



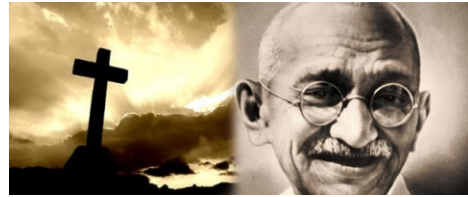
Pastor's Corner

Mahatma Gandhi is officially honored in India as the Father of the nation; his birthday on 2 October is commemorated in the country as Gandhi Jayanti, a national holiday, and worldwide as the International Day of NonViolence.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in Porebandar, Gujarat on 2 October 1869. Although Hindu, Gandhi had a very close connection with Christianity and admired Jesus very much, often quoting from his favorite 'Sermon on the Mount' chapter in Mathew 57. When the missionary E. Stanley Jones met with Gandhi he asked him, "Mr. Gandhi, though you quote the words of Christ often, why is that you appear to so adamantly reject becoming his follower?" Gandhi replied, "Oh, I don't reject Christ. I love Christ. It's just that so many of you Christians are so unlike Christ." "If Christians would really live according to the teachings of Christ, as found in the Bible, all of India would be Christian today," he added. Gandhi's closeness with Christianity began when he was a young man practicing law in South Africa. Apart from being attached with the Christian faith,

The non-violent Gandhi

he intently studied the Bible and the teachings of Jesus, and was also seriously exploring becoming a Christian, which led him to his discovery of a small church gathering in his locality. After deciding to attend the church service in South Africa, he came across a racial barrier; the church barred his way at the door. "Where do you think you're going, *kaffir*?" an English man asked Gandhi in a belligerent tone. Gandhi replied, "I'd like to attend worship here." The church elder snarled at him, "There's no room for *kaffirs* in this church. Get out of here or I'll have my assistants throw you down the steps." This infamous incident forced Gandhi to never again consider being a Christian, but rather adopt what he found in Christianity and its founder Jesus Christ. Stanley Jones once asked Gandhi: "How can we make Christianity naturalized in India, not a foreign thing, identified with a foreign government and a foreign people, but a part of



the national life of India and contributing its power to India's uplift?" Gandhi responded with great clarity, "First, I would suggest that all Christians, missionaries begin to live more like Jesus Christ. Second, practice it without adulterating it or toning it down. Third, emphasize love and make it your working force, for love is central in Christianity. Fourth, study the non-Christian religions more sympathetically to find the good that is within them, in order to have a more sympathetic approach to the people." Mahatma Gandhi truly was the pioneer of Satyagrah resistance to tyranny through mass civil disobedience, firmly founded upon ahimsa or total nonviolence which led India to independence and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world. Mahatma Gandhi was shot dead by an Indian on his way to attend a prayer on 30 January, 1948. In India we observe this day as martyrs day. +Lumen, CSC



Editorial

The monthly recollection at the Bishop's House now can startle you with its impressive turnout. Gone are the days when the recollection meant a gathering of about 30 to 40 people each of who were known to everyone else. At the inauguration of the diocese it had a total of 76 church personnel. Today it has 168 - a clear indication that the diocese has moved on a great deal as far as personnel are concerned. This increase in numbers has come about mainly because more religious congregations have entered Tripura in these years; the number of institutions in the State has increased; the number of parishes has increased and the Church has become a little more visible in public life than before. With the entry of every new Congregation not only does the numerical graph register an increase, but the entire canvas of the

diocese undergoes change. Every group brings with it charisms, experiences, and resources, all of which enrich the community. In turn, the Congregation too gets enriched by the relationship it enters into with the new community. Growth is every bit desirable in Tripura whose minuscule Christian population has miles to go both in numbers and in depth of belief. That is why the presence of an appreciable number of personnel is, by and large, an encouraging thing. When we view this increase in church personnel alongside the almost unlimited scope for a diversity of ministries and gifts, interventions and movements the Church in Tripura offers, we seem to be headed towards a happy future.



Enchanting Tripura

Nevertheless, there is a pertinent question we could ask ourselves, "Has this increase in church-personnel impacted itself in some corresponding manner on the community?" There's another thing. As numbers also signify strength, one must be wary of it too. It often contains the temptation to mainstream, establish, and consolidate. It seems to bring with it a license to impose, impress and to be insensitive. In a State where sheer numbers continue to determine destiny of millions, we would be unwise to ignore the ambivalence that surrounds numbers, even within our own ranks. But then, perhaps, in Tripura where a fledgling Church and an emerging hierarchy are yet to realize their potential, these thoughts are premature and superfluous. J. Pulinthanath, sdb

Khumlwng Parish

Shepherd strengthens faithful

Bishop's visit to Hrangkhwal village Twimairang on 19th August was an important occasion for the villagers. Under the guidance of the parish priest Fr. Arun Minj SVD, the villagers began preparing for Bishop's visit a week earlier. As we walked the village, Bishop was surprised at the development. On our arrival, people greeted and welcomed us and led to the village chapel. The Eucharist began with an entrance dance procession. Bishop asked the faithful 'to remain faithful and committed to Christ in the wake of various struggles and temptations'. After the Holy Eucharist, there was a short felicitation program for the Bishop. The kids of the newly opened nursery welcomed him and the parish priest with action songs and bouquet. Encouraged by the nursery kids, women of the village performed a dance on cultivation. There was beautiful discussion between Bishop and the villagers on the faith formation and the growth of the church in the locality. Shepherd's visit truly strengthened the faithful.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

Kathalcherra Parish



St. Mary's Chapel, Dumacherra was inaugurated and blessed by Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC on

Sunday 09 September 2012. It was fitting occasion to inaugurate a new chapel dedicated to Mother Mary a day after her birthday. Representatives from all the villages were present to witness the solemn event. Bishop expressed that the beautiful chapel just beside the road is a house of prayer for the mondoli and a symbol of Catholic faithful for all those who pass by. He thanked the Missionary Sisters of St. Peter Claver who had assisted to build the chapel. He also applauded the generous contribution of

local people. Holy Cross School at Dhumacherra which has more than two fifty children stands as a symbol of Holy Cross Education for many Tribal children around the area as well as from Manu Town. Thanks to the sincere efforts & commitment of Shri. Tarani Debbarma and the local mondoli at Dhumacherra.

Feeder School Staff Seminar

A day long HC Feeder School Seminar was organized at HCHS Kathalcherra



on Monday, 17 September 2012. Twelve teachers were present for the Seminar. Three staff members namely Ms. Manjeeta, Elizabeth & Sir Berendro from HCHS Kathalcherra presented the topics like lesson planning, classroom management, resource and methodology. The presentation helped the feeder school teachers to adapt to new and organized ways in the teaching learning process.

Fr. Valerian Castelino, csc

Tuikarmaw Parish

Parish Feast celebrated

St. Mary's Church Tuikarmaw, celebrated its Feast from the 14th-16th

A Stop at Dharmanagar Holy Cross Convent

A visit by Bishop Lumen Monteiro of Agartala Diocese on 24th August was very enriching experience to Holy Cross Convent and School Dharmanagar. The Sisters and the hostellers welcomed our dear Bishop through song and bouquet of flowers. Bishop seemed to be reliving and cherishing those sweet memories of the past. He was appreciative of the growth that has taken place within a short period of time. He encouraged the hostellers to study well and assured them of his prayers. He paid a visit to the newly construction site of convent cum hostel. Then the animator of the community Sr. Leena Miranda welcomed him on behalf of all the Sisters.

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

of September. This occasion was used to have the



Annual Parish Sabha. The theme for the Parish Sabha was "A New Way of Being Church". The main

Resource Persons were Frs. Bosco, Jeevan SVD, Lancy CSC and Hormis John CSC, the VG of the Diocese. On September 16 Fr. Hormis John initiated 41 people to the Catholic faith. After the Holy Mass there was a solemn Eucharistic procession. The Feast day celebration came to a grand finale with a festal meal for all.

Fr. Sijo Joseph

Rosary Procession

St. Mary's Church, Twikarmaw celebrated the feast of Nativity of Mary



with nine days of novena and on the 8th September there was a Rosary procession through the village to the Church with the statue of Mary. The Holy Eucharist was

celebrated by Fr. Arul Raj Gali CSC, the Director of Family Ministry India. It was a grace filled moment for all.

Fr. Sijo Joseph

"Great things happen when God mixes with us'. Indeed it was true when we heard Bishop's narration on the original site and its present state. This made us aware of God's miracle of becoming His extended hands, feet and heart to the last, lost and the least of our society.

On the following morning we gathered around the Eucharistic table to sing the mercies of the Lord. The Principal, Sisters, teachers and the students of Holy Cross Convent School were happy to have Bishop's address in the morning assembly. He expressed his joy in visiting us and advised the students to take care of the environment and build up an attitude of tolerance with each other. Bishop concluded his message by invoking God's blessings on our students who were writing their 2nd term exams.

Sr. Leena, BS

Seminar on Right to Education (RTE)

A one-day Seminar on 'Right to Education Act: Its implications for Catholic Schools in Tripura context' was organized at Diocesan level by the Education Commission in collaboration with JUST on 10th August 2012 at Bishop's House. Fr. Kuriala Chittattukalam, SDB, the Executive Secretary of Commission for Education and Culture, CBCI Delhi, was the Resource Person. Bishop Lumen in his inaugural talk appreciated the efforts of the Education Commission in organizing this important Seminar for all the Principals of the Catholic Schools in Tripura and hoped that we are sufficiently prepared. Fr. Kuriala in his presentation highlighted the pros and cons of the law and said, "Though the RTE Act is already in effect and the state government is in the advanced stages of finalizing its rules and regulations, the awareness about the law is very low, especially about the responsibilities of schools." He added that the Seminar was the first step in making the school heads aware of the law, so that they are on the right side of the law while abiding by the norms of RTE Act. Apart from describing the law, under which every school will have to admit 25 per cent students (excluding minority unaided schools) from the weaker sections of the society and provide free education to them, Fr. Kuriala also shared some other important norms like no screening procedure for admission, only random selection, free education, no tuition fees, no capitation fees, no child to be held back till std VIII, no corporal punishment and so on. The Seminar came to an end with Fr. Valarian, CSC, proposing the vote of thanks.

In the afternoon Core Diocesan Cell (CDC) organized an interactive session with all the Principals of the Schools. Bishop Lumen who is the Chairman of the CDC reflected with all the Heads of the Institutions about how we can effectively implement some of the thrust areas i.e. neighborhood coaching, coaching the dropout children and helping out the Catholic children in our schools. After a short workshop and presentation of the reports it was decided that they meet once again in order to formulate a system that could be followed by all the schools in the Diocese implementing CDC policies.

Fr. Prasad Rao

Bishop sings on Seminary Day at Minor Seminary

Jeevadhara Minor Seminary Day along with the birthday of Fr. Arun Minj SVD, Rector, was celebrated on 20th August with the theme 'WE ARE THE LIGHT'. The double celebration started with a meaningful Eucharist in the evening followed by the cultural program by the energetic seminarians. It was indeed a good opportunity for the young Diocesan Minor Seminarians to exhibit their god-given talents creatively in singing, dancing, speaking, acting etc., before the fathers, brothers, and sisters from neighbouring parishes and institutions. The highlight of the evening was the skit on the theme 'We are the Light' directed by the assistant parish priest cum vice-rector Fr. John Bosco SVD. Congratulating the seminarians for their performance, Bishop encouraged them to follow Christ more closely. Bishop also surprised everyone with the guitar in the hand singing 'One day at a time' and blessed all of us with his melodious hymn. The day ended with the sharing of the festive meal prepared to mark the double celebration.

Fr. John Bosco, SVD

Prison Ministry at Dharmanagar

On 10th August 2012 a short program was organized at Dharmanagar jail under the able guidance of Sr. Isabella the coordinator of prison ministry of Barak Valley Region, of Aizawl Diocese to mark the Prison Ministry Sunday. The program began with lighting the Diya by Milam Dutta the Jailer, Sr. Leena Miranda the Superior and the Principal of Holy Cross Convent School, Sr. Isabella the Coordinator and one of the Prisoners, while the choir kept on singing the chorus "Jyothi Do." Sr. Isabella in her welcome address said that the prisoners are like the sick people admitted in the hospital to be cured and be returned to their respective society. The Holy Cross Girls Hostellers presented two dances and two songs. Speaking on the occasion Sr. Leena Miranda, the Superior and the Principal of Holy Cross convent school Dharmanagar said that one can correct the other only when he/she has true love for the other. Sisters sang a song and one of the prisoners presented a song. At the end the prisoners were given snacks and soaps. A carom board was donated by the community



for their use. The jailor was impressed and thanked the organizers and the participants. "Every heart longs for love, so never hold back; the more you give the more you'll have for yourself. So, let your generous love ever overflow".

Holy Rosary Rally

The Laity Church Leaders under the banner of AICU (All India Catholic Union) Tripura Unit had organized a Holy Rosary Rally under the leadership of AICU Advisor, Rev. Fr. Thomas Pereira CSC and visited all the



18 Parishes of Diocese of Agartala on August 9 to 12, 2012. It was indeed a historical moment for

the Catholic Church in Tripura that all the Parish Secretaries coming together taking Mary our Mother with us through the prayerful means of Holy Rosary with the following intentions i) Linking all the 18 Parishes through Holy Rosary ii) To deepen the value of Holy Rosary iii) To show our oneness and solidarity. We thank the authority of the Holy Cross School, Agartala for providing us a school bus for the rally. We also thank our dear Bishop and all the Parish Priests for their prayers, support and hospitality. The Holy Rosary Rally was sponsored by the Holy Cross Family Ministries.

*Paul S. Darlong
State AICU Secretary*

SCC National Resource Team

The first meeting of the NRT (National Resource Team) took place from Aug 31st evening to September 6th noon at PAC Nagpur. All Regional Secretaries automatically become members of this since they have the role of coordination of all formation in the regions. I want that to be a manageable team as well as highly motivated and experienced persons, from among clergy, religious and laity from all regions. The other members from the region are carefully chosen, based on experience, interest, motivation, commitment and availability. Members of this team must be bi-lingual (English and language of the region) and must be available for the annual national meeting and also for service a few times a year for the region primarily and also occasionally at the national level.

Fr. Lancy D'Souza, csc, of Agartala Diocese is a Team Member. Thank you for your availability.

Fr. Vijay, SAC, Nagpur

- Sr. Tresa Abraham, OSF, Provincial Superior from Bhopal
- Sr. Jalena OSF Councilor, from Bhopal
- Fr. Arul Raj Gali, CSC, Family Ministries from Bangalore
- Fr. Ashim Gonsalves, CSC, Prov. Adm. from Dhaka
- Sr. Joy Provincial, BS, Provincial Superior from Guwahati
- Sr. Clara, BS, Councilor from Silchar

LINK MAIL BOX

Appreciating your timely online bulletin every month! *Fr. Udumala, ccbi*

Thanks for the Link. Bishop, I must say, "You are very quick and yours is the first digital newsletter that I get every month. Link is full of the News not only from the Diocese of Agartala but it also touches every nook and corner of the nearby and far off Dioceses, nay from all around the Universal Church too! All the best and keep it up! The First rank for the Link! *Sr. Ventura, FS, Rangia*

Thank you for the great shot again! *+P. K. George, SDB, Miao*

The little story of tribute is wonderful, very inspiring. Thank you so much for the LINK. *Sr. Pauline, SJA, Orissa*

THANK YOU for the September Link. How true; the attitude of gratitude is so rare among humans. *+D. Lumon, Imphal*
This is to acknowledge receipt of September LINK, loaded with information and experiences. *+Evarist, Karachi*

Thanks and appreciation to you for mentioning that wonderful story of gratitude. *Fr. Kanikkai Jayaraj CSC*

My way of expressing my gratitude to you is to reply to your email wherein you have sent me the September Link and the inspiring story or rather the fact concerning the elephants and their caretaker. Thanks a million for sharing the goodness in the manner you do. A person in your position making time to go an extra mile for others speaks of your greatness. I have experienced the fact that you make it a point to share with others the wisdom that you come across in your search for it. Keep doing the good work you are doing for the Lord. *Edmund Barreto, Goa*

Major award for nun who helps domestic workers



A Belgian nun, Sr. Jeanne Devos, ICM, who has spent the past 48 years in India has received a prestigious award for her work with domestic workers. Sr. Jeanne Devos was awarded the Ramakrishna Bajaj Memorial Global Award for her "outstanding contributions to protecting the rights of domestic workers" at the 28th Priyadarshni Global Awards in Mumbai on Tuesday. The award was presented to the nun by federal health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad. The Priyadarshni Academy was established to recognize and honor Indian talent. Awards are also presented every other year to achievers from around the world in different disciplines. *(UCA-News)*

TRTC temporarily stalls Maitri -- Indo-Bangla bus service

Tripura Road Transport Corporation (TRTC) has temporarily stalled bus services of 'Maitri' the India-Bangladesh friendly bus service with immediate notice after the bus was burnt down at Norshindhi in Bangladesh. The bus was set ablaze by agitated mob in the midst of clashes at Norshindhi on September 21. The Bangladesh government was reported to have assisted all passengers to reach their concerned destinations. A government source said that the vehicle which was set on fire at Bangladesh has been heavily damaged and is beyond repair. The service would resume as soon as the vehicle which made debut service in Indo-Bangla bus service hits back the streets, the source added. *(Tripurainfo.com)*

Air India's new Boeing 787 sets New Signs of a Resurgent India

The world's latest plane the 'Dreamliner' started flying within the country setting new standards and indicating things to come. It also set a new sign by having a woman commander, Captain Nivedita Bhasin, for its maiden flight from U.S. to Delhi. She becomes the first woman to commandeer a commercial flight of the 787 in the world. The plane which has commenced the flights between Delhi to Chennai as well as Bangalore makes the country in the forefront of using new technological developments. Putting a woman in the cockpit is not the only sign of things for a new gender consciousness in the world. Miss Sunita Williams is breaking barriers in space, taking space walks to beat all records. *(Times)*

Training on livestock rearing

JUST organized a training program supported by Manos Unidas on Livestock and Rearing at JUST training hall from 20th to 21st Sept 2012. 27 participants from Halam community development project cordially took part in the training program. Mr. Victor Jamatia and Mr. Daniel Kaipeng were the Resource Persons for the training program. Important inputs of the training were on understanding The concept of Livestock rearing, Relationship between human beings and live stock, Importance of livestock and linkage with the market, Livestock rearing process of Piggery, Poultry and Fishery.

Medical camps at 7 Bru displaced relief camps

Seven medical camps were organized by JUST at 7 Bru Displaced relief camps of Kanchanpur Sub-Division under North Tripura. These camps were organized at respective relief camps of the Brus from 17th to 21st September 2012. These relief camps are located under two different R.D. Blocks viz. Dasda and Damchera R.D. Blocks. Hamsapara relief camp, Naisingpara relief camp and Hazacherra relief camp were under Dasda R.D. Block jurisdiction. Kaskao relief camp, Naisao relief camp, Khakchang relief camp and Hamsa relief camp were under Damchera R.D. Block area. Two medical doctors were inducted as consultants during medical camp. More than 900 patients were treated during the health camps. This health camp was assisted by KFB Austria. *J U S T News Service*

BISHOP'S PROGRAM FOR OCTOBER 2012

- 01: Sanaya Chapel Blessing, Kamaranga Parish
- 02: Mass & Blessing of Fatima Convent School, Damdamia Clergy Meeting & Recollection, Agartala
- 03-07: To Germany met with benefactors
- 08-16: To Italy for Silver Jubilee of Fratelli Dimenticati
- 17-19: DFNEI Biannual Meet, Guwahati
- 21: Parish Pastoral Program
- 21-22: Parish Sabah & Feast, Moharpara
- 23-24: Vocation Camp, Khumlwng
- 27-28: Eucharistic Procession, Kumarghat
- 28-31: Caritas GB Meet, Delhi