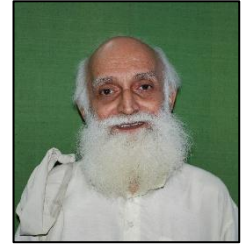


OBITUARY OF BR. SADHU SHILANAND, S.J (86/67)

Born: 30.04.1940 Entered: 20.07.1959 Final Vows: 22.04.1976
Died in Holy Family Hospital Patna: 06.08.2026



Studies and Formation:

Secondary Education. St. Aloysius High School Mangalore 1958
Hr. Secondary: St. Aloysius College Mangalore 1959

Graduation: Delhi University (B. Com)

Formation in the Society of Jesus:

Novitiate: Mt. St. Joseph Bangalore 1st yr /XTTI 2nd yr 1950-1960, 1961-1963

Juniorate: X.T.T. I, Patna 1963

Final Vows: St. Xavier's Patna 22.04.1976

Apostolic Assignment in the Society

Asst. Dir Xavier Hall

Patna 1970-1971

Hostel, Retreat work Sasaram 1971- 1980

Retreat/Charismatic, XTTI 1980-1987

Retreat work Muzaffarpur 1988

Masihi Satsang Kurji 2008

Evangelization: FMSSK 2016-

Rest, Xavier Bhawan 2023 -

Brother Sadhu Shilanand (Sylvester D'Souza) born on 30 April 1940 in Mangalore, Karnataka, was a deeply prayerful, simple and committed Jesuit missionary whose life was inspired by the words of Jesus: "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have, give to the poor, then come, follow me" (Matthew 19:21). Born into a devout Catholic family, he received a strong foundation in faith and education at St. Aloysius School and College, Mangalore. His devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary remained a constant source of his missionary zeal.

He entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Mount St. Joseph, Bangalore, in 1959 and continued his formation at XTTI. He pronounced his Final Vows on 4 April 1976. His Jesuit life was marked by a readiness to follow God's providence and to serve wherever the needs were greatest.

His first assignment was as Assistant Director at Xavier Hall, Patna, in 1970, where he worked with Fr. Jerome Durack, SJ. Inspired by Fr. Durack's holiness, simplicity and sense of duty, Sadhuji developed a similar style of committed service. From 1971 to 1980, he served in Sasaram, caring for a hostel and conducting retreat ministry in numerous villages. He accompanied students from disadvantaged backgrounds, helping them develop discipline, confidence and responsibility. He became their mentor, companion and spiritual guide.

Sadhuji developed creative forms of evangelization that spoke directly to local people and culture. Through village retreats, prayer and healing ministry, he helped people experience spiritual, emotional and physical renewal. He promoted **Isayan**, a folk-song form that communicated the Gospel in an accessible way, and **Masihi Satsang Mandali**, through which salvation history was presented through Bhojpuri folk songs. He also introduced Bhojpuri songs into the liturgy, convinced that people could encounter the Gospel more deeply when worship was expressed in their own language and culture.

His involvement in the charismatic renewal was another important dimension of his ministry. Along with Fr. William Goudreau, SJ, and Sr. Lydia, CJ, he formed a team for charismatic retreats. The movement attracted thousands of people, including about 5,000 participants at a charismatic convention held at St. Michael's School in 1984. His simple lifestyle and deep identification with

the people gradually transformed him into “Shilanand,” meaning hermit or sadhu. He adopted the dhoti-kurta, spoke Bhojpuri, and carried little more than a Bible, cross and shoulder bag.

In 2016, Sadhuji established an Ashram at Kurji, Patna, seeking to witness to the Gospel through a simple, shared community life inspired by the early Christians. Its activities included Bhojpuri Bible translation, liturgical songs, healing ministry and evangelization. It also developed small means of self-support such as pickle-making, shoemaking, tailoring and Bible-cover making.

His life was ultimately marked by heroic courage. In 1980, when Fr. Matthew Mannaparambil, SJ, was captured by robbers at Sasaram and threatened with death, Sadhuji placed himself between the robbers and the priest, offering his own life in exchange for Fr. Matthew's. This extraordinary act revealed the depth of his love, courage and self-giving.

Brother Sadhu Shilanand remains a powerful witness to simplicity, inculturation, prayer, evangelization, courage and selfless service. His life embodied the Gospel he proclaimed: to follow Christ completely and give oneself generously for others.

Fr. Pradeep Kumar, SJ