

INDIA SUB-ZONE FORMATORS SEMINAR

REPORT

A three-day seminar in two batches for the India Sub-Zone Formators was organized by the Sub-Zone Formation Board, on August 10-17, 2015 at Arnold Bhavan, Hyderabad. About 55 formators including all the Provincials and the Regional superior participated in the seminar. The general theme of the seminar was, "Formation of Formators for / in Mission" with three important dimensions necessary for every formator, namely formator as a person **for / of the poor and vulnerable**, formator as an **agent of change** and formator as a **total person**. The role of the formators as formation agent is summarized in these three words: Inspire, Interact and Instruct. It was an occasion for the formators to come together to reflect, to share, to introspect and to gather formative ideas.



On the first day of the seminar, Fr. John Joseph SJ, an experienced Jesuit priest, who had been in the missions and formation for a number of years, helped us to have clarity and to understand the theological implications of our involvement with the life of the poor and vulnerable. Fundamental option for the poor is grounded and rooted in God's love. God has special concern for the poor and the vulnerable and He identifies / places himself with them. Honoring and respecting poor means honoring God. As formators, he insisted that we cannot but be men who constantly respond to the unjust ordering of the society and to those on the fringes of the

society. We must safeguard ecology and the environment. Thus respect for life and nature are inextricably related to each other.

On the second day, Fr. Tony Menezes SVD, one of our confreres, a well-known psychologist presented to us, how we could be an agent of change in our situations. As formators we need to bring about change in oneself and in others. Though change is not easy due to various reasons, yet change is inevitable due to paradigm shift. Change is a process from acceptance of one's 'dissatisfaction' to 'exploration'. It is then one tries to 'integrate' them into one's life and begins to share with others, what one has learnt and thus becomes a 'missionary'. He presented Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, an inspirational personality of the day, as a model of an efficient formator, for his farsightedness, generosity, humility, simplicity, professionalism, team-work, wholeness and undivided spirituality.



On the third day of the seminar, Fr Joaquim Fernandes SVD was the resource person for the first batch and Fr. Henry D'Souza SVD for the second batch. Both of them are known for their expertise in the area of psychology and counseling. They focused on the importance of a formator as a person, for "The person of the formator is the most important factor. What you are for another person is far more important than what you do to or for the formee" (SVD Formation Manuel, 1.3.11, p.5). As a formator, we need to make the qualities of Jesus our own. No doubt, there are challenges in our formation ministry, but at the same time, we must make efforts to

find causes that lead to those challenges / problems. To be an efficient formator, we must change our perception and correct our vision. Right perception can help us to connect with the formee in the proper direction. In the process, the formator must constantly have positive and optimistic attitude towards oneself and the formee. We ought to create proper situations and circumstances in order to enhance our 'response-ability' in our formation ministry.

The participants found the exercise quite useful for its meticulous planning and organization, apt and experienced resource persons, friendly atmosphere and experience of our SVD mark of hospitality. We sincerely thank the Governing Board members of the India Sub-Zone Formation Board and all those extended their support in making the seminar lively and resourceful.

Fr. Pushpa Anbu SVD
India Sub-Zone Formation Secretary.