



Pastor's Corner



Hope you will enjoy the new insights that Rick Warren has, with his wife now having cancer and him having 'wealth' from the book sales of *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?* In a November interview by Paul Bradshaw, Rick said: "People ask me, what is the purpose of life? And I respond: In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were not made to last forever... We can be reasonably happy here on earth, but that's not the goal of life. The goal is to grow in character, in Christ likeness."

This past year has been the greatest year of my life but also the toughest, with my wife, Kay, getting cancer. I used to think that life was hills and valleys you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth... Rather than life being hills and valleys, I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life. No matter how good things are in your life, there is always something bad that needs to be worked on. And no matter how bad

The Purpose Driven Life

things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for. You can focus on your purposes, or you can focus on your problems. If you focus on your problems, you're going into self-centeredness, 'which is my problem, my issues, my pain.' But one of the easiest ways to get rid of pain is to get your focus off yourself and onto God and others. We discovered quickly that in spite of the prayers of hundreds of thousands of people, God was not going to heal Kay or make it easy for her. It has been very difficult for her, and yet God has strengthened her character... You have to learn to deal with both the good and the bad of life. Actually, sometimes learning to deal with the good is harder. For instance, this past year, all of a sudden, when the book sold 15 million copies, it made me instantly very wealthy. It also brought a lot of notoriety that I had never had to deal with before... So I began to ask God what He wanted me to do with this money, notoriety and influence... First, in spite of



all the money coming in, we would not change our lifestyle one bit. Second, about midway through last year, I stopped taking a salary from the church. Third, we set up foundations to fund an initiative we call The Peace Plan to plant churches, equip leaders, assist the poor, care for the sick, and educate the next generation. Fourth, I added up all that the church had paid me in the 24 years since I started the church, and I gave it all back. It was liberating to be able to serve God for free.

We need to ask ourselves: Am I going to live for possessions? Popularity? Am I going to be driven by pressures? Guilt? Bitterness? Materialism? Or am I going to be driven by God's purposes (for my life)? When I get up in the morning, I sit on the side of my bed and say, God, if I don't get anything else done today, I want to know You more and love You better. God didn't put me on earth just to fulfill a to-do list. He's more interested in what I am than what I do. That's why we're called human beings, not human doings.

+Lumen, CSC

Editorial



Some of those who stepped into the first month of the year alongside us are no longer around as we now step into its last month. That is why uppermost in our minds at this juncture is gratitude to God for time and for life.

Events like Christmas make us also fearful in a strange way. We become acutely aware of the passing of time. And we realize, life is not only fragile but also brief.

What is the stuff that makes up our busy lives? We could either fill our lives and days with beauty and love, loveliness and peace. Or we could

waste away a lifetime gathering dirt, settling scores, waging wars and proving points.



It only takes a casual look around or a moment of listening to realize that there are hundreds that need from us a helping hand, a consoling word, an encouraging deed, or a comforting gesture.

The Christmas story is about how love freely given transforms life's dark midnights into love-kissed oases of peace and goodness.

As we enter into cold and foggy December, may we find within our hearts enough love to take us

Butt-ends of our days and ways...

through arid loveless deserts of hatred and anger, selfishness and fear. And as we go, may we become the blessing that transforms night into day, hatred into love, swords into ploughshares and sickles into pruning hooks. Merry Christmas to you!

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

LINK wishes all its Readers a
**HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND
GRACE FILLED NEW YEAR
2012**



Kumarghat Parish

'Parents' Day': Amanika 'Do you love your parents? 'Yes indeed, 'they mean a lot to me', the compare of the day continued 'Dear parents, we would like honor you and express our gratitude to you'. With these notes commenced the **'first Parents Day'** at Holy Cross School, Kumarghat. The Chief Guest of the day was Shree Barun Das, Director of Education North Tripura. The School was privileged to have Shree Bijoy Sinha, BDO Kumarghat at the function. A colorful program was presented before the audience by the students.

Maria Sangha: The 4th Annual Convention of Maria Sangha, was held from 18 to 20 November 2011 at Zaroli an, a sub-center about 45 km away from Kumar



ghat. The Convention was attended by about 200 'Maria Sanga' members from various sub-centers. The 4th Annual Convention was focused on the theme 'My heart praises the Lord'. The Parish Priest Fr. Thomas Pereira CSC welcomed the members at the inaugural session and invited them to reflect upon 'Mary's humility and acceptance of the will of the Lord'. Input sessions on various topics like 'Mary a role model', 'Importance of Prayer', 'Role of women in Christian Family', 'Rights of women' etc., by Leena Lushai, John Halam, Lalrina Darlong, Sr. Fidoline MC, made the audience reflect on their Christian life and calling. Cultural competitions and fanfare brought lighter moments to the Convention.

Fr. Valerian, CSC

News from the Parishes

Depacherra Parish

A Gift from God for His people

November 9th was a great day for the people of Malbassa for they found their promised place of worship. Fr. Alvaro Martins, a diocesan Priest from Goa helped the people to get this beautiful place of worship. Fr. Alvaro Martins, the donor cut the ribbon and opened St. Francis Xavier Chapel for worship in the presence of Bishop Lumen Monteiro DD and faithful. Bishop prayed and blessed the chapel. Frs. John Diniz and Edmund Barretto who played their role in getting this Chapel completed, were also present for the event. After the blessing, we had Holy Eucharist presided over by our Bishop. Then the people thanked all who were behind the scenes, especially the people from Goa, at the completion of the Chapel. The celebrations came to an end with the agape meal.



Parish Feast

After much preparation the people of Depacherra Parish celebrated their Parish Feast of Christ the King, on November 20.



The celebration started with the hoisting of the Parish flag on 11th November and Novena for 9 days during which different priests came from different places and celebrated Mass for us and broke the Word of God on different themes, mainly the Sacraments. On the feast day, we had the Eucharistic celebration, presided by Fr. Joe Paul CSC, the Administrator of Holy Cross School, Agartala and concelebrated by several other priests. During the Holy Eucharist 27 of our children received Jesus for the first time. Then we had the Eucharistic Procession and Adoration followed by a family meal. At the end of the celebration we had different games for all the villagers and distributed prizes for the winners. It was a great day for all of us.

Fr. John Bosco

Khumlwng Parish

Parish Sabha St. Alphonsa Parish

The Parish Sabha of St. Alphonsa Parish, Khumlwng began with two days of Retreat on 28th and 29th of October. The Retreat was preached by Rev. Fr. Joe Paul CSC, the Administrator of Holy Cross School Agartala. The Retreat was organized mainly for the parishioners to strengthen their faith and spirituality. The people appreciated preacher's eloquence in the local language-Kokborok. October, being the month of Mother Mary, we had a very impressive and meaningful Procession from Khumtoya village church to the Parish on 29th evening. The Procession concluded with adoration-confession and the Holy Eucharist. Devotion to Mother Mary has certainly increased in the hearts and minds of our people. The culmination of the feast was in the Holy Eucharist on 30th October. Many priests participated in it and made the occasion a memorable one. Fr. Thomas Lakra SDB was the main celebrant and Fr. Joe Paul CSC gave a thought-provoking message on this solemn festive Holy Eucharist. First Holy Communion was administered to the children as well. The three day Parish Sabha cum Celebrations concluded with a beautiful traditional felicitation programme and fellowship meal. The celebration has united and strengthened the parishioners.



King Procession this year. Along with hundreds of students the parishioners gathered at Belbari market public stage at 8 in the morning. Closed shops and the silent roads loudly proclaimed that Jesus Christ is truly the King of the Universe. At this beautiful moment, we

Christ the King at Belbari Market, Khumlwng



Taking risk is always doubtful but rewarding, because in doubt and fear one believes in the providence of God. We decided to organize an adventurous Christ the King Procession this year. Along with hundreds of students the parishioners gathered at Belbari market public stage at 8 in the morning. Closed shops and the silent roads loudly proclaimed that Jesus Christ is truly the King of the Universe. At this beautiful moment, we

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Fr. Thomas Manjaly from ORIENS, Shillong writes:

Dear Bishop Lumen,
I should have written this note earlier. But better late than never, so they say! First of all hearty Congratulations to you and your Team for organizing the Diocesan Mission Congress (6-9 October 2011), which many of the older Dioceses (with large number of Catholics) in the region and even in the country have not managed to organize, and that too with so much effectiveness. Numbers do not count, but not always. Your 2500 or 3000 participants constitute a very high per cent of the Catholic population.

That you were able to gather so many and to provide an atmosphere of prayer, and actual prayer for so many days, and that you were able to motivate, enthuse and inspire the lay faithful for greater commitment to bring others into the Church, are great achievements. I am sure many unseen and untold miracles will take place through such events. God bless you and your Ambassa Team.

Fr. Edmund Barretto from the Goa Archdiocese School Education Board writes:

Dear Bishop Lumen,
I hope and pray that life and Divine Providence treats you well as you shoulder the great God-given responsibility of being the pastor to the thousands of Christ's poor.

I would like to convey on behalf of all of us who visited Tripura, especially on behalf of John and me, our sincere gratitude for your much appreciated hospitality. It has been a memorable experience to revisit the mission spirit with its enthusiasm and hardships. Though it was a short stay, it was an enriching one. It was like visiting a petrol pump for refueling.

Thanks too for your promptness in sending the e-copy of 'Link'. I am assured that I will be linked to the land, the people and the happenings that I treasure so much in my life.

Continued from page 2

began praise and worship at the top of our voice-Jesus is the King of the kings, Jesus is the king of the universe, Jesus is the king of our life... The procession was lively full of slogans and songs welcoming Christ the King in our hearts.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

Bishramganj Parish The Shepherd with his flock

It was a moment of grace for the people of Bishramganj, when our pastor, Bishop Lumen made a 3-day visit to this Parish from 16th November. He was warmly welcomed by the School children with flowers and he presided over the Parents' Day celebrations of the



School. After lunch he went to Hirapur where he had blessed a new Church in 2009. People from Hirapur and adjoining villages joined in the celebrations and he was happy to interact with them and they with him. It was almost the first time that many of them came so close to the Bishop and he to them. The evening was spent in visiting Don Bosco Boys' Home, Auxilium Girls' Hostel Pathaliaghat, and to the big village of Gulirai.



The next day began with an early morning mass for the Sisters and the hostellers of Don Bosco School, Udaipur. He was then able to see the development of the Church in the Killa Block of South Tripura. The visit to Raio and Twirupa and the Mass at Pitra, followed by a visit to Sukmohanpara where the people from the Molsom villages of the South Barmura range, who are still quite poor and disadvantaged were gathered with the children of the School along with the Sisters,

showed the prospects of further growth in the region. The lively faith of the people and the evangelizing zeal of the laity will ever be etched in his memory. The hospitality and warmth of the people and their simple faith have encouraged him a lot. On that one day, the 17th of November, he was able to see several villages of the Killa Block. It was hectic but consoling, seeing the growth and the enthusiasm for the faith evinced by the people. The place is home to the Jamatias and the Molsoms, and the progress of the work among the different tribes shows that the Lord is with them as their Saviour and their Lord.

□ The next day was another day filled with activity and joy. He was able to visit and then go to Thelekung, a place of the Kalais and the Molsoms, where there is a vibrant church, then to the Don Bosco School, Nabasardar, near Jampuijala, where the children welcomed him with joy, and then on to Shyamnagar where he said Mass for the people of the Takarjala Zone, then on to Duigoria, and finally back to Agartala for a well-earned rest after three days of fulfilling pastoral work. His Lordship was able to visit several families especially the old and the sick and to stay in one family at Torbang, where they made him welcome a la Bethany.

This was his first extended pastoral visit to Bishramganj Parish, and it was both consoling and encouraging. The visit was organized by the parish priest, Fr. Sunny, and it was certainly a very good initiative of his.



The priests and the sisters and all the laity of Bishramganj Parish thank their pastor and pray for him, and they look forward to his next visit. Thank you, your Lordship.

Fr. K.K. Jose, SDB

News from the JUST

Livestock Distribution Programme

A Livestock distribution programme was held in Bidhi Bazaar Community Hall on 24th of November 2011, under Jampui Jala R.D Block. About 70 SHG members were present for the programme. 60 SHG members of Halam Community were provided

with Goats and Piglets which had been insured under the National Insurance Company. Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro was the Chief Guest and Fr. Robert Mathias Director of JUST and Mr. Louis



Mondo Manager of National Insurance Company were also present for the programme. Encouraging message in IGA (Income Generation Activities) had been shared by the Guests. At the end Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro distributed the livestock to the beneficiaries. The livestock had been provided to the poor beneficiaries to enhance their

income generation which will support their families in generating the income of the family. *Mr. Birendra Jamatia*

Animation Programme for the Women's Leader

Animation Programme for the Women Leaders of the Parishes was held on 21st to 23rd November by the Women's Commission Diocese of Agartala at JUST Hall. Fr. Robert Mathias, Fr. George Jacob, Fr. Joachim Kullu were the



Resources Person of the program. There were altogether 30 participants present in the program. The Theme was based on "Women and Family". The aim of the animation program was to enable the participants to understand the concept of women's role in the family and the society. The facilitators emphasized on the Gender Policy, its' strategies, and "Women and Family". *Sr. Susheela Xess*

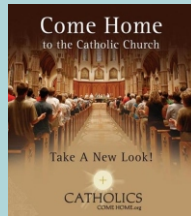
Visitors at Bishop's House

- ✕ Montfort Councilors Joy, Sebastian & Shaiju from Assam
- ✕ Sr. Judith, SSpS, General Councilor from Rome
- ✕ Sr. Prabha, SSpS, Provincial Leader from Guwahati
- ✕ CMI Fathers Varghese & Shaji from Kerala
- ✕ Fr. Andrew, CM, from Orissa
- ✕ Mr. Jose Kallungal from Kerala
- ✕ Fr. A. Martins, Ms. Martins & Celine from Goa
- ✕ Frs. Diniz & Edmund from Goa
- ✕ Fr. Joe Pereira, Grace & Eric from Mumbai
- ✕ Fr. M.C. John, Veteran Missionary from Imphal

News Briefs

TV Spots to invite Catholics 'Home' at Christmas

A ministry dedicated to bringing fallen-away Catholics back to the Church through media will be getting its message to 250 million people this Christmas season. Catholics Come Home will air a one-minute invitation to return to parish life and get to know the Church. The spot will run more than 400 times from Dec. 16 to Jan. 8, reaching every U.S. diocese.



According to a statement from the ministry, Catholics Come Home hopes to inspire as many as 1 million souls to come home to local parishes. They've based this goal on statistical census results from Catholics Come Home media initiatives that have aired in 30 past partner dioceses: Where these ads have aired, Mass attendance has increased an average of 10%, and helped over 300,000 people home to the Church, just since 2008.

Source: zenit.org

Outstanding woman of the year award for Sr Goretta



Sr. Maria Goretta, Mother General of the Queens of the Apostles (SRA) Congregation, has been selected for the

Rachana award for outstanding woman of the year. Sr Goretta was coordinator of Dharmajyothi Social Centre in Vamanjoor in Karnataka which built over 900 houses for the poor and the marginalized. The Mother General has established a host of children's homes, schools/ colleges for nursing and technical training centres for physically challenged at various places in Karanataka.

The Rachana Awards- 2011 instituted by Rachana Catholic Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be conferred on five noted individuals on November 26.

Source: daijiworld.com

Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love. - Hamilton Wright Mabie



Bishop's Program for December 2011

- 02: Parents Day, Auxilium Nandanagar
- 03-04: Program at Kukicherra, Kathalcherra Parish
- 05-06: NEDSSS GB Meet, Guwahati
- 07-10: Archbishop's Installation & Program, Dhaka
- 11: Parish Church Blessing, Tuikarmaw
- 16: Matambari Motha Jubilee, Mandwi Parish
- 18: Christo Mela, Kamaranga Parish
- 24: Midnight Mass, Mariamnagar Parish
- 25: Christmas Day Mass, Agartala Parish
- 27: JUST Christmas Program, Agartala
- 29: Catechist Lala Master's Anniversary Mass
- 31-01: Parish Mass, Tuikarmaw Parish