INTRODUCTION
The Basilica of Bom Jesus is located in Old Goa, it is one of the most iconic landmarks of the state of Goa, and is recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The Basilica is regarded sacred by the Roman Catholic Community world over and hence is also an important site of pilgrimage for Catholic believers.

The church was built in the year 1605, and also serves as a tomb for the mortal remains of St. Francis Xavier, a distinguished Jesuit (also known as the Society of Jesus) priest. It is said that after the death of St. Xavier in China, his body was brought back as it was buried after two years and from since then it has been housed in this Basilica. Every ten years his body is showcased to believers of the Catholic community, who profess their faith in the miracles of the saint.

ARCHITECTURE
While the exterior of the Basilica is not so impressive, the sheer size and beauty of this structure can be appreciated if one looks at the context of architectural traditions that informed its construction, this 400 year old church is known for its Baroque Style of Architecture, certain elements of which can be called a Jesuit invention.
The architecture style is mainly a combination of the Roman, Doric, Corinthian and other European styles, the façade is devoid of any plaster and hence carvings on the structure can be seen. The interior of the church is notable for its impeccable and aesthetically pleasing woodwork and gilded columns, use of fine marble and precious stones.

Near the main altar of the church, a huge statue of St. Ignatius Loyola can be seen, the founder of the Society of Jesus and a statue of Francis Xavier one of the founding members and pioneering Jesuit, a statue of Bom Jesus, (Child Jesus) is also placed on the altar who is the patron of the church. Along with a main Basilica is a smaller chapel, called the Chapel of St. Francis Xavier which is again notable for its beautiful and rich interior. The mortal remains of the St. Francis Xavier are also housed here.

Apart from structure of sacred importance the Basilica is has an art gallery, which has a display of beautiful paintings drawing upon Biblical themes. Thus the Basilica is not only a place for the sacred and holy, but also encapsulates in itself a history of composite architecture.
St. Francis Xavier died of a fever in the year 1552 on the island of Shangchaun. He was buried in the Portuguese colony of Malacca and after a few years when his grave was extricated, he was body was found to be as it was buried. It is believed that upon hearing this Father Francis Xavier was canonized as a saint!

**ACTIVITY**

1. What is the Society of Jesuits also known as?
   
   ________________________________________________

2. Find out one key difference between a Church and a Basilica

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

3. Match the following

   Taj Mahal  
   Humayun’s Tomb  
   Brihadeswara Temple  
   Konark Sun Temple  
   Mahabodhi Temple  

   Gaya  
   Agra  
   New Delhi  
   Thanjavur  
   Bhubaneswar

   **What fact is common to all these monuments?**
   
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