

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST. XAVIER'S SCHOOL DORANDA  
BLESSING CEREMONY: END OF JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

22 April 2022

YOUR GRACE MOST REVEREND FELIX TOPPO S.J., ARCHBISHOP OF RANCHI,  
YOUR LORDSHIP RIGHT REVEREND BINAY KANDULNA, BISHOP OF KHUNTI,  
REVEREND FATHER AJIT KUMAR XESS S.J., PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR, RANCHI JESUIT  
SOCIETY,  
RESPECTED FATHER IGNATIUS LAKRA S.J., PRINCIPAL, ST. XAVIER'S SCHOOL DORANDA,  
REVERAND FATHERS, SISTERS, HONOURABLE ALUMNI, BENEFACTORS, GUESTS, TEACHERS  
AND DEAR STUDENTS.

I feel extremely blessed and elated to have this wonderful opportunity to share with you the journey of St. Xavier's school Doranda, for the past 62 years as we reach the culmination of our Jubilee celebrations.

**“Fire must Burn”** was the inspirational words of Father Constant Lievens, the great missionary of Chotanagpur. From 1927 to 1944 massive expansion of primary and secondary education brought about a magnificent transition from a limited Christian group to a massive, progressive and vibrant tribal community of Chotanagpur.

Keeping the fire burning and the Gospel as the light, St Xavier's School Doranda was started in the year 1960 in response to a request from the professional community of Heavy Engineering Corporation, Hindustan Steel Ltd. and National Coal Development Corporation. In the beginning, the classes were held in the rooms of a rented house and under a tree. In the meantime, negotiations started for a lease of five acres of land which now houses the Senior Section and the Senior Secondary Section.

From the very beginning, the school received its patronage from the likes of Dr. Zakir Hussein, the then Governor of Bihar and Dr. Binod Nandan Jha, the then Chief Minister of Bihar. In November 1961, the lease was granted and executed. The first School Bus was hired from M/s Bharat Motors to commute the students from Simdega to Ranchi. The pioneering spirit of the Jesuit Fathers was shared by the teachers, parents and students in the form of extraordinary commitment and dedication. At that time, the School was affiliated to Cambridge Board of Overseas Education with Hindi as the second language on two levels.

The motto of the school in Hindi **“Utsah Siddhaye”** translated into English as **“Strive to Excel”** was coined by Dr. Fr. Camil Bulcke.

On 31 July, 1976, the Primary Section was blessed by His Grace Reverend Pius Kerketta S.J., the then Archbishop of Ranchi.

In 1984, to commemorate 25 glorious years of St. Xavier's School Doranda, the Silver Jubilee was marked by the inauguration of a four storied building. The Jubilee wing including a library, Audio Visual Room and a large Indoor games room which we now call the TT Room – was built.

The advent of the millennium in 2000 saw Father James Lakra S.J. taking charge as the Principal and a dynamic young priest Father Ajit Kumar Xess S.J. as the Vice-Principal who was the assistant teacher as a young brother in 1993 – 95.

The school continued its graph of progress with a holistic approach adding different labs like Mathematics, English, Languages and Multimedia. The School Houses expanded to 07 in number, each house having been named after a remarkable Jesuit saint as it's patron.

In 2001, the school upgraded itself to the Senior Secondary level with co-education. Initially, only the Science Stream was offered and in the year 2006, the Commerce Stream was added.

The School did not shy away from its responsibilities to the society at large and so with the joint efforts of Father James Lakra S.J., Fr. Ajit Xess and Father Jonckere S.J., '**the Outreach Programme**' was started. The Project, right from its inception, is committed to uplift the literacy rate of the target groups comprising of underprivileged, marginalized and drop-out students from the lower economic backgrounds and helps them to join the mainstream society as employable youth of caliber.

The year 2006 witnessed Reverend Father Ajit Kumar Xess S.J. taking charge as the Principal of the School. Already a sophisticated, erudite and a firm believer of the Gospel, the young Father Ajit started his tenure with dynamism in his administrative methods and a Vision for the future in his eyes. He was well acquainted with the changes in the education sector in terms of technological innovations being applied to teaching-learning pedagogy and was farsighted enough to predict the yet to come new expectations of the society from School education. The same foresightedness saw the rapid rise of the School in both academics and co-curricular activities at both National and International levels.

The year 2010, was the dawn of the Golden Jubilee of the School. The 50 Years of St. Xavier's School Doranda were marked with volumes of golden

dreams, aspirations and untiring dedication of the teachers, the students and the parents.

The next decade saw a meteoric rise in the name, fame and glory of St. Xavier's Doranda under the sturdy and visionary Captaincy of Reverend Father Ajit Kumar Xess S.J. at the helm of all affairs. The School was awarded with Gold Medal, the highest rank among all the Jesuit schools of central zone by Adhyayan, a Mumbai based Educational organization.

This decade also saw the conception and actualization of **“SXD Vision 2020”**. Father Ajit was inspired by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the 11<sup>th</sup> President of India, and his Vision 2020 for catapulting India as a Superpower in Economic, Defense and Education fields. With the same fire in his thoughts, Father Ajit visualized a Plan of Action to propel St. Xavier's Doranda as a pioneer in the Field of Education and drew the Blueprint for ‘SXD Vision 2020’ to mark the 60 years of the School. Mr. Rahul Surin, an Architect and an illustrious alumnus of the School, above all one of the liked Students of Fr. Ajit designed SXD Vision 2020 and Mr. Jasbir and Paresh both parents and builders, completed the construction work with full dedication and love.

A grand vision to match the grander credentials of the school, the Vision foresaw magnificent infrastructural upgradation to a new Senior Secondary Wing being added to the existing School structure, Library, Computer Labs, Research grade Science Labs, World class Classrooms and concert grade Multipurpose Hall. The new Humanities Stream was also proposed to meet the societal expectations. It took sweat, blood and toil of our Jesuit Fathers under the aegis of Reverend Father Ajit Kumar Xess S.J., working in tandem with the DOX and the parents as benefactors that this seemingly impossible dream of erecting World-Class infrastructure in terms of Architectural excellence and Utilitarian value has now seen the light of the day.

After 24 years in St. Xavier's, Father Ajit was appointed as the Provincial Superior of Ranchi Jesuit Society by Rev. Fr. Arturo Sosa, the Superior General, his vision was propelled forward by Father Sanjay Kerketta S.J. in June 2020 and thereafter by Father Ignatius Lakra S.J., the present Principal of St Xavier's School, Doranda.

Father Lievens had said **“If it is God's work, it will be realized”**. The past 15 decades are a living testimony to the fact that the Jesuits of Ranchi Province have successfully discerned God's will. Today, St. Xavier's School Doranda can proudly write in the annals of history that **“We did not fail, it was God's work”**.