



### Pastor's Corner

These few lines are an inspiration from a write up by Fr. Reuben of Mumbai in which he says "the difference between ordinary and extraordinary is the 'extra', which set me thinking." Indeed, when we look at life we realize that the persons who have been able to make a difference have been those who have infused that 'extra' into their work and into just about anything that they are involved in. Hence, it would not be wrong to say that extraordinary people are just ordinary people with an 'extra' edge. Just recently we read of the death of Dominican Sister Alessia known as the 'Mother Teresa of Pakistan'. An Italian missionary, she spent 61 years of her life in Pakistan, devoting her time to the marginalized, women, and the poor. But she will be especially remembered for her devotion to the disabled. This nun is one of those who made the 'extra' effort in the ordinariness of life. There are so many people who make 'extra' ordinary efforts in their day to day living parents, teachers, doctors, and



### Transfer to be Transformed

nurses, to mention just a few. As you read this you may be thinking of some people who live around you who make that 'extra' ordinary difference. You and I can be 'extra' ordinary too. We just need to ask ourselves what is that 'extra' edge that we can offer that will make the ordinary

'extra' ordinary even when we seem to be busy with our own lives. A sense of humility and the readiness to do God's will are the basic requirements. 'Extra' ordinariness does not have to do with success; it has to do with fidelity to the purpose for which God has placed us in the world!

+Lumen, CSC



### Editorial

#### Passion to the Fore!

While most whined and complained, this person seemed different. He said, "I get whatever I need

be it an idea, a design, a solution, finances even. All I need is to desire it passionately." At first, it sounded to me, a naïve and oversimplified stand. As if everything depended merely on how passionately one desires for it!

The more I thought about it, the more it began to feel true. Jesus asked the disabled person at the pool "do you want to be healed?" A strange question to someone who had been suffering for decades! But also a most natural question to someone who had got used to a way of life and may perhaps not want to change even if it meant better health, better opportunities, better everything!

Prior to the miracle, Jesus makes the cripple assert his desire to be healed. If the unfortunate person were to be in two minds at that critical moment, we would have had a different ending to that wonderful story. It is debilitating to be entrapped in an 'ambivalent' attitude expansion or consolidation, individual freedom or common good, local



rootedness or universal relevance, the waning past of our forefathers or the emerging future of our children, rubber or bamboo, one language or one's own language, and so on. Such ambivalence

could even be a temptation to inaction and come in the guise of some compulsion exhorting one to be 'sensitive to life's irreducible complexities'.

The cripple was fortunate that at the moment of his passionate desire, Christ himself was standing before him. As long as we refuse to be seized by

passion but stand apart seeking solace in muddled mental categories 'strategy', 'sensitivity', miracles keep on bypassing us.

And miracles we need, indeed! Now more than ever! The price of things are rising, our villages are getting empty, our forests and hills getting bare, and our young people seem to be going away from land, from past, from us. Now more than ever 'the best' seem to 'lack conviction'. Now more than ever, 'the worst are full of passionate intensity'.

This seems to be no time for miracles. This arid 'humanscape' of doubt and lackadaisical belief seems to provide no relief.

But then, what are miracles for? And why are they called miracles!

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

### LINK congratulates:

Newly elected Superior General of Montfort Brothers Bro. John Kallarackal, SG, the first Indian General in the Congregation that was founded in France 300 years ago.

Newly appointed Vice Provincial Fr. Thomas Lakra, sdb

Newly appointed Councilor Fr. Pulinthanath, sdb.

Newly appointed Provincial Fr. KJ Abraham, CSC

## Depacherra Parish

### SCC DAY

For the first time we made it a point to thank God for the growth of the parish on the annual SCC day from 27-28<sup>th</sup> April. We began to establish SCC units in our parish 2 years back. Only this year we organized the annual SCC day at the parish level. It was fully organized by the SCC members. On the first day we began with adoration in the evening and followed by SCC prayer. On the second day we had a seminar on SCC and Word of God. The Diocesan secretary for the SCC movement Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC was invited to animate the session on SCC. Then the parish priest Fr. Bosco gave a talk on the relationship between the Word of God and the family prayer. Celebration came to an end with the Eucharistic celebration. *Fr. John Bosco*



## Khumlwng Parish

### FATHERS ARE PROUD OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

Fathers' Day celebration was an interesting event on 6<sup>th</sup> of May at St. Alphonsa Parish, Khumlwng. The celebration began with the Holy Eucharist thanking the Lord for making them

responsible for the family and praying for continuous grace and blessings. 'Parenting is no child's play therefore; St. Joseph must be the model of all the fathers' was the theme of the day. All the village chapel Presidents, Secretaries and all the dads of the Parish participated in the celebration. They were divided into 5 groups and Bible Quiz and Quiz on the Diocese were conducted. They were felicitated by mothers and the youth with befitting items. The Fathers' Day celebration ended with a fellowship meal.

### YOUTH RETREAT

The Charismatic Retreat was a return to the Church for the youth. Holy and exemplary life and active participation in the Church were the main theme preached by Fr. Joshy and Team (11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> May). There were about 50 participants from different Parishes. Youth of St. Alphonsa Parish Khumlwng organized and managed the Retreat program. Youth were energized to actively participate in the Church and lead an exemplary life.

### CATECHISTS GET BOOST



The Catechists' renewal program was held at Pastoral Centre, Champaknagar

from 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May. The Catechist's main duty and responsibilities were reiterated by Fr. Thomas Lakra, Fr. Sunny and Bishop Lumen Monteiro. The Catechists dispersed with renewed spirit and missionary enthusiasm.

*Fr. Arun Minj, SVD*

## Kathalcherra Parish

### Parish Feast



Kathalcherra Parish celebrated its first Parish Feast on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2012 with the presence of Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC and the Parish Community. The festive occasion began with the Solemn Eucharist presided over by the Bishop and concelebrated by Frs. P. V. Joseph and Lourdhu, CSC. Members from all the *mondolis* assembled at the Parish Church for the celebration of the Parish Feast. The new Church was named after 'Jesus the Good Shepherd' in the year 2010. Being a master piece of late Fr. Mathew Ullatil the Church stands as one of the biggest structures in the Diocese of Agartala. The entire parish community has grown to 2,070 with 17 village *mondolis*. This festive occasion instilled in the parishioners a need to be 'one community'.

*Fr. Valerian, CSC*

## NEWS FROM THE JUST

### Cleaning drive at Bidi Bazaar

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March, JUST organized a cleaning drive program through our SHG members at Bidi Bazar, Jumpujala Block. The cleaning drive program was very successful as the local people and SHG members numbering to 100 actively supported and took part in it. The MNGREGA Master helped by providing food to all the participants in the work. The village chairman too came forward with a helping hand and arranged for cold drinks and snacks. The Bazar committees has decided to keep the area clean by cleaning the market twice a week.

*Mr. Deepan Gurung*

### Morality Program at Damdamia

JUST organized an Awareness Program on 'Values of good

Education' at Damdamia School on April 16. It is part of the Peace project. Mr. Sumon Roy the animator of Peace Program was the main organizer. 35 students took part in the program. He interacted with the students and shared about Peace, importance of Education and importance of moral character.

*Bishwajit Debbarma*

### Storm hits Naisingpara

A massive storm accompanied by cyclone swept through Naisingpara Relief Camp on the afternoon of 27<sup>th</sup> April and destroyed more than thousand houses. According to the information given by MBDPF it is estimated that 1,273 houses were partly or fully damaged and around 50 persons were injured. Those who are rendered homeless are taking

shelter in the SSA School building and Anganwadi Centre.

*Mr. Lilmohan Reang*

### Health Awareness Program at Gopal Nagar

Two health awareness programs have been organized by JUST through Peace Project at Gopal Nagar J.B. School on 17<sup>th</sup> and 21st April on the topic "Drugs and Alcohol". Mr. Sumon Roy the animator of Peace took good initiative and conducted the program well. He interacted with the students and made them to understand the casualties caused by Drugs and Alcohol. There were about 77 students who participated in the program.

*Bishwajit Debbarma*

### Retreat for married Couples

It was a great time for the Catholic couples of the Diocese when they got a chance to sit together as couples to reflect about their life as Catholics. A group of 6 people from Goa belong to the Association of Crusaders for Christ with Mary, animated the Retreat from 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April. The group was divided into two Teams and went to different parishes simultaneously to give 2 days Retreat in each parish. Everywhere the Teams were welcomed with great joy. The participants were so happy at the opportunity to be together as husband and wife to pray. They even suggested having this program for future couples too.

**Fr. John Bosco, Secretary of Family Commission**

### First Catholic Hospital in Tripura

The foundation for the first Catholic Hospital in Tripura was laid by Bishop Lumen Monteiro of Agartala on 16<sup>th</sup> May. The St Joseph's Hospital will come up at Amtali, a suburb of Agartala, capital of Tripura and will be owned and managed by Sisters of St. Joseph of Anney (SJA), Bhubaneswar.

“It will provide quality medical facilities in a spirit of service,” said SJA Provincial, Sr. Pauline. She said the biggest challenge for the hospital will be to deliver high-quality healthcare treatment at an affordable cost. Bishop Monteiro of Agartala thanked the Sisters for their health care service in



Tripura. He said there are only a few private health care facilities in the capital city that are struggling to deliver quality health care.

The hospital will begin services after one of its floors gets ready by next year. The entire project will be completed within four years.

A good number of priests and religious attended the function, said Holy Spirit Sister Janet Tellis. According to her, the entire Tripura has only three main hospitals to cater to its 3.67 million people.

**Fr. Paul Pudussery, CSC**

### Holy Cross Provincial Chapter at Agartala



The members of the Province of Northeast India gathered together at Moreau Community House, Agartala, India for the Fourth Provincial Chapter from May 17th to 23rd 2012. 53 Capitulants, 2 members from the General administration and 5 observers from all sectors of Holy Cross in Asia and 2 Holy Cross Bishops attended the Chapter. Fr. Dr. M.C. Abraham, CSC, was the Chapter moderator. All sectors of Holy Cross in Asia were represented at the Chapter as observers. The Chapter elected Fr. Abraham Kochupurackal, CSC as the new Provincial Superior for a six year term. He was serving as the pastor of St. Andre Parish, Bodhjungnagar before his election. Fr. Abraham has been educated at Gregorian University, Rome and has a Licentiate in Depth Psychology and religious vocation. He served a six year term as the Novice Director of the Congregation of Holy Cross in India.

*Courtesy CSC Net*

### LINK MAIL BOX

Thank you very much for the LINK which keeps us connected and informed. The articles and news are interesting. Thanks to the editor and all the contributors. Congratulations for leading the Diocese for 16 long years. May God and his blessed Mother continue to inspire and lead you. **Sr. Philo, MSMHC, Guwahati**

I just read my most recent copy of LINK and as always, I was delighted to read of the wonderful ministry of the gospel that occurs within your Diocese. I look forward to each edition as it brings back wonderful memories of my visits to Agartala. May God continue to bless you and your sisters and brothers as you preach and live the gospel. **Tom O'Hara, CSC, USA**

Thank you once again for 'Link.' I find it

very enriching. I pray that God's wisdom and grace will help to make all your dreams come true. **Sr. M Fay A.C., Kolkata**

Thank you for posting 'LINK' every month on its first day without fail. Though I don't regularly express my gratitude and show how appreciative I am of you and your selfless work in Tripura, I am grateful to you for it. I do enjoy reading 'LINK' and refreshing my memory. **Fr. Albano, Goa**

Thanks for the Link. **Fr. Vincent Furtado, ofm Cap., Bangalore**

Thank you for LINK. Luminous as ever! **+P.K. George, SDB, Miao**

Thanks for May Link. You make it very interesting, colourful and in brief, that is what modern communication skills are

and you have it. Congrats. Looking forward to be part of the Link with the entry of Pilar Fathers in Agartala.

**Fr. Tonysfx, Kolkata**

Thanks for sending the Link to us on the first day of every month for the last many years. I do like your short reflections which are ever inspiring. The Editor seems to enjoy certain amount of freedom of expression as the editorials have been clear-cut and relevant based on factual knowledge. Thanks! **Rui Pereira, csc, Goa**

Congratulations as you prepare to celebrate the anniversary of the Diocese and your becoming the Ordinary. Not only has God blessed you, but the whole Diocese through your generous ministry to the people of Agartala. **Tony Krisak, USA**

- ◆ Fr. Marcel from Badarpur
- ◆ MSMHC Provincial Sr. Kathrine from Shillong
- ◆ Sr. Shirley, BS from Punjab
- ◆ Mr. & Mrs. V. Aranha from Mumbai
- ◆ Neo Cath Bros. Jude & Jeenan from Bangalore
- ◆ SJA Provincial Sr. Pauline & Sr. Linnet from Orissa
- ◆ CSC Assistants General & Provincials
- ◆ CSC Fathers & Brothers
- ◆ Mr. Schmiedchen, German Consul General
- ◆ Mr. Quadros and Mr. Rai from Karnataka
- ◆ Mr. Stenson JY Campus Ministry from Kerala

### New Rajbhavan in Agartala

Tripura Governor Dr D Y Patil laid the foundation stone for construction of new Raj Bhavan at capital complex adjacent to the Civil Secretariat on 8<sup>th</sup> May. Besides Chief Minister Manik Sarkar and his cabinet colleagues, former Governor K M Seth remained present in the foundation laying Ceremony. The Mackintosh Burn Construction Company has been assigned to build the two-storied building at plot area of 10 acres with an estimated cost of Rs 30 crore. The present Raj



Bhavan has also been identified as a heritage building not only because of its association with royalty but also because poet Rabindra Nath Tagore and other contemporary great personalities had stayed in Puspavanta palace as royal guests.

### India Missionaries Serving in 166 Countries

India, regarded for a long time as mission territory, has become one of the countries that sends most missionaries abroad. This was confirmed at a conference in Bangalore, organized by the nation's



bishops and panel of religious superiors. Eglise d'Asie, the news agency of the Foreign

Missions of Paris, reported that according to Indian Father Balthazar Castelino of the Foreign Missions of Paris, himself currently on mission in Madagascar, India's missionaries today are present in 166 countries. The missionary, who is also administrative secretary of the Episcopal Conference of Madagascar, believes the number of Indian missionaries at present is about 15,000. A figure that "far from being exaggerated" looks like it will increase in the near future, said Father Castelino, who pointed out that today more than 214 religious congregations send members of Indian nationality to missions abroad. (*Zenit.org*)

### Caritas bids farewell to outgoing Chairman and Executive Director; welcomes new leaders



April 30 was an occasion of great significance for Caritas India as it commemorated the day to acknowledge the remarkable contribution rendered by its management team. The program began with a Holy Mass presided over by Bishop Peter Remigius, outgoing Chairman and concelebrated by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, Chairman Caritas India, Bishop Jacob Mar Barnabas, Fr. Victor D'Souza, Fr. Varghese Mattamana, Fr. Frederick D'Souza, Fr. Paul Moonjely and several priests. Bishop Peter Remigius, the outgoing Chairman in his speech advocated the need for selfless love to add value to the service towards nation building. The new Chairman of Caritas India Bishop Lumen Monteiro, reiterated that Caritas India should be a link for the poor that works earnestly, innovates and reaches out to the people at large. (*Courtesy CBCI site*)

### BISHOP'S PROGRAM FOR JUNE 2012

- 02: Sanaya Chapel Blessing, Kamaranga Parish
- 03: Confirmations, Kamaranga Parish
- 05: Clergy Meet, JDC Agartala Clergy Recollection
- 07-09: NEDSF GB Meet, Guwahati
- 10: Confirmations, Bodhjunnagar Parish
- 12: Fund Appeals, USA & Canada

### Great Inspirational Quote



### Plathottam to head NISCORT by C.M. Paul



Salesian media trainer Fr. George Plathottam has been appointed Director of the National Institute of Social Communications Research and Training (NISCORT). The Standing Committee of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) that met in Bangalore April 25-27 chose Plathottam, currently the Secretary of the conference's Office of Social Communication. The appointment of Fr. Plathottam as director comes in the wake of the death of Jesuit Fr Jacob Srampickal on April 14 in Austria. Fr. Srampickal was scheduled to take charge in June. Fr. Plathottam, a member of the Salesian Guwahati Province who holds a doctorate in Communications from the Shillong-based North Eastern Hill University, will continue to hold the responsibility of the national office as well as head of NISCORT.