

Fourth Sunday of Advent 18 December



Fr Peter Balleis SJ/Jesuit Refugee Service

“And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation’.”
Mark 16.15

Sri Lanka: Although the civil war has ended in the north-east, many people are still displaced, waiting and hoping for the opportunity to return home.

One of the chief instructions of Jesus was that his disciples should proclaim the **good news**, just as he did. This Christmas, join us in spreading the **good news** among those who most need to hear it. Your gift will go directly to one of circa 35 initiatives that we support in 15 countries around the world.

Thank you for your gift!

Please send a cheque payable to **Canadian Jesuits International**. Or just log on to www.canadianjesuitsinternational.ca and click the Canada Helps icon and follow the easy instructions.

If you wish to make a **monthly donation**, the amount can be charged directly to your Visa or Mastercard or withdrawn from your bank account. If you wish to leave a lasting legacy, you could consider **planned giving**. To learn more, call or write to us at CJI.



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Haiti: Automeca camp in Port-au-Prince; one of the camps set up for survivors of the January 2010 earthquake.

The CJI vision and mission

The vision of CJI is of a world of justice, peace and integrity of creation, transformed through our commitment to the poor and our faith in a living God in our midst.

As a response to God’s love in the world, the mission of CJI is to support poor and marginalised people in developing countries through the work of Jesuit and other partners, and to carry out educational advocacy in Canada, linked with our overseas work.

We work with Jesuit and other partners rooted in the Jesuit tradition in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

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The Good News

“There were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’”

Luke 2:8-13



Nepal: Mrs Jyoti, a tea estate worker, with her daughter Smriti.

Fr. Roysabhai (Nellipuzha) SJ

Christmas Appeal
2011

CANADIAN JESUITS INTERNATIONAL

First Sunday of Advent

27 November

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” Mk 1:1

Darjeeling: Amber Biswakarma works with SOJASI (Society of Jesus Agricultural and Social Institute) in Kurseong. A widower who cared for his bedridden wife for years before her death, Amber now looks after his children; SOJASI provided a home for his family.



Jenny Cafiso/CJI

The shepherds are a familiar part of the Nativity scene, so familiar that we can easily miss the significant symbolism of their role. Anyone living in Jesus' time would have been surprised that the first people who heard the **good news** of his birth were shepherds. Shepherds were outcasts: their work was despised and they were stigmatised as being dishonest, considered unworthy of giving their testimony in court. Yet they were the ones chosen to be the first witnesses of the ultimate **good news**.

This choice echoes our approach: as CJI we work with partners in developing countries to share the good news of Jesus, of life, peace and justice, with those often seen as outcasts. As we start Advent, let's reflect how Jesus is incarnated in marginalised communities and in efforts to free them from all that oppresses them.

The life of Jesus was dedicated to *proclaiming the good news*. Just as the shepherds were the first to hear the **good news** of his birth, so Jesus favoured people who were oppressed. He saw people whose life was a constant struggle for survival, crushed by debt and oppression, and it was to them that he delivered the **good news** that God loved and wanted to give them *life to the full* (Jn 10:10).

Worldwide our partners do the same for those suffering poverty and injustice today. This week, we remember those who share the good news of hope through education.

Nepal: The Jesuits help tea estate workers to break the cycle of deprivation, isolation and lack of opportunity in the estates through education. Pictured on the right at Moran Memorial School is teacher Ram Pokharel helping Ajay Rajbanshi in social studies. The school serves children from a nearby tea estate.

Second Sunday of Advent – 4 December

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to... let the oppressed go free.” Lk 4:18



Fr. Roysebastian, Wellipuzha SJ



Jenny Cafiso/CJI

Third Sunday of Advent – 11 December

“Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness.” Matthew 9.35

When Jesus saw people who were sick and rejected, he reached out spontaneously to them – healing was an integral part of his proclamation of the **good news**. This week, let's remember those who share the **good news** of life and healing with people who are ill. We think especially about those who, themselves affected, help others, like Petronie Minani and Jeanne Mpawenimana from Burundi. They belong to the *Service Yezu Mwiza* (SYM), a Jesuit project for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Petronie and Jeanne are peer educators (in the photo, flanked

by SYM staff Bienvenue Kaneza, left, and Isaac Nkurikiye, right). They courageously share their testimony of living with HIV to encourage others and to raise awareness. Having received the **good news** from SYM, they are eager to share it, regardless of stigma – just as the shepherds must have done. *So the last will be first, and the first will be last* (Mt 20:16): God reversed the social order when he chose the shepherds; we too put first those who are marginalised, so that they may enjoy the rights that are naturally theirs, the right to medication, to food, to housing, to all they need to be **fully alive**.