



Pastor's Corner

The important Lesson

Rabbi Harold Kushner shares this beautiful personal experience: I was sitting on a beach one summer day, watching two children, a boy and a girl playing in the sand.

They were hard at work, by the water's edge, building an elaborate sand castle with gates and towers and moats and internal passages. Just when they had nearly finished their project, a big wave came and knocked it down, reducing it to a heap of wet sand. I expected the children to burst into tears, devastated by what had happened to all their hard work. But they surprised me. Instead, they ran up the shore away from the water, laughing and holding hands and sat down to build another castle.

I realized that they had taught me an important lesson. All the things in our

lives, all our complicated structures we spend so much time and energy creating, are built on sand. Only our relationships with other people endure. Sooner or later, the wave will come along and knock down what we have worked so hard to build up. When that happens, only the person who has somebody's hand to hold will be able to laugh. (*Stories for a Man's Heart'*)

Connecting with people is an important element even in moments of disasters. We know the recent Nepal earthquake on 9th April killed thousands and displaced tens of thousands in a 7.9 magnitude quake. A Press Release from Caritas India said, "The international Caritas network has begun procuring tarpaulins, shelter kits and water,



sanitation and hygiene materials." It added, "They are also looking to address the need of trauma counseling for people who are out in open spaces and some in temporary shelters around Kathmandu." The Team from Caritas India that went to Nepal included a trained counselor. Counseling, we have discovered is as important as medical aid, food and shelter. It forges relationships and helps people manage trauma better. And that is the important lesson! **+Lumen, CSC**

LEARN KOKBOROK

Kokborok Language Learning Program for Priests and Religious will be held at Don Bosco Peace Centre, 10-22 (both days inclusive) June 2015. Interested candidates may contact 9436126649 or 9856240802 at the earliest.



Editorial

The Ground beneath our Feet

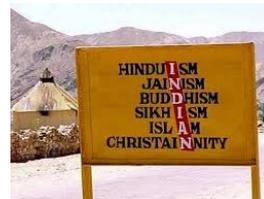
The just concluded ADC elections in Tripura were in many ways just another round of elections. The hype, the hope and finally, we knew it would be so, thank you very much. But a great deal of Post-election analysis focused on the indications of change that election results seemed to have showed.

Absence of palpable changes notwithstanding, we are aware, elections seldom merely say who wins and who loses. They reveal lessons. The government at the Centre was a factor in this elections much more than it was a factor in the earlier editions. For the first time perhaps, it was a factor, even more than the government at Agartala was a factor.

There is no doubt the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is desperate to make inroads in to ADC areas of Tripura inhabited mostly by indigenous people. In the past months, especially after that party came to power in the Centre, we have seen them go overboard to please the indigenous people of Tripura.

They have seldom been expressly against the demand for separate state by sections of indigenous people; they have set up of numerous English medium schools in the indigenous-inhabited areas of the state and now there is the possibility of Kokborok language finally being included in the 8th schedule.

Judging by the recent anti-minority, anti-Christian events that have been happening in India with alarming regularity after the coming into power of the BJP government in the Centre, one may conclude that the party in question has little interest in the plural tradition of this great nation. A party that believes in and propagates the 'one culture, one religion, one nation' theory cannot be expected to have a great deal of sympathy for small but distinct religious and cultural groups. Why they have picked on the Christian community which constitutes a mere 2.3% of India's



population is yet quite unclear. We would be foolish to dismiss these as insignificant matters especially in Tripura where most of the Christians belong to indigenous communities. The reticence and lack of passion we Christians are known for, could make it a cakewalk for fascist entities. The indigenous communities of Tripura, beset as they are with problems on all fronts, cannot perhaps be censured if they warm up to the BJP for the sake of the goodies they seem to offer. That would be portentous for us who have implicitly and complacently considered certain domains as 'our sure turf'.

For us Christians, perhaps, it's not so much about trying to stop this party or support that party. It's more about engaging even more urgently and passionately with communities and peoples we serve. It's simply about not taking things for granted any longer.

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

Santir Rani Parish, Mariamnagar

Confirmations at the Centre

On Sunday, 3rd May, the Catholic Community at Mariamnagar had an



experience of encounter with the Divine, as some of our youngsters received the Holy Spirit. Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC presided over the Sunday Eucharist and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to seven youngsters of our Parish. Using the occasion to convey his pastoral concerns the Bishop exhorted the community to live their call to evangelize, always cooperating with the Holy Spirit who provides life, strength and energy.

Fr. Ronald, SDB

St. Mary's Parish, Tuikarmaw

Faith Formation Program

This time of the year where the children



are in their holiday, the Parish took an occasion to organize a faith formation program for the Children. The program was held in four different villages with children as the target group. The first program was from 8th to 10th of May at three villages viz, Pottichery, Kalabon and Duptoli. The second one was held from the 15th to 17th of the same month at Itchachara for its children and its other four neighbouring villages. The children came out in many numbers with their enthusiasm to learn. At the end of the three days we could see the children were well informed about the prayers and the sacraments, they were also entertained with short video clips and action songs. The response of the children and their parents were amazing and encouraging for the organizers. The event was concluded with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on

each Sunday in which many gathered to pray and thank the Lord with the children. Kudos to the Resource Persons, Meena Marak, Meena Jamatia and Agnes Reang, the teachers who spare their leisure time for mission work; and to Supriya and Kanika Ronga our parish youth who collaborated with the Fathers in this venture.

Fr. Kitbok CSC

St. Paul's Parish, Kumarghat

Youth Day- 2015

The Parish of Kumarghat organized 'Youth Day' on 9th and 10th of May 2015. The program was aimed at bringing together the catholic youth from different villages of the parish. Total number of youth participated in this mega event are 145 from various mondolis of the parish. They day began with football tournament for the boys and throw ball tournament for girls. Competitive Spirit, Team Spirit, unity etc were exhibited during the event. At the end Kanchancherra mondoli was the winners of tournament and Sunaimuri mondoli remained the runners up. In the evening We had election of the new officers bearers that followed a talk by Mr. Thomas Darlong on the topic Carrier guidance. He asked the youth to aim high and have a personal goal to achieve in life. At the end of talk we had rosary in Church. After the supper cultural competition were organised. Various Mondolis exhibited their skills and talents through dances, singing, and skits. The Masli Reang Mondoli won the first prize of the cultural competition, Masli Garo Mondoli won the second prize. The youth day was successfully concluded on the 10th of May through the Holy Eucharistic celebrations. It was parish mass attended by all the Mondolis of the parish. During the Holy Eucharist Fr. Agi Paul CSC stressed the role of the youth in the Church. He invited the youth dedicate their life to the Lord and he appreciated their team spirit and their total participation in the youth day of the parish. After the Holy Eucharist the Prizes were distributed to the winners appreciated.

Fr. Alfred CSC



Immaculate Conception Parish, Moharpara

This month we had many parish activities. On 10th May we had our Parish Council Meeting. Following



was discussed: In order to keep a track of those come to the church, weekly attendance register is

made compulsory for every mondoli. Financial accountability and transparency and the need to support the Church by way of tithes were also discussed. It was decided to have the Marriage Preparation Course in the month of October. Every young man and woman of marriageable age has to enroll their names for the Course.

On 2nd May we gave a sendoff to Sr. Jeewanlata, SSpS, who rendered her valuable services at Notre Dame School and Parish. We wish all the best for her higher studies.

On 13th May we celebrated the 76th Birthday of Fr. Thomas Thengumpally, CSC, the pioneering and zealous missionary of Tripura. We wish him good health, joy, happiness and many more returns of the day.

On 13th May Fr. Hormis was invited to share a topic on Peace and Hharmony from the Biblical and Christian perspective along with many other religious leaders Khowai on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Shri- Shri Ravisankarji. He spoke in Bengali quoting the Bible, explaining the Beatitudes, and sharing the message of love and peace to a crowd of about 200 men and women. He ended with a prayer song "Make me a channel of your Peace----" We conducted 8 zonal youth leaders Meetings to youth from Nelsi, Sirduk and Singlung who participated in the leadership programme, held at St. Xavier's School, Pathaliaghat organized by the Diocesan Youth Director Fr. Remol SDB, on the theme 'Unity in the church and the role of leadership'. The Seminar was meaningful. It helped and enabled them to renew their commitment and grow in leadership.

Fr. Ishwar, CSC



Kathalcherra Parish

Maria Songho Women in Shillong

Everything that could turn green had outdone itself in greenness and everything that could even dream of blooming or blossoming was in bloom and blossom - this was the experience of women of Kathalcherra Parish as they had days out at Shillong. It was a dream come true for 34 women of Maria Songho, because for most of them it was a maiden visit. This was also an occasion to mark the jubilee year of Maria Songho. Forgetting the hustle and bustle of their daily living, with the blessings of Mama Mary they savored the beauty of God in nature. Nature itself cooperated in a mysterious way to make their days memorable. The sunlight was a benediction. Women themselves enjoyed each and every minute, love and concern from each other and the generosity of Holy Cross Fathers in each centre they visited. There was a smile of satisfaction and joy as they returned to their home with grateful heart to God and the priests of our Parish. *Sr. Suman B.S.*

Christ the King Parish, Depacherra

VBS for school Children

Christ the king parish has organized VBS for the school children from 12th May to 15th May. About 250 children from all 30 *mondolies* of the parish attended this program. Various competitions besides daily Bible classes were conducted and prizes distributed. It was a wonderful time for children to familiarize with the gospel and towards the end of the course all children were distributed Bibles.

Couples for Christ

On 23rd May 2015, Parish organized couple seminar. 80 couples participated in this seminar. Fr. Bhuban, Mr. Oshim, Mr. Pradip Minj, and Mr. Thanda were the resource person. Fr. Prasad our parish priest in his inaugural address highlighted three elements ; love, commitment and sacrifice for the success of happy married life. During the Mass couples renewed their marital bonds. All participants expressed their happiness and gratitude to the organizers.

Rosary Rally



On 30th May 2015, Rosary month was concluded with Rosary rally. 60 faithful from local *mondolies* with much devotion and prayers to our lady of holy Rosary visited all 30 *mondolies* of the parish. The rally was concluded with Eucharist in the parish church.

Fr. Bhuban Sirkar

Parish and Salesian Community celebrate Jubilee of Confere

Mariamnagar is the ideal spot for celebrating Jubilees, Anniversaries,



Pilgrimages, Marian Devotion and encounters with the Divine. The historic Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in August 2014 was followed by another historic and first of its kind Jubilee Celebration in Agartala Diocese on 2nd May 2015 the Diamond Jubilee of Religious Profession and Golden Jubilee of Priestly Ordination of Rev. Fr. Isaac Mattappillil, sdb. A splendid event! A very beautiful Saturday evening in May! Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, a throng of Priests, Sisters, the Salesian Pre-novices and some parishioners gathered together at Mariamnagar to greet the Jubilarian with acclamations of "Ad multos Annos, Ad multos Floreat, Ad multos Coronas. Plurimosque annos vivat. Vivat, vivat, vivat!" (May he live and flourish for many years). Fr. Isaac presided over the concelebrated Holy Mass inside the Church at 6:00pm. The "open air stage" felicitation programme that lasted an hour was very lively and heartwarming. The messages delivered by Fr. P. V. Paul sdb, by Bishop Lumen csc, Fr. Sunny sdb, Fr. Kannala sdb, and one of the Pre-novices enthralled everyone present delightfully humorous, deeply inspiring, admirably praising the Jubilarian and fondly recalling great moments from his past 79 years. It was a grand celebration to thank God and to set afire our inner yearnings by marveling at the example set by Fr. Isaac of "fidelity and steadfastness in a life of commitment as a Religious and Priest of God" truly a very meaningful celebration in this "Year of the Consecrated Life". The concluding talk by Fr. Isaac revealed not only his gratitude towards God, his family, the Salesian Congregation and the participants of the Jubilee celebrations, but also his

life's aim "Let Christ Shine in You" his motto from the day of his Priestly Ordination on 29th January 1966. The Twin Jubilee Celebrations ended with a very sumptuous dinner.

Fr. Ronald, SDB

Diocesan Youth Commission Faith Formation Program for Parish Youth Leaders

"Let it be done for you according to your faith (Mt.8:13.) A three days Faith Formation program was conducted from 15th to 17th May 2015 at St. Xavier's,



Pathalia ghat for the Parish Youth leaders. The program

began with a short inaugural function and welcome address to the Resource Persons and all the youth. Sr. Regina Mareem, MSMHC, the NERYC Directress along with Sr. Barnadeth Kropi MSMHC the new in charge of YSM/YCS North Eastern Region animated the program. Fr. Sunny, SDB, the Parish Priest and Rector of Don Bosco Parish Nandanagar, took a session on Faith and the Bible and conducted a Bible Quiz. There were 30 Youth Leaders who participated actively in the program. Several subjects of present youth problems were discussed in the sessions, like, responsibility of catholic youth, abuse of Media especially of the use of mobile and internet, prayer life, Church history, etc. were emphasized. There was a daily one hour Adoration service with lots of singing and intercessory prayers. On the last day there was a planning session for each Parish in order to strengthen the faith Parish Youth. Fr. Vijumon SDB the Principal and Rector of the Pathaliaghat community supported the food expenditure from beginning till the end of the program. We thank him immensely. *Fr. Remol Marak, SDB*

Pastoral Centre, Champaknagar

Catechists spirited before Pentecost Sunday

The theme of the Catechists' renewal program was- "Eucharist: the source and summit of Christian life" held at Pastoral



Centre, Champaknagar from 21st to 23rd on May 2015. 25 Catechists from the Diocese attended the program organized by Fr. Joachim Kullu SVD. The program began with Recollection Talk, Adoration and Confession. Fr. Joachim emphasized the importance of Holy Eucharist in one's life. He also dealt with various catechetical themes. Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC spoke on the importance of the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life and reiterated



catechists' duties and commitment to the mission. He was greeted by the priests and catechists on his 19th Episcopal Ordination anniversary. Fr. Arun Minj SVD, highlighted their strength and weakness in pastoral field in comparison to other pastors and encouraged them to venture into evangelization with renewed enthusiasm. The catechists were filled with the spirit of mission and evangelization and left for their places on 23rd morning.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

JUST News Roundup

JUST gives ray of Hope to interior Ganganagar

JUST conducted a series of awareness programs on SHGs in the month of April 2015 at some villages under Ganganagar R.D. Block. The women were made

aware on the importance of SHG formation and how it will help them for generating income and sustainable development. As a result 236 women have now decided to form SH Groups for their sustainable development.

Bishop's Program for June 2015

- 02: Clergy Meet & Recollection, Agartala
- 07: Corpus Christi, Nandannagar Parish
- 08-09: JUST Strategic Planning Seminar, Agartala
- 11: Inaugural of Academic Year, Minor Seminary
- 13-14: Pastoral Visit, Harina/Sindukpathar
- 16-18: Caritas Forum Chairmen & Directors Meet, Delhi
- 21: Confirmations Kedernal, Depacherra Parish
- 23-26: ORIENS Seminar, Shillong
- 28: Parish Feast, Kumarghat
- 29: Foundation for Carmel Teacher Training College, Gokulnagar

Our Distinguished Visitors

Fr. Roy, CSC, Assistant General from Rome
 Fr. Descary, CSC, from Montreal, Canada
 Fr. S.M. Michael, SVD, Asia Pacific Coordinator
 Mr. L. Vittal Rao, B.Com, FCA from Bangalore
 Bro. Varghese, SG, from Mizoram
 Fr. Leo, CSC, Provincial from Bangalore
 Holy Cross Fathers from Arunachal Mizoram and Meghalaya

JUST Enables the Disabled

Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura through CBR Project helps the people with disabilities of 12 Gram Panchayats



under Teliamura R.D Block. JUST linked the differently abled persons with the Rural Development

Block through its Education and Social Welfare Departments. Through linkage and continuous effort of JUST the CBR staff various resources were mobilized from different departments in cash or kind for the disabled people. The identified beneficiaries namely Papi Sarkar and Indrajit Shil are presently receiving disability pension @ Rs. 500/- per month and Mousami Shil and Nakul Paul are receiving disability pension @ Rs 400/- per month from the Social Welfare Department. Rate of allowance are subjected to percentage of disability. In addition, eight Children with Disability (CwD) from identified areas are receiving Escort Allowance of Rs. 2,500/- per year from the SSA. **Mr. Deepan Gurung**

20th General Assembly of Caritas Internationalis

As Chairman of Caritas India I had the privilege of attending the 20th General



Assembly of Caritas Internationalis along with our Executive Director Fr. Frederick

D'Souza. The Assembly began on 12th May with the Holy Mass presided over by Pope Francis in Saint Peter's Basilica who said whoever lives the mission of "Caritas" is a true witness of Christ. Speaking during his homily the Pope said "the Church's humanitarian and development organization reveals the power of Christian love and the desire of the Church to reach out to Jesus in every person, especially the poor and the suffering."

The outgoing President, Cardinal Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga, who completed his eight-year mandate, opened the proceedings which were held at Domus Mariae from 12th to 17th May. "Especially now we feel Pope Francis' invitation of a poor Church for the poor," noted the Honduran Cardinal. Caritas Internationalis Assembly meets every four years, to make plans for the future and strengthen relations in this federation of 162 national Caritas. Cardinal Maradiaga specified that at this meeting, entitled "One Human Family, Caring for Creation," not only will there be the concern about global warming but also about justice to creation and among peoples. Cardinal Louis Tagle of Manila was elected the new President of Caritas Internationalis. Noted Speakers included American Economist and Advisor to UN Jeffrey Sachs, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, Prof Beverley Haddad, Cardinal Parolin, Cardinal Turkson, Fr. Cedric Prakash, Dr. Jacques Diouf, and others.



On 18th and 19th May the whole group went to Milano for Caritas Day at the EXPO 2015. (+Lumen Monteiro, CSC)