



### Pastor's Corner

Taking a look at two common creatures that represent two opposing spiritualities, the **CAT AND MONKEY, Fr. George Stephen SJ**, makes an interesting reflection. "Let us

take (1) The Cat. Suppose a kitten wants to go here and there, the mother cat carries it by the neck and takes it here and there. The mother cat is in control as it holds on to the kitten. The kitten reaches its destination only as long as the mother cat is holding on the kitten. The kitten is only hanging loosely, passively in its mother's mouth. Once the mother drops the kitten, it stays there until the mother picks it up again. It hangs around, waiting for what the mother cat will do next. Many times, we find that we have a CAT SPIRITUALITY. Lord, help me... Lord, increase my faith... Lord, protect me... Lord, bless me. It is the Lord who is responsible: I am not. Things will happen in our life only when God wants. Like a kitten, we cry all day praying, asking, and waiting for mother cat to come to us. We sit around waiting for our Lord to do something for us: pick us up, carry us, and take us wherever he wants. We are not responsible. Only God is responsible.

(2) The Monkey. Suppose a baby monkey wants to go here and there, Mummy says, "I'm going there. If you want to go there cling to me." At first you think that the mother monkey is in control as it jumps from one branch to the next while the baby clings to her. The baby reaches its destination only as long as it clings to its mother. Yet, it is the baby monkey that is in control. The moment it lets go of its mother, it gets left behind a branch and starves, or it falls to the ground, or it gets snatched up and eaten by a wild animal. The mother cannot hold the baby as it is always moving, jumping here and there. It is the baby monkey that is responsible for clinging to its mother in order to be safe, in order to feed, in order to reach its destination. Jesus wants us to have a MONKEY SPIRITUALITY where I will be responsible. "YOU give them something to eat." "YOU untie him and let him go free." "If YOU wish to become my disciple, renounce yourself. Take up your cross daily and follow me." "YOU come to me all of you who are heavily laden." "YOU go and sell all that you have and give to the poor, then come and follow me." "YOU can do greater things than I do."

What is my responsibility? Like the baby monkey, I am responsible. I must do something: I must cling. No one else can cling for me. My mother is responsible for jumping from branch to branch, tree to tree, forest to forest. Similarly, I am responsible for holding tightly- sometimes onto her back, other times onto her neck, different time onto her chest. I must do everything I can to make sure I am one with my mother so I will eat and be safe and survive.

### God and I are responsible TOGETHER!



Just like the baby monkey, I am responsible for what happens to myself. At the same time, just like the mother monkey, I am responsible WITH God as I align my will, thoughts, actions with God's will and plan for my life. Let us not forget, God and I are responsible TOGETHER." **+Lumen, CSC**



### Editorial

#### About bridging an ever-widening chasm

Each year thousands of young people spend the major portion of the month of March poring over textbooks and sweating it out at examination desks. In our State of Tripura the run up to these Board Examinations distinctly show the growing divide among youth into the haves and have-nots. The



former has lavished on them utmost attention, care and assistance. The youth that belong to our many Schools are fortunate to belong to this category. Most of them not only emerge victorious but also bag

impressive grades, thus bringing well-deserved honor and name to themselves and their Schools.

This band of victors is not few in number certainly. And yet, truth be told, in fact, they are only a small percentage of the total number of students that give exams in any given year. The vast majority belong to the latter group who are left in the lurch to languish simply because not many give them adequate attention, care or guidance. From the Church's point of view despite its noble intentions, there is little it can do because these do not officially come under the ambit of the Church's influence. This vast army of youth go through the emotions and often have to be content with very unflattering outcomes.

The stark contrast that exists between these two segments of youth is a telling comment on the education scenario of the State. "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark."

As a Church too, when education comes up, we do flex our muscles and think of it as our best bet for credibility; our trump card that lends us legitimacy and respect. Which is why,

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perhaps, we cannot let things be as they are. In such a scenario, we cannot deny that there seems to be something out of joint, something wrong with our professed penchant for weaker sections and vulnerable peoples. How do we broaden the sphere of our influence and service so as to include the most deserving and needy? How do we break free from trappings that limit us and even give a bitter edge to our sweet successes?

If this seems a bit exaggerated, it is another proof of how out of touch we perhaps are, for reality is far more dreadful than what our 'sane' faculties let us envisage. Students who study in our Schools generally get more guidance than they need from the teachers and the school authority. (Whether they put it to good use or not is a different matter though). Parents too shower on them their share of care, counsel and guidance. In the case of students who attend vernacular medium schools in the rural areas, in many cases, they get none of it, neither from the school nor from the parents.

This certainly is not new knowledge; merely a new attempt to search a solution for along standing problem.

**J. Pulinthanath, SDB**

## KUMARGHAT PARISH

### Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Parish



The Golden Jubilee celebration of Kumarghat Parish was held on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> February 2020 with great joy and gratitude. On 8<sup>th</sup> we had Felicitation Program with speeches and various cultural programs presented by the *mondolis* and Holy Cross School students. Our Chief Guest was Bishop Lumen

and the Guest of Honor was Minister Mr. Mevar Jamatia. The presence of Holy Cross Provincial Fr. Simon CSC, and Vice-Provincial Fr. Roy CSC added more grace to the occasion. Father Lancy the Parish Priest gave a brief history of the golden pathways of the Parish in his welcome speech. The former PPs, Assistant PPs, the Religious who worked in Kumarghat Parish and the Catechists were honored by the honorable guests.

On Sunday the Bishop blessed the Golden Jubilee Gate and Fr. Simon CSC unveiled the Foundation stone. Bishop Lumen was the main celebrant of the Thanksgiving Eucharist. It was a deep faith experience for all and a great moment of gratitude. This festival was the grace-filled culmination of the preparation that began six years ago by Fr. Arul and Fr. Lancy with the cooperation of all the Parish Council Members, the Youth, Children and Religious concluded the golden Jubilee celebrations. We thank all who participated in the celebration.

**Fr. Babu Paul SJ**

## MOHARPARA PARISH

### Marriage Preparation Course

Immaculate Conception Parish Moharpara organized two days Marriage Preparation Course on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of January 2020. The resource persons dwelt and emphasize mainly on the topics such as marriage as a sacrament, natural family planning, Pope's message on the Joy of Love



and good parenting. Lecture method and discussion method were employed by the resource persons in exploring the subject matter. Big thanks to Fr. Paul Cr csc, Fr. Hormis John csc, and

Thomas Hrangkhawl Catechist for their service and support. The 10 couples who participated were happy and faith rejuvenated.

**Fr. Arbok, CSC**

## KATHALCHERRA PARISH

### 'The Family that Prays Together Stays Together'

**Maria Songho:** The annual Maria Songho was organized in Puranbari village on 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>

January. There were more than 200 hundred Women who attended the program. Fr. Jeevan SVD the Director of JUST, Agartala was the Resource Person.

### God has joined Together:

What God has united let no man separate (Mt.19:6).

There were 2 days of Marriage Preparation Course organized in the parish. 22 couples had an opportunity for the would-be couples to listen to the experiences and the Word of God shared by Fr Ivan SVD the Parish Priest of Ambassa, to prepare themselves for the Sacrament of Marriage.

**Parish Sabha:** The annual Parish Sabah was organized at Holy Cross School Chailengta. The Holy Cross Fathers and VSDB Sisters collaborated with the local *mondoli* to organize the Sabah. Fr. Pradeep Mondol a Redemptorist Priest from Kolkata was the Resource Person. He enlightened the faithful on the theme "The Family That Prays Together Stays Together" by Fr. Patrick Payton CSC.

**Fr. Ishwar, CSC**



## AMBASSA PARISH

### Holy Childhood Day celebrations

Ambassa: February 16, 2020:

Raipasa village one of the Sub-centres of Ambassa Parish celebrated Holy Childhood Day conducting Sports and Games for the children. Raipasa is mostly dominated by the Molsom tribe and it is not far away from the National Highway only 4kms from Ambassa Town. The approach road to the village is dilapidated; especially during the rainy season it is difficult even for a motor cycle to go the village. There are many children in the village, some of whom go to school and some are dropouts. The Parish Priest along with Parish Council Members celebrated Holy Childhood Day.

During holy Mass Fr. Ivan reminded the faithful to pray for the children, especially those who are deprived and marginalized. Dr. Ashok Debbarma gave a class on hygiene and health care. Mr. Neithunglian Halam the Parish Youth Animator spoke on importance of family prayer. After Holy Mass games were conducted and prizes were distributed to the children. Many children participated in the Competitions to mark the Holy Childhood day.

**News Bureau, Ambassa**



**Basic Bible Course**

The Bible Commission of Agartala Diocese organized the Basic Bible Course for all the evangelists of the Diocese on the theme “The Word of God--Foundation of Evangelization”. The Course began on 3<sup>rd</sup> February with the enthronement of the Bible and the introductory Talk by Fr. Valentine SVD, the Parish Priest of St.



Alphonsa Parish, Khumulwng. The Secretary of the Bible Commission Fr. Stany Pereira SVD, welcomed all the participants and Speakers and explained the importance of the Course. Fr. Joseph Pulinthanath SDB and Mr. Subol Debbarma took two days classes on the Old Testament. Fr. Johnson, the Secretary of the Bible Commission for Northeast Region, took two days classes on the 4 Gospels. The Commission distributed Holy Bibles to the participants. The visit and the encouragement of our Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, and Fr. Maxim Rodriguez SVD, the Regional Superior of ING was very enriching. The Bible Commission is grateful to all the 20 participants who made use of this great opportunity. **Fr. Stany Pereira, SVD**

**Diocesan Silver Jubilee organized by CRI Agartala**



Conference of Religious, India - Agartala Unit organized a 2-day Seminar from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 1<sup>st</sup> February on the theme: *Present*

*Socio-Political Scenario in our country, and our Response to the challenges.* Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas SFX, Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi Archdiocese, was the Resource Person. The Seminar was organized in the context of Agartala Diocese and its first Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC celebrating their Silver Jubilee of existence.. Taking into to account the political scenario of the country, particularly of Tripura, and cautioned by the recent Kumarghat-incident, we thought, the best way to prepare for the Silver Jubilee of our Diocese is to learn how to deal with the uncertain-future. Hence, the theme chosen for our Jubilee Seminar was: *The present Socio-Political Scenario in our country, and our Response to the challenges.* The Resource Person proved to be sensitive to the needs of the participants, as he invited questions and clarifications from the participants, setting aside a considerable amount of time for responding to the queries. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Day of the Seminar drew a larger number of Religious, being the Birthday celebration of Bishop Lumen. God bless our Diocese and all the Religious. **Fr. Mariaraj, CSC, President CRI Agartala**

**Hrudaya - Mobile Palliative Care by Syro Malabar mission**



On the feast of our Lady of Lourdes, the World Day of the Sick, Hrudaya Mobile Palliative Care by Silchar Syro Malabar mission was inaugurated on 11<sup>th</sup> February by our beloved Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, Chairman of the NE Commission for Health. In the presence of Sisters, Fathers and few laity Bishop Lumen blessed the Ambulance and flagged off of the new Palliative Care mission of the Syro Malabar Church, represented by Fr. Titus Kattuparambil and Team. Quoting from Pope Francis' Message Bishop Lumen said, “Christ did not give us prescriptions, but through His passion, death and resurrection He frees us from the grip of evil... The Church desires to become more and more the “inn” of the Good Samaritan who is Christ, that is, a home where you can encounter His grace, which finds expression in closeness, acceptance and relief.” **Fr. Amalraj, Diocese of Agartala**

**India News Tidbits**

**CBCI new Office Bearers**



Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, is the new President of CBCI. This is Cardinal Gracias' third term as CBCI President. **Joshua Mar Ignathios Metropolitan Bishop of Mavelikkara**, was elected Vice President I of CBCI. This is his second term. **Mar George Njaralakatt, Archbishop of Eparchy of Tellicherry**, was elected Vice President II of CBCI. This is his second term. **Archbishop Felix Anthony Machado, Bishop of Vasai**, was elected as the Secretary General of the CBCI. This is his first time.

**Conference of the Diocesan Priests of India (CDPI)**

The national level Conference of CDPI was held at Shrine

Basilica of our Lady of Good Health Vailankanni, from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2020. The main theme was “The joy of Priesthood”. Around 750 Priests of Catholic dioceses of Latin rite from all over India participated in the meeting. The Conference began with the inaugural holy Eucharist by His Eminence Cardinal Oswald Gracias, President of CBCI along with His Excellency Bp. Devadass Ambrose of Thanjavoor. After the inaugural session the Priests' delegates from each region shared their experience. The second day's theme was joy in celebrating Christ. Abp. George Antonysamy, Vice President of CCBI, presided the holy Eucharist and delivered the homily. On the third day Bp. Udumala Bala, Patron of CDPI presided over the holy Eucharist. The theme was joy in building the reign of God. On the final day Bp. Susaimanikam of Sivagangai presided over the holy Eucharist and delivered the homily on the theme 'messengers of joy with a joyful heart'. Various Resource Persons and Panelists also spoke on various themes based on joyful priesthood. At the end of the national Conference the final Resolutions and Statement were made, as Action Plan of



CDPI.

I thank our Bp. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, for giving me this opportunity to participate in such a national level Conference for the first time in my life.

*Fr. George. S., Diocese of Agartala*

**Theology Course for SCC at Nagpur**

My stay at Pallotti Animation Centre for SCC Theology Course was indeed a memorable one. The Course helped me to understand that I need to make communities a communion of communions, built on the Word of God and Eucharist leading towards fullness of life and transformation of society. I gained basic knowledge about SCCs, spirituality, animation skills and leadership. Bible enthronement, Bible procession, Bible meditation, Bible



*Fr. Amalraj, Diocese of Agartala*

adoration and Bible veneration helped me fall in love with the Word. I am convinced that a life centred on the Word of God animated by Gospel Sharing can bring about fruits of Gospel values and in a deep way build the Kingdom of God. The 30 days Theology Course enabled me to theologize with my head and heart by learning new information on SCCs and helped to grow in love for the Word of God and for SCCs, the new way of being church.

**JUST News Tidbits**

**Distribution of Water Filters**

As a part of Health Care to students JUST distributed water filters to the 10 JUST coaching centers in the month of January 2020 under Ganganagar R.D Block in Dhalai District.



The distribution of water filters aims to promote use of clean water among the students. The water filters were distributed by the JUIST Project

Coordinator Mr. Lilmohan Reang in all the 10 JUST coaching centers and explained to the students that 'Health is Wealth' and to maintain good health clean water is necessary.

**Training on Early Intervention and Identification of CsDs**

JUST organized training on **Early Intervention and Identification of CwDs**

for the Anganwadi Workers (AWC) on 31<sup>st</sup> January at Maiganga Colony Anganwadi centre. The Resource Person was Mr. Prasanta Chowdhury, JUST CBR Project Coordinator. There were 21

Anganwadi workers who participated in the training. The Resource Person explained the Anganwadi workers how to identify 21 types



of disabilities and how to measure the child development both physical and mental stage according to month wise up to 5 years. He also distributed child development chart and 21 types of disabilities chart to the participants.

*Mr. Cyril Darlong*

**Our Distinguished Visitors**

- Fr. Stany Pereira, OFM Cap Delegate Superior from Mizoram
- Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas, SFX from Ranchi Archdiocese
- Fr. Johnson, CMF from Shillong, (Secretary of Bible Commission)
- Fr. Maxim, SVD Regional Superior from Guwahati
- Sr. Birgit Bohn, SCV, Superior General from Germany
- Sr. Johanna Maria SCV, Councillor from Germany
- Sr. Primosa SCV, Councillor from Germany
- Sr. Santan Nago FS, Former Superior General from Pune
- Sr. Jolly FS, Regional Superior from Rangia
- Mrs. Leena & Mr. John Robert from Pune
- Mr. Lawrence Ekka and Team from Couples for Christ, Kolkata

**Bishop's Program for March 2020**

- 01: Launching of Lenten Campaign, SFX Agartala
- 02: Meeting with Jesuit Provincial
- 03: Clergy Meeting & Recollection, Agartala
- 07-08: Pastoral Visit, Gandacherra
- 14-15: Pastoral Visit, Karbook/Depacherra
- 16-20: NE Bishops Council Meet, Dibrugarh
- 21-22: Parish Sabah, Moharpara
- 27-30: CBCI-CARD Meet, Delhi