



## Panjim Circle Launches Youth Project

*By Basil D'Cunha, Panjim Circle, Goa*

**W**ithin days of its inauguration, Panjim Circle initiated a social project for the youth with the twin objectives of:

1. Providing our youth with sound Catholic values through better understanding of our faith
2. Developing leaders for tomorrow through confidence building exercises/games plus training in Public Speaking and Group Discussions.

Our resource team has been drawn not only from among our membership and some of our members' wives (see list below), but also from the clergy and various leading Catholic associations viz Couples for Christ, Singles for Christ, the Charismatic Group and some Catholic Doctors.

We have the blessings of the Panjim parish priest, Fr Antimo Gomes (of the Immaculate Conception Church where we had our Inaugural Mass) and have also received tremendous support from the Jesuits and the Salesians.

In fact the Salesians have offered us their mini-auditorium which is ideally located in the heart of the city to conduct these programs.

### Three Categories

The entire program has been broadly tailored into three categories:

- a) Deeper understanding of the Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church.



*Listening attentively at the first presentation*

(We felt that our children in Goa do not have further training in our faith after Confirmation. Besides, there is hardly any training given in schools (even Catholic schools).

- b) An insight into how one should face the contemporary challenges eg Pre-marital Sex, Contraception/ Abortion, Dealing with Abusive Parents, Inter Community Marriages, Drugs/AIDS, Pornography, etc.
- c) Confidence building exercises/games plus training in Public Speaking and Group Discussions.

### Leadership Camps

We plan to have two sessions a month and also to use the annual school vacations for the leadership camps. We have set aside just two sessions a month as our youth have their academic

pursuits and are also involved in other activities and therefore we did not want them to find an excuse not to attend.

Our first session was launched on 8th November 2009 and we had 22 young men and women attend. The age group incidentally has been maintained at 15-21 years of age and for Post Confirmation students. We do anticipate some problems in terms of maintaining 100% attendance, in that students are drawn from different schools/colleges in town and each have their own examination and vacation schedules. However, given the spirit in which we have begun, we will go by the old axiom – “when the going gets tough, the tough get going.”

### A Full Blown Presentation Ceremony

At the conclusion of this program we intend to have a full blown presentation ceremony where the parents of the youth will be invited and other social organizations. The youth themselves will conduct the entire program. This will give the Social Project the supporting publicity it needs and will hopefully be the basis not only for extending the program in and around the city but possibly, in time, all over Goa. We have felt that there is a great danger of our youth drifting and that we Catenians could contribute our bit to reverse the tide.

Led by Basil D'Cunha, the Catenians and their spouses in the resource team for the project are Basil's wife Judy D'Cunha, Circle President Eurico Noronha, Circle Secretary Basil Fernandez, Treasurer Savio Fonseca, Trevor Fernandes, Caetano Filipe Colaco and his wife Patricia.



*Preparation for the topic, "Fun and Values"*