

INDIA - MUMBAI PROVINCE

Official Languages: **English, Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, Konkani and Malayalam**

Vision Statement

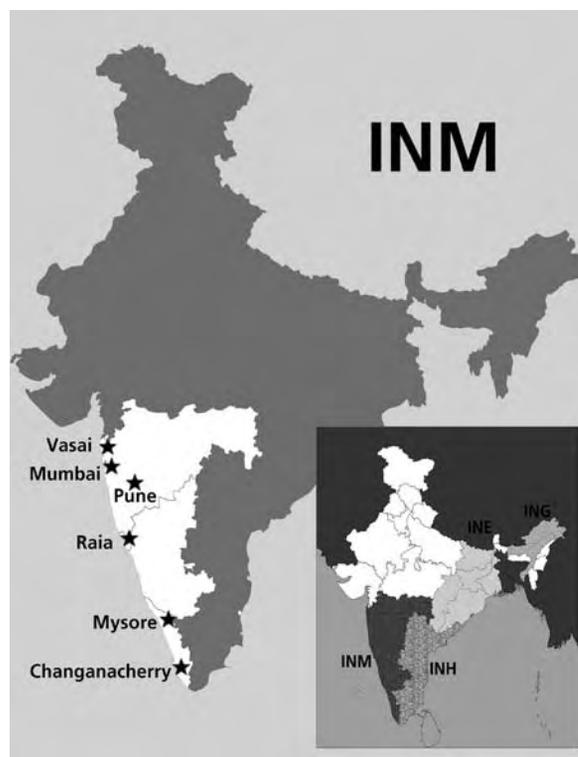
Rooted in the love of the Father and led by the Holy Spirit into the Mission of Christ.

Mission Statement

We, the Divine Word Missionaries of India Mumbai Province, commit ourselves to witness to the Reign of God by building communities of love, peace, justice and reconciliation through fourfold prophetic dialogue with the poor, people of other religions and cultures, and faith seekers in all our ministries - spiritual and mission animation; biblical apostolate; formation; education; communication and research; and promotion of justice, peace and integrity of creation.

1. Societal Setting

The Province was established on 2nd April 2002 when the erstwhile India Southern Province (INS, established in 1963) was divided into two new provinces, namely India Hyderabad and India Mumbai. Geographically the province is situated on the Western Coast of the Indian Union, straddling the states (civil administrative



provinces) of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala.

The state of Maharashtra, both in terms of population and geographical area, is the second largest state in India. With over 9.3% of the total population of India living here, it is currently home to over 123 million people. It is one of the most developed states of India as 45% of the total population in the state lives in urban areas. The state plays a key role in the economic development of India as major financial institutions are located here.

Goa is India's smallest state in terms of area and the fourth smallest by population. This state is one of India's wealthiest with a GDP per capita over two times that of the national average. It was positioned the best placed state by the Eleventh Finance Commission for its framework, and positioned on top for the best personal satisfaction in India by the National Commission on Population. The population of Goa in the year 2017 as per estimated data is 3.10 million. It is the state with the most noteworthy extent of urban population with 62.2% of the population living in urban areas.

Karnataka is the seventh biggest Indian state by territory. With 66.8 million occupants it is the eighth biggest state by population. Karnataka is one of the leading states in the field of industrial development and in the area of computer software. About 70% of the people live in the villages and 71% of the total work force is engaged in agriculture. The state has a unique educational environment in the whole of south Asia with the largest number of professional colleges in the country.

Kerala is one of India's most progressive states in terms of social welfare and quality of life. This state is currently home to about 2.8% of India's total population. The present population of Kerala is estimated to be 34.5 million. Kerala prides itself for being the flag bearer for not just how a culture can respect its past but also march forward with growth and progress as well. Hundred percent literacy, world-class health care systems, India's lowest infant mortality and highest life expectancy rates are among a few of the milestones. There are 1084 women for every 1000

males in the state, thus its sex ratio is considered to be the best of all Indian states.

2. Ecclesial Setting

Christians were 2.3% of the population in 2011. In the state of Maharashtra, Christians account for 1.9 million or 1.0% of total population. Most of the Christians are Catholics and Protestants. There are also Goan, Mangalorean, Keralite and Tamilian Christians in the urban pockets of Mumbai and Pune. There are 8 Latin-rite and 3 Syro-Malabar rite dioceses in Maharashtra.

In Goa, Christianity is one of the major religions. About 25% of Goans are Christians. Among Christians, the majority of them are Roman Catholics. Goa is a Latin rite archdiocese with a total of 615,400 Catholics. The Christian population of Goa has been facing a continual decline. This is caused by an emigration of Goan Catholics from Goa to other places in India and abroad.

In Karnataka, Christianity is a minority religion. Christians constitute 1.9% of the total population. There are 10 Latin rite, 3 Syro-Malabar and 1 Syro-Malankara rite dioceses with a total population of 1,089,408. The second largest Church in Karnataka is the Church of South India. The state had a relatively high number of anti-Christian attacks in 2009. More than 20 Churches were devastated by the Hindu nationalist movement Bajrang Dal in 2008.

In Kerala, numerically, the Christians are the smallest among the three major religious groups.

They number just about 6.14 million, 18.4 percent of the total population of the state. The 6.14 million Christians consist of 3.74 million Catholics (61.0 % of the total Christians), 977,000 Jacobite/Orthodox Syrians (15.9%), and 405,000 Mar Thoma Syrians (6.6%). While the Catholic denominations in general are found to be maintaining their increasing trend, the non-Catholic Episcopal Syrian Christian communities the Jacobites, the Orthodox, the Mar Thoma and the CSI have started decreasing.

3. Intercultural Mission – *Ad Extra*

Those in Final Vows

IN ACTIVE MINISTRY	Personnel	2018 (%)	2012 (%)	2005 (%)
Parish	12	9.7	15.2	12.5
Education	15	12.2	7.7	4.8
Schools	13	-	-	-
Universities	2	-	-	-
Formation/ SVD Vocation	23	18.7	25.2	24.4
Administration/ Support	7	5.7	7.7	20.2
Other Apostolates	43	35.0	34.6	29.8
JPIC	17	-		
Bible	2	-		
Communication	4	-		
Mission Animation	6	-		
Others	8	-		

Those in Final Vows

NOT IN MINISTRY	Personnel	2018 (%)	2012 (%)	2005 (%)
Studies/ Orientation	8	6.5	7.7	6.0
Retired/Sick	15	12.1	1.9	0
Others	0	0	0	0

Parishes: We administer two parishes in the Archdiocese of Mumbai, namely St. Theresa's Church, Bandra and Sacred Heart Church, Andheri. We also look after three parishes: Mysuru (St. Theresa of Kolkata Church), Nala (St. Anne's Church, Mangalore), and Marcela, Goa (Holy Family Church). Specific initiatives such as celebration of Mission Sunday, forums for collaboration in mission outreach for the laity, as well as talks and sessions given by missionaries working abroad, provide a unique missionary flavor to our pastoral involvement in these parishes.

Schools: We have five senior secondary schools and one higher secondary school in the province. A vision of holistic and all-round development permeates our efforts in this direction. The annual event of a four-day workshop that we organize for the teachers of all our schools is a useful forum for exchange of ideas as well as development of an Arnoldian identity among our co-workers.

Specialized Research Centers: There are two centers concentrating on research and training

in missiology and anthropology. Ishvani Kendra, the center for mission and communications, has established itself as a premier center for training in contextualized mission for contemporary challenges. It is a major destination for ongoing formation and training of mission personnel. The Institute of Indian Culture in Mumbai concentrates on providing researched data on cultural pluralism in the context of India for the Church as well as the wider public.

Characteristic Dimensions

Mission Animation: The intercultural focus of SVD mission spirituality permeates all the ministries in the province. The parishes have special campaigns for contributions towards mission by which parishioners are encouraged to contribute generously to the mission projects. Regular visits are organized for the parishioners to the sites of new missions in the province as well as in the India sub-zone. The academic communities in our schools are given exposure to the raging debates in the international arena. Our centers of research concentrate on themes of interculturality.

Biblical Animation: Under the leadership of the coordinator, regular workshops on Bible are organized at our retreat centers. Biblical themes are the main focus of retreats at our centers of prayer and charismatic renewal both at Mulki and Kaduthuruthy. The Bible is engaged with spiritual reflection with psycho-spiritual perspectives at the retreat centers.

JPIC: The confreres in the province have decided to make JPIC part of our life and work in very visible ways. The province as a whole has resolved to give emphasis to this aspect of our characteristic dimension by strengthening our activities in the existing centers and opening new fronts. The centers of intervention and assistance are spread out in the whole province, in both urban and rural locations. The Urban Community Development Center and Sarva Seva Sangh at Mumbai, Sarva Seva Sangh at Pune, Sarva Vikas Deep at Manggaon, Jan Seva Society at Tala and SVD Vachana Jyothi at Pilathara are all engaged in reaching out to people on the margins in very visible ways. Issues of land rights, making statutory documents of citizenship, and education of people on the move are addressed, along with reaching out to street children, rag pickers, alcoholics as well as HIV infected and affected people. Organizing women to demand their rights as well as formation of groups for micro finance are also taken up on a priority basis.

Communication: Founded by Fr. George Proksch SVD, a pioneer in indigenization of liturgy, Gyan Ashram has grown to be a dynamic center for training in music, dance and drama where confreres explore new ways of adapting the message of the gospel to idioms of local culture. It also houses a media production center, St. Arnold Institute of Media Studies, engaged in

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making documentaries on socially relevant themes for the public. The communication unit at Ishvani Kendra, Pune continues to contribute in significant ways to mission animation through its regular production of documentaries, audio and video productions of devotional music. The communication department of Divine Call Centre, Mulki produces programs which are regularly aired on the local cable network.

Priorities among Congregational Directions

The priorities among the Congregational Directions are in the following order: a) Family (Promotion of a culture of life), b) Social Justice (Integrity of Creation, indigenous and ethnic communities and migration), c) Education, and d) Evangelization (Interreligious and ecumenical dialogue).

Thus, each community/ministry/coordinator of Characteristic Dimensions prepared an action plan on family that needs to be implemented during the three years. A committee, with a member of the provincial council as facilitator to coordinate the ministry towards the families, was instituted to reach out to the families in our parishes, institutions, our co-workers and mission partners. In collaboration with diocesan Pro-Life cells, our parishes take the lead in organizing programs for conscientization of people towards adoption of a pro-life culture and life-style. Refresher programs organized for the teachers in our schools have a component on gender sensitization and strategies towards eradication of violence against women.

Some initiatives were taken in our centers and parishes on the issue of the abuse of minors as well as on the need for a more inclusive mindset with regard to people with special needs. The centers of social work are engaged in initiatives at employment for the poor. A noteworthy initiative is the organization of a fisheries co-operative as well as the pioneering role of SVDs in assisting the indigenous people to get the necessary documentation in place for claiming their share of the forest land as per the provisions of the National Forest Act, 2006.

Maitri Sanghatan, under the auspices of the Urban Community Development Center at Bandra, Mumbai is engaged in the commendable work of assisting the migrant laborers from the tribal areas of North and Northeast India. The work of the center involves pastoral care of the migrant Catholics, legal aid to those in distress, and a help center which is accessible to the migrant laborers undergoing problems of one sort or another.

SVD Lay Partners

Keeping in line with the Society's thrust towards lay collaboration, efforts are being made in different parts of the province to initiate and nurture lay groups. Besides the officially recognized group of the society, the **Disciples of the Divine Word** (DDW) based in Mumbai, lay partners in Kerala, Mangalore, Goa and Pune, are being nurtured to form formal groups.

The parishes that we administer in the city of Mumbai, namely Sacred Heart and St. Theresa,

have adopted Tala and Mangaon missions respectively for sponsorship. Lay people of these parishes regularly visit our areas of work and support us in whatever way they can. Such initiatives bring a deeper awareness of missions in the minds of the laity in our parishes.

4. Intercultural Life – *Ad Intra*

MEMBERSHIP	2018	2012	2005
Bishop	0	1	0
Clerics	119	102	83
Brothers (final vows)	2	1	1
Brothers (temporal vows)	0	1	0
Scholastics	51	53	55
Total	172	158	139

AGE AND COUNTRY	2018	2012	2005
Average age	52.7	51.1	40.7
Nationalities	1	1	1

Community Life: The province is divided into five Inter-Community Forums to facilitate regular and frequent interaction among the confreres belonging to various house councils and communities. The coordinators and assistant coordinators of these forums are elected and they facilitate regular meetings for discussions, sharing and recollections. These forums have grown to be dynamic avenues for mutual enrichment of all the confreres. Interculturality is given utmost importance in the constitution of communities

in the province and efforts are being made to make it a reality in all the communities.

Formation: The province has four minor seminaries which act as “nurseries” for vocations for the entire Society. A lot of emphasis is given to making the ministry of vocation promotion more effective and a collaborative venture. The province also has a seminary for undergraduate education at Mysuru. At the major seminary at Pune, the scholastics pursue their bachelor degree in theology from the Papal Athenaeum.

Leadership: Decisive steps are taken at all levels for making the leadership in the province more team oriented. Leadership training programs are organized for the confreres at regular intervals. Recently an enlarged version of the *SVD INM Manual* was published. It is a unique booklet, containing all the documents, manuals and policies promulgated in the province for the ready reference of all the confreres. The provincial leadership team involves confreres with expertise in different fields to assist in planning and making in depth studies of all the planned ventures in the province.

Finance: Management of financial resources is given its due importance in the province. With a view to managing our resources in a more professional manner, more confreres are sent for professional training in this area. The province is growing in greater awareness and practice of financial solidarity. Concerted efforts are being made for the optimal use of land and other resources across the province.

Spiritual Renewal: Hallmarks of a seminarian's mature spiritual life include a deep love for the Holy Scriptures, personal prayer and devotions, a special love for the Blessed Virgin Mary, asceticism and penance, as well as simplicity of life and obedience. There are other devotions of the Church, the rosary, Stations of the Cross, adoration, divine mercy chaplet, and all these are offered to the seminarians, as well as recollection and retreat days that take place in the seminary. Daily meditation and spiritual direction help them to come closer to God.

We also accompany the new priests in their first five years of priestly life. A senior confrere is appointed to meet them and guide them through personal meetings and occasional gatherings. Other senior confreres are encouraged to attend the renewal programs organized by the province as well as attend the renewal programs conducted by the renewal centers in the country. Every year our province organizes at least two retreats and encourages the confreres to attend them. This year, as part of general chapter preparation, the confreres are motivated to embark on a journey of personal renewal to be committed missionaries.