

## **CBCI - OFFICE FOR SOCIAL COMMUNICATION Report 2016**

Catholic Bishops Conference of India-Office of Social Communication conducted a survey on **“Public View and Media Use: A study on Media behaviour and habits of the people of hilly-tract region of Raigarh District, in Chhattisgarh, India.”** It is about the Media Practices of the Farmers in the hilly tribes of Gawanga, Dhawara Bari, Kawhajoba, Kanchira and Kuma in Raigarh District of the State of Chattisgarh in India in collaboration with NISCORT students. It was moderated by Fr. Varaprasad Marneni, the Secretary of CBCI-OSC.

At the suggestion of our Chairman Bishop Salvadore Lobo and in close collaboration with CBCI-OSC and NISCORT we ventured to do this research of the Media Practices of the Farmers in India. This will be an ongoing research which will be replicated in various parts of India. It is a survey by a questionnaire, covering 100 square kilometres area and 780 people participated in the survey.

In an age where information Technology has joined hands with Agricultural practices to increase Productivity and Marketing, in the developed world like Europe and America, machinery has taken over the labour intensive fields and made it techno savvy. Agricultural use of GPS, Computers, Internet and machinery, even robotic equipment to till the land, sow seeds, irrigate, fertilise, manage pests and harvest the crop, pack and send the product to the market and reap the benefits of the work of Man and Technology in Collaboration with each other.

In our survey we found that the use of modern day technology is non-existent to moderate use on the lower side. Villages are in the range of, lacking electricity, have no News Paper, no Radio, no Television and no Internet facilities. They use electricity for irrigation, and domestic consumption with news papers in some areas, Radio and Television in other areas. Villagers depend mostly or solely on Rain for water and traditional practices for weather forecast. In areas where there is access to Electricity, News Paper, Radio and Television they depend on the weather forecast and other news and developmental programs for their agriculture.

For a complete article on the survey kindly contact:

Fr. Varaprasad MARNENI, Secretary, CBCI-OSC.

### **Report of the CBCI Office of Social Communication Regional Chairman Bishops and Secretaries Conference. 8&9, March 2017, NCR Delhi.**

CBCI Office of Social Communications Secretary, Fr. Varaprasad Marneni organised a two day conference with the theme: “Rejuvenating the Regions” for the Regional Chairman Bishops and Secretaries of the CBCI at NISCORT on 8th and 9th March 2017.

The day began with the Holy Mass presided by Most Rev. Salvadore Lobo and Most Rev. Stanley Fernandez. There were 12 Regional Secretaries and 3 National Secretaries along with the Staff and students of NISCORT.

The Chief Guest for the inaugural function was Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas, the CBCI Secretary General. In his inaugural speech he highlighted the various forms of Communication specially good communication and bad communication and said that the Regions should be vibrant with better communication and adapt to best communication methods.

Most Rev. Salvadore Lobo, the National Chairman of the CBCI Office of Social Communication, said, "last century belonged to Social Work and this century belongs to Social Communication and Mass Communication. The Regions have to be Rejuvenating and Vibrant with the message of Christ."

Western Regional Chairman Archbishop Stanley Fernandez said, "Christ and his message has to be at the heart of Social Communication."

In one of the input session, Fr. Jose Murickan highlighted and classified the various documents of the Church on Social Communication.

The keynote address was by Fr. David Arockiam, the CEO and Director of Madha TV from Chennai. He gave the experience of starting and running a TV channel from A to Z.

The regional reports started and by evening we went to Yusuf Sadhan in Delhi for a dinner hosted by Fr. Stanly, Secretary of Media Commission New Delhi.

The second day began with Holy Mass presided by Most Rev. Stanly Fernandez.

The input session was by Fr. Sudeep Paul. He spoke on "Social Media for Ministry", and said that the Church has to adapt extensively the latest communication technologies specially the Social Media platforms.

The conference continued with the Regional Reports and ended with National Reports.

Fr. Varaprasad Marneni the Secretary of the CBCI-OSC thanked the participants for their cooperation and all those who helped to make this conference a success. He wished that the Bible could be put in the cell phones in various ways so that people could carry it and follow it everywhere.

#### MEETING OF THE HEADS OF INSTITUTIONS ON "COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND PUBLIC RELATIONSHIP" IN VARANASI 19&20, August 2017 (NavSadhana)

The Meeting of the Heads of Institutions on Communication Skills and Public Relationship was held on 19th & 20th of August in Varanasi Diocese. It was a well attended meeting comprising of 120 members.

The Meeting was inaugurated by lighting of Lamp by Most Rev. Eugene Joseph, Bishop of Varanasi, Most Rev. Salvadore Lobo, The National Chairman Bishop of CBCI Office of Social Communication, Bishop of Baruipur, Fr. Varaprasad Marneni, The CBCI Secretary for Office of Social Communications, Fr. Paul CSC, Fr. Suresh Mathew Ofm Cap, the chief editor of Indian Currents, and Other Chief Heads of Institutions.

The Theme of the Meeting was "Communication Skills and Public Relationship." The Resource persons were Most Rev. Eugene Joseph, Bishop of Varanasi, Most Rev. Salvadore Lobo, The National Chairman Bishop of CBCI Office of Social Communication, Bishop of Baruipur, Fr. Paul CSC, and Fr. Suresh Mathew OFM Cap, the chief editor of "Indian Currents."

The focus was to equip all the members with the skills of communication and Public Relationship as it is the need of the hour. Fr. Paul spoke about the emerging trends of education

and said that there has to be paradigm shift from the Principal centeredness to Students' centred life.

Fr. Suresh Mathew with all vigour made the participants to be aware of the threats faced by the institutions and spoke on the strategies of building healthy public relationship.

Both the Bishops, Most Rev. Salvadore Lobo and Bishop Eugene Joseph spoke on the urgent need of being aware of the surroundings and the need to build up Public Relationship.

The second day of the meeting began with the celebration of the Holy Mass. In his homily Bishop Eugene Joseph, Bishop of Varanasi, spoke about the Mission of Christ and how the Heads of Institutions can participate in it.

The meeting continued with Fr. Suresh Matthew continuing the theme of Public Relationship. Then the group of 120 members was split into 12 smaller groups to discuss various topics that were given to them. Later a brief report was presented by the secretaries of the groups.

Vote of thanks was proposed by Fr. Antony Rodrigues, Fr. Peter Colaco and finally the meeting was concluded by Fr. Thomas, the Education Secretary. The association of The Heads of Catholic Institutions is grateful to Most Rev. Dr. Eugene Joseph, Bishop of Varanasi, to Most Rev. Dr. Salvadore Lobo, President of CBCI-OSC and Rev. Fr. Varaprasad, the secretary, CBCI-OSC for their presence, valuable contribution, support and for their help.

CBCI-OSC Seminar/Workshop on Media and Formation in Varanasi.

8-11, October 2017, NavSadhana, Varanasi

Varanasi, is the holiest place for the Hindus, as according to them, the Ganges which flows through it is said to have spiritual powers to wash away sins. 51 formators, found their way to Nav Sadhana Campus in Varanasi, UP, in the northern plains of India to partake in the Seminar on "Media and Formation" from 8 – 11 October, 2017 organised by the CBCI-Office of Social Communications. At the initiative of Fr. Varaprasad Marneni, the Secretary of the CBCI-OSC, Fr. Justy C. R., who is Secretary of the OSC of Agra Region responded and arranged the place for the Seminar and workshop. Nav Sadhana includes the Agra – Regional Pastoral Centre, Regional Communication Centre and Kala Kendra College of Music and Dance. Presently, Fr. Wilfred Moras (of the Diocese of Lucknow) is the Director of Nav Sadhana . The main organizer of the Seminar was Fr Varprasad Marneni, Secretary of the CBCI-OSC and the resource persons were, Sr. Michelle Mathias FSP, Sr. Joeyanna D'Souza FSP and Fr. Varaprasad Marneni himself.

Majority of the formators were from formation houses situated within UP and the surrounding states, namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, M.P, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. We had religious Sisters who came from Trichy and Mumbai too. The group also included 8 priests from Seminaries of Latin dioceses in the Northern Region, two from Bijnor Diocese (Syro-Malabar) and Sisters from Sagar Diocese (Syro-Malabar). It was indeed a joyful and enriching mixture of religious cultures.

The topics treated were – Foundations in Communication, Internet Uses and Abuses, Models and Theories of Communications, Benefits of Social Media, Internet Addiction, Pornography Addiction, the Church's Response to Internet and Pornography Addiction today. It also

included an evening of practical sessions on Blogging, and uploading videos on YouTube, which are very important for archiving and capturing important events for long term use.

The media or “means of social communications,” (Inter Mirifica) are tools for evangelization and must be made use of for the good of humankind. However, besides the good that can be harnessed, in the waking circumstances of today, secular and religious News feeds make us aware of more and more religious and priests committing suicide for ‘unknown’ reasons, or strange reasons like ‘loneliness’, or being convicted for startling crimes like sexual abuse of minors, or for being in possession of pornography or for abusive communication skills, CBCI-OSC felt it fitting to organize a seminar on Media and Formation.

The group was welcomed on the evening of 8th October, and initiated into the seminar mood by the 2015 Oscar Award film “Spotlight” which was related to the Seminar topic.

The Inaugural Eucharist was on 9th October, presided by Most Rev. Eugene Joseph, Bishop of Varanasi, at the beautiful and artistic Nav Sadhana chapel. In his homily, he encouraged the resource persons and invited all the participants to make the best use of the programme, as today media is ‘forming’ religious and priests, more than we can imagine. A very good speaker and one of repute, the Bishop in his Key Note Address stressed how human formation is very important as “today’s generation is communicating, beyond our imagination.” He gave the gist of Mass Communication in a short time and quoted Marshall McLuhan, “The Medium is the message,” and connected it to Formation by quoting Pope Francis, “The Formator is the Formation.”

After the opening ceremony, the programme took off, with the first two sessions on Foundations in Communication by Sr. Michelle, who has recently completed her Masters in Communications from St Joseph’s College (Autonomous), Bangalore. She is presently teaching in NISCORT (National Institute of Social Communications and Research Training), one of the six CBCI-run Institutions and also serves there as Registrar.

Fr Varprasad Marneni, the CBCI Secretary for Office of Social Communications, hailing from the Archdiocese of Hyderabad, who did his a doctoral studies in Communications and Canon Law from Louvain (Belgium), is also Staff member and lecturer at NISCORT took sessions on Models and Theories of Communications and Benefits of Social Media, for Formation and Formators, making it interesting with short video-clips.

Sr. Joeyanna, with expertise in Computer Systems Management and Internet, manages the Online Presence and Mobile Application Management at Pauline Publications & Communications, and is presently pursuing her Licentiate in Moral Theology. She coached the group on symptoms of Internet Addiction and how to deal with those in religious formation, who show these symptoms.. Today, with smart phones becoming part of seminary and religious life, online pornography is ‘anonymously’ available and freely accessible, with Wi-Fi, and even the famous JIO free data schemes and could become a strong temptation in Religious Formation houses and Seminaries, if not treated in time. Her session on Pornography Addiction which is catching up among youth, including some seminarians and religious, was to treat circumstances of the kind. She also took practical sessions on Blogging and uploading on YouTube.

The sessions were held in NAV SANCHAR which is the Communications Section of Nav Sadhana, managed by Fr. Justy C.R., who is a professional in Film direction, and AV

production. He was part of the hosting management team and whose involvement was indispensable and is appreciated.

The entire hosting management was capably taken care of by Fr. Wilfred Moras, Director of Nav Sadhana and his team of priests, religious and employed staff. His poise, patience, support and management skills need to be mentioned and appreciated. The Cultural Nite organized by Kala Kendra, was indeed memorable. It confirmed the presence of powerful and innate talent among the students, which is being disciplined and fine-tuned by the staff of Kala Kendra and Nav Sadhana as a whole.

Kudos to CBCI-OSC, and especially Fr. Varaprasad Marneni for the efficient, cost-effective organization and meticulous planning and implementing of the entire programme. Thanks to Bishop Eugene Joseph the Bishop of Varanasi, the Regional Chairman for the OSC, for taking active part in the Seminar by inaugurating it with Holy Mass and inspiring the members with his thought provoking Key Note Address. Thanks to Bishop Salvadore Lobo, National Chairman of the CBCI-OSC, for his blessings on this Seminar.

Fr. Varaprasad Marneni,  
Secretary, CBCI-OSC