

### **St. Xavier's at 30: Celebrate. Reinvent.**

In our Academic Council Consults (ACC) to fix a theme for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our college, almost all of us felt that the theme should have the word 'legacy' in it. For any institution of Higher Secondary and Tertiary Education in Nepal, 30 years can seem like a lifetime. However, the Jesuits began their first school in Nepal - St. Xavier's Godavari - in 1951, at the invitation of the then King, almost 67 years ago. Moreover, the Jesuit education in the world has a tradition of over 475 years since it began in 1540 in Europe. How much of a legacy is 30 years after the founding of St. Xavier's Kathmandu in 1988?

My curiosity led me to discover that the word legacy comes from the Latin word *legatus* and can be understood in two interesting ways: 1. "ambassador" \* and 2. "a gift by will." And I strongly feel that understanding these two traits of meaning of the word legacy will help us celebrate and reinvent the thirty years of existence of St. Xavier's Kathmandu.

An ambassador is a servant, a messenger. She represents the person or institution or the country that appoints her. An ambassador has to fulfill the mission that is given to her by the one who sends her.

For the last 30 years, St. Xavier's Kathmandu has transformed the lives of thousands of students. These men and women have gone out of its portals with a mission: to make the world a better place for everyone. In whichever corner of the world they are and in whatever profession they are, Xavierians have been the flag bearers of an educational tradition that believes in the God created goodness of every person, tolerance and respect for alternate beliefs and a sustained and loving care for our planet. Hence, St. Xavier's Kathmandu's alumni are its legacy; they are its ambassadors who live out Excellence, Leadership and Service throughout their lives. They are the gift left behind by St. Xavier's Kathmandu on its will written over the last 30 years. They are its reason to celebrate.

To us who are part of St. Xavier today the same legacy of academic excellence, moral uprightness, social responsibility, healthy emotional life and spiritual wisdom – the five hash tags of a Xavierian - is gifted but with the challenge to reinvent.

To reinvent, as the word suggests, is to invent again something that has already been invented. It is not to throw the 30 year legacy out of the window but to adapt it into a different form; it is to affirm the legacy by giving it a new style or image. And it is the responsibility of every one of us to start the process of reinvention so that SXC's mission of transforming lives to transform the world may live to be a fifty, a hundred, and a thousand.

We have a legacy indeed. Let us celebrate it. Let us reinvent it.

Fr. Jomon Jose, S.J.

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\*late 14c., legacie, "body of persons sent on a mission," from Medieval Latin *legatia*, from Latin *legatus* "ambassador, envoy, deputy," noun use of past participle of *legare* "send with a commission, appoint as deputy, appoint by a last will" (see *legate*).

#Sense of "property left by will, a gift by will" appeared in Scottish mid-15c. Legacy-hunter is attested from 1690s. French *legs* "a legacy" is a bad spelling of Old French *lais* (see *lease* (n.)). French *legacie* is attested only from 16c.