



Diocese Of Agartala

Lead Us Onward

Agartala Diocesan Newsletter

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Pastor's Corner

Recently Fr. George Stephen SJ forwarded this story: In England in 1920 there was a graduation ceremony for a group of new doctors. It was attended by the British Prime Minister of that time.

During the ceremony, the head Doctor who was in charge of the group gave the necessary advice to the new graduates. He told them the following incident which happened with him sometimes back: "It was after midnight, and I heard a knock on my door. It was an old lady, and she said to me: 'O my doctor, my child is sick and in a very serious condition, so please do something to save him. I rushed out to follow her to her house without worrying what will happen. It was a stormy night and very cold. The rain was pouring down very heavily. Her house was on the outskirts of London, and after a difficult journey, we reached her house. She lived in a small room with her son. When I entered the room, I saw her son at the corner of this room groaning and deeply in pain. After I did my duty towards the sick child, the mother gave me a small bag with money. I refused to take the bag and I told her gently that I can't accept that payment, because I felt sorry for their situation. Then I promised her that I will take care of her child until he gets better." And he continued by saying: "This is the true profession of medicine; and being a doctor is the closest profession to mercy and one of the closest to God".

As soon as the head Doctor finished his speech, the Prime Minister jumped out of his seat and headed to the podium. "Permit me Sir, to kiss your hand. For twenty years now and I am looking for you. I am the child you mentioned in your story just now. Oh, my mother will be happy now and she will rest in peace. Her only wish was for me to find you and to reward you for that goodness you did for us at the time we were living in poverty." That poor child who became the Prime Minister of England

Plant Goodness Wherever You Go

was: "Lloyd George".

The point is clear. Plant goodness wherever you go. Doing goodness to others will always purify your heart, and it will fight any kind of evil which comes your way. Always stay humble and grateful, because you never know which life you are touching. No one can say where the influence of a doctor and a teacher ends. So pass on the lamp of goodness that was passed on to you.



As the Diocesan Youth Convention gets under way in a few days' time, the idea of planting goodness everywhere should be uppermost in their minds. Our Youth today are beset with harmful addictions. The Youth Convention is poised at helping them to become aware and hopefully

eliminate these addictions that enslave them. Youth must be helped to see beyond themselves and their own comforts. Let us help create a peaceful and harmonious environment where Youth are taught to plant goodness rather than become hapless victims of hate, prejudice and paranoia.

The story is told of a woodcutter who was busy felling trees and on the first day cut 15. His boss was much impressed and encouraged the woodcutter. On the following day, enthused by the boss' encouragement he started off early but at the day's end could bring down only 10. The following day he started even earlier, worked even harder but could barely manage 5. I must be losing my strength the young man thought and went to the boss to apologize. "When did you last sharpen your axe" asked the boss. "Sharpen" said the young man, "I had no time to sharpen the axe; I've been busy cutting trees!"

In our day to day life we may be like the woodcutter, too busy with life's chores that we have no time to sharpen our lives! God Bless.

+Lumen, CSC



EDITORIAL

Undoubtedly the October-highlight this year is the Youth Convention of the Diocese scheduled to be held at Montfort premises, Champaknagar, the first week of the month.

After a gap of some time, once again, the spotlight is focused on the Youth, and it feels good.

It is interesting to recall that 24 years ago the Youth of the Diocese had gathered on the very same premises of Montfort School Champaknagar in order to celebrate the second Youth Convention of the Diocese of Agartala. The Convention was christened 'Youthrise' and as it turned out, among other things, it provided the Chief Minister of



Focus Youth 2022

the State the first opportunity to address and be impressed by the Catholic youth of the State.

That was a volatile period in Tripura's history, and yet, the Diocese of Agartala, barely two years old, did all it could, to give importance and power to its Youth. The Chief Minister Shri Manik Sarkar, confessed he had come with a 5-minute speech to deliver but on seeing such a disciplined group of youth all eagerly listening to his words, he could not but carry on speaking for a good 45 minutes! The

upcoming Convention is similar in many respects, yet different in many ways too.

If the Youth of those times were riddled by the violence happening around, and sought to shield themselves

from its impact, the Youth of today seek to shield themselves from so many surrounding pressures that try to enslave them in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. Young people of today have the advantage of better facilities and greater possibilities. And yet, they seem to have surrendered themselves at the altar of addictions - especially the drug menace looming large all around us. There was a time when we thought very erroneously that the drug problem was limited to states like Nagaland and Mizoram. Today, Tripura needs to hang its head in shame at the frightening proportions in which drug addiction cases keep rising in the state. A couple of weeks ago, the social media was abuzz with the case of the parents who had to call police and hand over their

addict son. They found no other way to protect themselves from physical harm they feared their son would do to them. As the Youth Convention is coming up in a few days' time, we the youth-carers should wake up to the urgency of the task and the responsibility we have taken upon ourselves. We ought to realise that Youth ministry today offers no short cuts of any sort. As we wish the Youth Director of the Diocese and its youth all the best for the coming celebration, we hope the Youth of Tripura rise and shine like never before. God bless.

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

Congratulations

We extend our heartiest CONGRATULATIONS and prayerful assurance to Sr. Mabel Dhar VSDB who was elected as the 5th Superior General of the Congregation on 29 August 2022. We pray for her noble mission of governing the Congregation along with her Council members – Sr. Cecilia Sad VSDB (Vicar General) and other Councilors – Sr. Kasiini Auxilia Mao, Sr. Ridalin Mawlong and Sr. Justina Kahit.

The Visitation Sisters of Don Bosco have two Convents in our Diocese.

Parish News Briefs

AMBASSA PARISH

Girl Child Day Celebration



Ambassa 08 September 2022: Ambassa Parish organized Girl Child Day on the feast of Nativity of our blessed Mother and the 147th Foundation Day of SVD Congregation. Around 300 faithful gathered to celebrate the occasion in the Parish Church. Prior to this, every day evening Novenas to Mother Mary were held; devotees offered their prayers along with flowers. And on the 8th many people gathered for the Holy Eucharist. Several Priests and Sisters also joined in the festivity. It was a joyous feeling for the SVD's because Ambassa was the first place in the Northeast to begin the mission in 1992. Like when St. Arnold began his mission in a humble way in Styel, the pioneers Fr. Peter D'Cunha and Team too with one of the families before they had their own thatched roof and bamboo fenced house. After the Holy Mass girl children were wished by cutting a cake. Though it was a warm evening yet it was a thanksgiving moment to God as the faithful wished one another and enjoyed the snacks. *Ivan D'Silva, SVD*

DEPACHERRA PARISH

SCC Seminar – Deanery level at Depacherra



Depacherra Deanery-level one day SCC Seminar was held on 17th September at Depacherra parish, which began with the Bible procession and enthronement. The Resource person Rev. Fr. Lancy CSC, Diocesan SCC Coordinator animated the Session on What is Church; Responsibility of a baptized person; a Christian leader's duties towards the church, meaning of neighborhood church; and importance of Bible Sharing. Totally 45 delegates from Karbook Parish, Pitra Parish, Twikarmaw Parish and Depacherra Parish actively participated. After the Seminar a short meeting was held to elect Deanery level SCC Secretary and to decide the place and date. The Seminar ended with photo session and agape. *Fr. Amalraj*

TUIKARMAW PARISH

Media Awareness Training Program

Twikarmaw, September 10, 2022: One day training program on Media awareness was conducted for the Students of Holy Cross School, Twikarmaw. There



were 94 students who were of higher classes registered their names for the training. Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD the Secretary for Social Communication Commission of Agartala Diocese was the Resource Person who was invited and welcomed by the School Principal Fr. Renju George CSC. Fr. Ivan dealt on various topics connected to Media, such as: Mobile, Internet, Advertisements, Films, T.V serials etc. At the beginning of the Session he posed a few questions: what is Media; and what do they understand by media. He cited many practical examples to make them understand what are the advantages and disadvantages in the Print, Electronic and Social Media. During the feedback session, they articulated that the subject was very interesting; they were not aware of many things; and a longer class on this subject was required. *News bureau, Ambassa*

MOHARPARA PARISH

Bishop's Pastoral Visit



Immaculate Conception Parish Moharpara witnessed God's blessing through the visit of our beloved Shepherd Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro CSC, on 18th September. 80 people received the Sacrament of Confirmation and 25 children received first Holy Communion at St. Jude's Church Dhanlekha. With joy and enthusiasm, the faithful welcomed our beloved Shepherd with their beautiful traditional attire, songs and flowers.

The holy Eucharist commenced with an entrance dance and solemn procession to the altar accompanied by the First Holy Communicants and the Concelebrants. During the homily Bishop explained the meaning of the Sacraments of Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. He also exhorted the faithful to

keep up the faith by being regular to the church on Sundays and other days of obligation. He also expressed his joy and happiness to see the faithful and visit Dhanlekha village after a decade. Soon after the Holy Eucharist a short felicitation program was kept to honor our beloved Bishop and other dignitaries. The event comes to a close with an agape meal shared by all. *Fr. Arbok, CSC*

KUMARGHAT PARISH

Couples' Day



Couples' Day along with Teacher's Day and the Feast of St. Teresa of Kolkata were celebrated on 4th September with the holy Eucharist. About 80 couples attended the celebration even though there was continuous rain. Couples came from all the substations. The Catechist Mr. Subia D/B conducted the Holy Rosary by praying for various intentions. Rev. Fr. Lancy CSC did a Power Point Presentation on the theme "the family that prays together stays together" by quoting the events from the life of Venerable Patrick Peyton CSC. During the Talk Fr. Lancy suggested all the families pray together and insisted on the importance of reciting Rosary together daily. Fr. Jomon CSC, Assistant Provincial from Montreal, Canada, gave a Talk on the holy and virtuous life of St. Brother Andre.

The holy Mass was presided over by the newly ordained priest Fr. Robin Sekhar S.F.X. who preached about spouses' relationship to each other. Then the spouses were reminded of their marriage day promises and made to renew the same which became very meaningful and something they would never forget. In addition, the couples made a promise to pray daily as a family and recite the rosary. This was followed by a special blessing to all the couples by the priests present. The faithful were much inspired by the celebration and promised to lead a good Catholic life. At the end of the Mass all the Teachers in the Parish and invited priests were felicitated by the Parish Council. *Bro. Jojappa*

BAGBASA PARISH

Sacrament of Confirmation

Our Parish had the privilege of the presence of our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, on 4th September for a Pastoral visit. The Bishop first met with some Parish Council Members on 3rd and reviewed the works of the Parish. During the Holy Eucharist on 4th



he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 120 young men and women. After the Holy Mass there was a short felicitation program to thank our Bishop. The Maria Sangho welcomed the Bishop with *risha* and flowers and the Parish Secretary said a few words of welcome, while the children sang a welcome song. On his part Bishop Lumen thanked the Parish Priest, Catechists, and all those involved in preparing the children for the reception of the Sacraments. The Bishop admonished the parish community to stay united, attend church services, participate in SCCs

and help one another.

Fr. Tarun Hrangkhawl, CSC

News Briefs from the Diocese

Silver and Golden Bells Rang at Capitanio Home Panisagar



The Silver Jubilee of the Sisters of Charity Capitanio Home Panisagar and the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Mary Ponthempally the Provincial Superior and Sr. Philomena Parappuram was celebrated on the 3rd September. We were blessed with good weather and also with the presence of our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, Fr. Simon Fernandis, CSC, the Provincial Superior of Holy Cross, our Parish Priest Fr Tarun CSC, our Provincial Superior Sr. Mary SCCG, the SCCG Sisters who worked here in the past years, many Priests and Sisters from far and near, the people of our locality and our dear Boarding Boys and Girls. The family members of Sr. Philomena were delighted to experience the celebration and people. Around 300 of us gathered together to praise and thank the Almighty for the wonderful way that he has led us through thick and thin. The most appropriate way to thank Him was through the Holy Eucharist. The Altar and the Hall were tastefully decorated and the choir sang in heavenly voices. The felicitation followed after the Holy Mass. The Hostel Boys and Girls displayed their talents through various items. To crown the event everyone shared in the family meal. *Sr. Anice, SCCG*

Jubilate Deo...Sr. Rita SSpS Golden Jubilee of Religious Profession

Melodies of gratitude resounded in the hearts of everyone in Ambassa Parish as Sr. Rita SSpS, celebrated her Golden Jubilee on 11th September 2022. From the fullness of our creator God, "We have received grace upon grace." Sr. Sunita Kujur SSpS, the Provincial of Holy Spirit Sisters North East Province welcomed every one for the Eucharistic celebration. The solemn concelebrated Holy Eucharist at 9.30am was presided over by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC,



the Bishop of Agartala. The Jubilarian was led to the altar with the entrance dance performed by the students from Girls Hostel attired in their traditional colorful dresses. Many Priests and Sisters from different missions joined for the celebrations. Sr. Berndetta SSpS narrated Sr. Rita's 50 years of religious life service in many areas of our missions. The Parish choir, hostel boys and girls, directed by Mr. Prabhat Marak and Sr. Sushma SSpS sang harmoniously and every one prayed for Sr. Rita. In his homily Bishop Lumen congratulated Sr. Rita for her journey of 50 years in fidelity, prayer, faith, love, and service and wished her *ad multos anos*. After the homily Sr. Rita renewed her Vows in the presence of the congregation. A short Felicitation program soon after the Holy Mass gave everyone an opportunity to express their wishes to the Jubilarian. The family members from Sr. Rita's family were also delighted to witness this event. Sr. Rita expressed her sentiments of gratitude to everyone. The celebration came to an end with a fellowship meal in the Hostel complex.

Sr. Prabha SSpS

International Day of Sign Languages celebrated at Ferrando Nandanagar



September 23rd marks the International Day of Sign Languages. This is a day celebrated every year with the aim to spread awareness surrounding the development and preservation of sign languages to support the hearing-impaired community and others who use them to communicate with the deaf.

On this occasion Ferrando School for Speech and Hearing – Nadannagar, had organized a competition on sign language having two purposes in mind: One is to raise awareness of the sign languages that are recognized for the human rights of deaf people. Second is to equip them further with new vocabulary and signs.

Sr. Maya, MSMHC

JUST News Briefs

JUST SHGs Training cum Exposure visit to IVDP Krishnagiri, Tamilnadu

The 14 member Team of JUST including our Director Fr. Lathees visited IVDP, Krishnagiri, from 3rd to 8th



September. The Members were selected in view of creating SHGs in all our Parishes. On the first day the Team was taken to the field to see and learn systematic way of conducting SHG meetings. During the visit the IVDP SHG Women shared their experiences of being an SHG member for many years and the benefits of being part of IVDP. They also shared about the systematic way of documentation, conducting meetings without failure, unity

among the SHG Women, Insurance Policy during death and 100 percent recovery on inter-loaning.

On the second day the Team visited the Cluster Level Federation (CLF) Office. Interactions were done with the Federation Members and also with the Bank Managers regarding the functioning of the Federations and regarding Schemes availed by the IVDP SHGs. JUST Team also visited different villages where SHG Members are engaging themselves in different Income Generation activities. After that the Founder/President of IVDP Mr. Kulandai Francis, interacted with the Team and explained about how IVDP is functioning, how they monitor the SHGs, and the purpose of forming SHGs.

JUST celebrates International Peace Day

On 21st September 2022 JUST celebrated International Peace Day at JUST Office Damdamia, Agartala. 48 Youth from different Districts attended the celebration. Fr. Lathees S Director of JUST gave the introduction about International Peace Day with the theme "End Racism (Discrimination) and Build Peace"



and motivated the Youth to observe 24 hours of non-violence and strengthen the ideas of peace in the society. The Special Guest Dr. V.M Darlong Asst. Prof. Tripura University, spoke on the topic Why Conflict, Pillar of Peace, Gender equity, Solidarity for peace, Freedom as a pillar of peace, and how to restore peace and to value diversity. Mr. Debashis Majumder, Yuva Vikas Kendra (YVK) President, also spoke on Mahatma Gandhiji principles of peace and

motivated the Youth to respect others culture and religion. During the program Mr. Monson Kalai and Mr. Mihir Debbarma from Hillrock School of Music performed a song for peace and harmony. The program concluded with a Vote of thanks by Mr. Cyril R Darlong, JUST Coordinator.

Mr. Cyril Darlong

Pope Francis jokes that either he or John XXIV will attend World Youth Day next year



With the next World Youth Day less than a year away, Pope Francis has promised that a Pope will be in attendance, but joked that it may be "Pope John XXIV." Pope Francis told CNN Portugal in a television interview that aired on Sept. 4 that he plans to attend the 2023 World Youth Day, the largest international Catholic youth gathering scheduled to take place in Lisbon next August. "I plan to go. The Pope is going to go — either Francis or John XXIV — but the Pope is going," he joked. The quip was made after months of speculation in the media that the 85-year-old pope could be close to retirement. Pope Francis told journalists on his return from Canada in July that he is "open" to the possibility of retiring if he discerns that it is God's will. *Courtesy Mares of CAN*

Pope's significant Kazakhstan visit

Escorted by fighter jets when Pope Francis's plane touched down in Kazakhstan's capital city



of Nur-Sultan, on September 13, the visit was termed historic. He was here to attend the Sept 14-15 Congress of World and Traditional Religions. Pope Francis remembered the Church in the country, saying he was "so glad to meet a community of happy, joyful people filled with enthusiasm." The Pope praised the initiative of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. "This initiative has been carried out for 20 years by the authorities of the country, which presents itself to the world as a place of meeting and dialogue, in this case at the religious level, and thus as a leading player in promoting peace and human brotherhood." Pope Francis lauded its commitment to put religions at the center of efforts "to build a world where we listen to each other and respect each other in diversity."

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Bishop's Program for October 2022

- 02: Parish Feast, Gachirampara Parish
- 03: NESNIM Closing Ceremony, Agartala
- 04: Clergy Meet, Agartala
Consulters Meet
- 06: Hrangkhawl Sabha, Kamlacherra under Ambassa
- 06-09: Diocesan Youth Convention, Khumulwng
- 09: Parish Day, Baijalbari
- 15: Silver Jubilee, MSMHC Udaipur
- 16: Parish Mass, Khumulwng
- 22-23: Parish Silver Jubilee, Kamaranga
- 25-27: DFNEI Convention, Guwahati
- 29-30: SDB Centenary, Shillong

Our Distinguished Guests

- Sr. Celine D'Cunha FMA, from Shillong
- Fr. Shaji CSC, from Jongksha, Meghalaya
- Fr. Jomon CSC, Vice Provincial from Canada
- Bro. Varghese SG, Provincial from Guwahati
- Bro. PK James SG, Councilor from Mizoram
- Bro. Richard SG, Councilor from Mizoram
- Fr. Jilson Mathew VC, Provincial from Kerala