

# STARS, ASTEROIDS AND BEYOND: *Role of Jesuits*

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In an era when rovers are sent to Mars, it comes as a big surprise that several craters on the moon and several asteroids are named after Jesuit priests. Among them is **Christopher Clavius** (1538-1612), a Jesuit German mathematician and astronomer, with a large crater on the moon to his record. He modified the proposal of the Gregorian calendar and is the sole mastermind behind the adoption of a rigorous mathematics curriculum within the Jesuit order, in an age when mathematics was often ridiculed by



philosophers as well as fellow Jesuits. In mathematical logic, Clavius' law (inferring the truth of a proposition from the inconsistency of its negation) is credited to him.



**S**t. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), a religious order of the Catholic Church has got an asteroid named in his honour. He has written in his autobiography that gazing at the stars gave him the 'greatest consolation'. His life and interests set us an example of how things in the world and faith emanate from the same God. Right from the beginning of the Society, the Jesuits have been key players in astronomy, and have been researching on several topics related to stars, asteroids and meteorites. Their research continues even today at the Vatican Observatory in Vatican City.

To the one question of how researchers in the field of science and technology struggle to see the face of God, the lives of Clavius and St. Ignatius of Loyola come as a befitting motivation. Yes, let the young generation of today be rekindled by what Jesus says in John 14:6, 'I am the way, the truth and the life', with their passions propelling them along ways less traversed to that truth leading to a new awakening.