stalls showcasing delicious food, fun activities, and creative displays. An Art and Craft Exhibition and a Science Exhibition highlighted the creativity, innovation, and scientific curiosity of the students. A special video presentation on the life and mission of St. Claret added a reflective and inspiring dimension to the event.

Under the guidance and encouragement of their teachers, students enthusiastically showcased their talents and creativity in every activity. The celebration was further honoured by the gracious presence of Shri Nurul Islaam, Pradhan of No. 4 Nandanpur Gram Panchayat, who attended the programme as the Guest of Honour. Parents and invited guests greatly appreciated the thoughtful initiatives and commendable efforts of both the students and the staff. By actively upholding the theme of unity and family spirit, the students made CLA-UTSAV a truly memorable and meaningful celebration for all.

Students' Excursion

St. Claret School, Bishrail



The pre-primary students of St. Claret School, Bishrail, went on an excursion to Colony Parish on 13 January 2026. The outing provided the children with a wonderful opportunity to relax, refresh, and enjoy a joyful learning experience beyond the classroom.

The excursion created a lively and cheerful atmosphere where the children could explore, play, and interact freely. Various fun games and activities were organized for the students, helping them to relax, develop friendships, and strengthen their bonds with one another.

The day was filled with laughter, excitement, and memorable moments, making the excursion a delightful and enriching experience for the young learners and their teachers.

Inter-School Athletics Championship

St. Claret School, Basmata



St. Claret School, Basmata, has proudly won the Championship Title in the Inter-School Athletics Meet organized by St. Mary's High School, Dumka. The remarkable achievement reflects the students' hard work, dedication, discipline, and outstanding athletic performance. The victory is a matter of great pride for the entire school family. The enthusiastic participation and team spirit of the athletes, along with the encouragement and guidance of the teachers and coaches, contributed significantly to this success.

This achievement stands as a testament to St. Claret School's commitment to the holistic development of students, nurturing not only academic excellence but also physical fitness and sportsmanship.

Annual Picnic

St. Claret School, Basmata

St. Claret School, Basmata, organized its annual picnic on 12 January 2026 at Shishu Bagan, Damri, bringing together all the school children, teachers, Fathers, and Sisters for a day of joy and togetherness.

The picnic provided a refreshing break from routine academic life and offered students an opportunity to relax, interact, and enjoy nature. Various games, activities, and moments of shared laughter strengthened the bonds among students and staff, fostering a spirit of unity and family.



The day was marked by happiness, fun, and memorable experiences, making the annual picnic a truly enriching and enjoyable event for the entire school community.

“Mera Yuva Bharat” Program: National Youth Day

St. Claret School, Basmata

On the occasion of National Youth Day, a “Mera Yuva Bharat” program was organized on 14 January 2026 at St. Claret School, situated in the Neem Pahari area of Sadar Block, under the aegis of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, through the Mera Yuva Bharat initiative. The program was organized to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. On this occasion, Fr. Antonish Lakra, CMF, the Principal of St. Claret School,



offered floral tributes to the portrait of Swami Vivekananda and highlighted his inspiring personality and contributions. He emphasized that students should draw inspiration from Swami Vivekananda’s life philosophy and remember his works dedicated to the nation and society. Addressing the students, Ashok Singh, District Program Coordinator of the District Youth Welfare Committee, said that Swami Vivekananda was a guiding light for the youth generation. His entire life was dedicated to nation-building, and his thoughts continue to inspire national consciousness. He stressed that the greatest message of Swami Vivekananda was to “Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached.” During the program, Uday Kumar Singh, representing *Mera Yuva Bharat, Dumka*, urged today’s youth to internalize Swami Vivekananda’s ideals and actively work for the welfare of society and the nation. He encouraged the youth to come forward with innovative ideas and constructive initiatives.

On this occasion, students participated in the second session of the Swami Vivekananda Life-Oriented Program, which included a cleanliness drive within the school campus. The participants also took a pledge to preserve cleanliness. The program was conducted successfully with the active involvement of the school teachers, including Ms. Suchita Lakra and Ms. Sonia Kujur, along with a large number of students of the school.

GK Competition and Road Safety Workshop

St. Claret School, Basmata

A GK Competition and Workshop on Road Safety Measures was conducted for the students of St. Claret School, Basmata, on 22 January 2026. The programme aimed to enhance the students’ general knowledge and create awareness



about the importance of road safety in daily life. Through interactive sessions and activities, the students learned about traffic rules, safe road practices, and responsible behaviour as pedestrians and commuters. The GK competition encouraged students to think critically and actively participate, making the learning process both enjoyable and educational.

The programme proved to be informative and engaging, helping the

students develop greater awareness, responsibility, and discipline regarding road safety, while also fostering their curiosity and knowledge.

Annual Day Celebration

Khrist Raja School, Bariarpur



Khrist Raja School, Bariarpur celebrated its Annual Day with great joy on 20 December 2025. The theme of the celebration, “Move Towards Hope,” was inspired by the Jubilee Year theme *Pilgrims of Hope*. The programme was graced by distinguished guests: Fr. James George, Education Director of the Archdiocese of Patna, and Mr. Mukesh Manjhi, Member of the S.C./S.T. Commission, Bihar. The event was enriched by colourful and vibrant cultural dances, which captivated the audience. The students, who participated in the programme, worked tirelessly to make the celebration lively and meaningful, while the teachers, as the backbone of the event, played a crucial role in its success. In his address, Fr. James George congratulated the students, teachers, and organizers for their dedicated efforts and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence in education. Mr. Mukesh Manjhi, the Guest of Honour, also appreciated the school community for organizing such a wonderful programme.

A highlight of the celebration was a meaningful skit on the importance of education, followed by a beautiful enactment of the Nativity scene, through which the children brought Bethlehem alive at Khrist Raja School by vividly portraying the events of Christ’s birth.

The Annual Day celebration was a memorable occasion that reflected the creativity, unity, and hope of the school community.

Pastoral Apostolate

Zonal Catholic Mahasabha Meeting

Claret Bharma, Betapur, Middle Andaman

The Zonal Catholic Mahasabha Meeting was successfully held at Betapur, Middle Andaman, on 17 November 2025. The meeting brought together members from the zone to reflect on matters concerning the life of the Church and the Catholic community in the region.



The gathering provided a valuable platform for discussion, planning, and strengthening unity among the faithful. Key issues related to faith formation, social concerns, and community development were deliberated upon, fostering a spirit of collaboration and shared responsibility.

The meeting concluded with renewed commitment among the participants to actively contribute to the growth and welfare of the Catholic community, promoting faith, solidarity, and service in Middle Andaman.

Christ the King and Wangala Celebration

Claret Noktang, Bangladesh

The feast of Christ the King, combined with the vibrant Wangala celebration, was joyfully celebrated at Claret Noktang, Bangladesh, on 23 November 2025. The unique celebration beautifully blended Christian faith with the rich cultural heritage of the local community.



The event was marked by a solemn Eucharistic celebration honoring Christ as King of the Universe, followed by the traditional Wangala festivities, symbolizing thanksgiving, joy, and communal harmony. Faithful from the surrounding areas gathered in large numbers to take part in the prayerful and cultural expressions.

The celebration highlighted the spirit of inculturation, unity, and gratitude, strengthening the bond between faith and culture. It was a memorable occasion that deepened devotion and reinforced the sense of belonging and joy within the Claret Noktang community.

DEDICATED TO CLARETIAN MARTYRS

St Antony Mary Claret: Missionary by love

Claret, a man on fire with love,
Not flames to burn the earth below,
But sparks to light the skies above,
To help the beauty of God grow.

A man of action, bold and bright,
A living flame, a guiding light.
Not for applause, nor for transaction,
But moved by pure, divine attraction.

He worked not chasing gold or fame,
Nor walked to lift his earthly name.
He spoke not as a statesman proud,
But as a voice that cried aloud.

He wrote, not seeking vain applause,
But driven by a higher cause.
He loved the poor, for he was one of them
A brother beneath the rising sun.

He embraced the cross with open arms,
And found in pain his deepest charms.
He showed the way to follow Christ,
A life of love, through sacrifice

He thought of souls, not fleeting gain,
He fought so none would live in chain.
He sought to heal, to bind and bless,
To bring the world God's tenderness.



He did not fear to stand alone,
A missionary, fully known.
His shame was none, his joy was high
To serve the Lord and testify.

He marked a path with light and grace,
To love all hearts, in every place.
And now his name forever stays,
A flame that lights our missionary ways.

By Stud. Dhilip Gnanaseelan

Long Live Christ the King



Spain is known for its many martyrs, especially those who lost their lives during the religious persecution that broke out in the 1930s. Over 1,870 martyrs from this time period have already been officially recognized by the Catholic Church and many more are on their way to canonization.

Barbastro (Huesca, Spain) was the diocese that suffered most during the persecution. 80% of the clergy, the highest figure in all of Spain, were killed. A total of 18 Benedictines, 9 Piarists, 51 Claretians, 13 canons of the Cathedral, 114 diocesan priests, 5 seminarians, and a bishop were martyred.

The 51 Claretians or Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, were martyred between August 2 and August 14 of 1936. The Claretian community of Barbastro (Province of Huesca, Spain) was composed of 60 missionaries: 9 priests, 12 religious brothers, and 39 seminarians on their way to ordination. Only 9 of these were over 25 years old.

On July 20, 1936, a group of armed men broke into the seminary and searched the house in hopes of finding arms inside. Although their search was in vain, the entire community was arrested. Before leaving the seminary, "in the blink of an eye, two priests went and got the two ciboria and there, in the patio, we consumed about 10 hosts per person" (Letter from Atilo Parussini to his family. Frascati, September 29, 1936). Strengthened by the Eucharist, they prepared to face their martyrdom.

The sick and elderly were taken to the hospital. The superior, the formation director, and the administrator were taken to prison and were the first to receive the palm of martyrdom on August 2, 1936. The rest were taken to the school run by the Piarists and locked in the auditorium until the day of their execution. They underwent every kind of physical and moral suffering: thirst, the stifling heat of August, insults, blasphemies, and mock firing squads, some of which lasted up to an hour. Prostitutes were sent into the auditorium to provoke them and they were offered freedom in return for blasphemies or if they agreed to take off their religious habit, because "it is not that we hate you. What we hate is your profession, your black habit, your cassock," they told them. Yet not one of them gave in.

It was the Holy Communion they secretly received during the first days of the persecution, along with their prayer, the recitation of the Divine Office, the Sacrament of Confession, community life and fraternal charity which led them to pray for the grace of final perseverance for all. Their filial devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary kept them firm in the faith and strengthened their souls up until the moment of martyrdom. The time had come for them to remain true to the words they had so often sung: “Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, grant us sweet consolation in the fight when your faithful soldier falls to the ground, embracing his ideal. What ideal? That of shedding my blood for you, my Queen.”

The three superiors were executed by a firing squad on August 2, and on August 12 another 6 priests of the community were killed. They were bound two-by-two and then taken in the back of a truck to the cemetery. Once there, they were shot and their lifeless bodies fell into the trench behind them. On August 13, another 20 of them were executed. The one remaining priest gave them the absolution without being noticed by the executors. “We were all praying for our brothers, that God would give them the grace of holy perseverance until the end, as we had done the night before. Two of us started to pray the Rosary, meditating on the Sorrowful Mysteries, and when we heard the shots, they began praying the Glorious Mysteries” (Pablo Hall). On August 15, 20 more were executed and on August 18, the last 2 were killed.

Brother Pablo Hall and Brother Atilo Parussini, both from Argentina, were freed on August 13 in virtue of their foreign nationality. In their final salute to the last group, they became witnesses of their last thoughts and words. “I wholeheartedly forgive all those who are hurting us, persecuting us, and trying to kill us... If they only knew that they are doing me the greatest favor, in spite of their hatred for me!” (Casadevall). “Please tell Father José Fogued that, seeing as how I cannot go to China as I had always wished, I am pleased to offer my blood for the missions in China and I will pray for them from Heaven” (Rafael Briega). Pablo Hall continued, saying, “We were all very moved, but they were very enthusiastic thanks to the example of those who had preceded them, and they assured us that they would be singing and shouting ‘Viva!’ (Long Live!) to Christ the King, the Heart of Mary, the Catholic religion, and the Pope, on their way to execution” (From the sworn testimony of Pablo Hall).

The spiritual strength of the martyrs was found in the writings which they left in their breviaries, prayer books, notebooks, and even on chocolate wrappers and a piano stool. Ramón Illa wrote to his family saying, “When you receive these lines, sing to the Lord for the immense grace of martyrdom that He is granting me.” Salvador Pigem wrote: “Long live the Immaculate Heart of Mary! We are killed for the mere fact that we are religious,” and added in his mother tongue: “Do not cry for me; I am a martyr of Jesus Christ.”

An especially eloquent and moving letter was written on behalf of all the martyrs on August 13, paying their final salute to the Congregation:

“Dear Congregation: the day before yesterday, August 11, six of our brothers died with the generosity that marks the death of martyrs. Today, August 13, twenty have obtained the palm of victory and tomorrow, August 14, the rest of us (twenty-two) hope to die. Glory to God! Glory to God! (...) We spent the day encouraging one another in our martyrdom and praying for our enemies and for our dear Institute. When the moment comes to choose the victims, all experience a holy serenity and desire to hear one’s own name, so he can come

*forward and join the ranks of the chosen. We look forward to this moment with generous impatience, and when it has come, we have seen some kiss the cords that bind them, and others offer words of forgiveness to their executors. When they head off in the truck, towards the cemetery, we hear them shout: ‘Long live Christ the King!’ The mob shouts: ‘Death! Death!’ But nothing intimidates them. **THEY ARE YOUR SONS, DEAR CONGREGATION;** these men who die facing pistols and rifles, shouting with confidence as they meet their death: **LONG LIVE CHRIST THE KING!** Tomorrow the rest of us will go and we now know what we should proclaim – even when the shots start to fire – to the Heart of our Mother, to Christ the King, the Catholic Church, and You, **THE MOTHER OF ALL OF US (...)**. We joyfully die and not one of us feels faint or overburdened. We all die praying to God that the blood of our wounds may not be a blood of vengeance, but rather a blood that is alive. We pray that entering your veins, it may be a catalyst in your development and expansion throughout the world. Good-bye, dear Congregation! Your sons, martyrs of Barbastro, salute you from prison and offer you their painful anguish in expiation for our failures and as a witness to our faithful, generous, and perpetual love. The martyrs of tomorrow, August 14, realize that they will die on the Vespers of the Assumption. What a great thought! We die for wearing a cassock and we die the very same day we received it... **Long live Christ the King! Long live the Heart of Mary! Long live the Congregation! Good-bye, dear Institute. We go to Heaven praying for you. Good-bye! Good-bye!**”*

May the blood of martyrs encourage us to live and die as true disciples of Christ.

<https://www.homeofthemothor.org/en/magazine/selected-articles/saints/9631-the-martyrs-of-barbastro>

© HM Magazine; n°204 September-October 2018

