



Pastor's Corner

The Good Shepherd who cares for our every need

Every once in a while, a ewe will give birth to a lamb and reject it. There are many reasons why she may do this. If the lamb is returned to the ewe, the mother may even kick the poor animal away. Once a ewe rejects one of her lambs, she will never change her mind. These little lambs will hang their heads so low that it looks like something is wrong with its neck.

Their spirit is broken. These lambs are called "bummer lambs." Unless the shepherd intervenes, that lamb will die, rejected and alone. So, do you know what the shepherd does? He takes that rejected little one into his home, hand-feeds it and keep it warm by the fire. He will wrap it up with blankets and hold it to his chest so the bummer can hear his heartbeat. Once the lamb is strong enough, the shepherd will place it back in the field with the rest of the flock. But that sheep never forgets how the shepherd cared for him when his mother rejected him. When the shepherd calls for the flock, guess who runs to him first? That is right, the



bummer sheep. He knows his voice intimately. It is not that the bummer lamb is loved more, it just knows intimately the one who loves it. It's not that it is loved more, it just believes it because it has experienced that love one on one.

So many of us are bummer lambs, rejected and broken. But God is the good Shepherd who cares for our every need and holds us close to His heart so we can hear His heart beat. We may be broken but we are deeply loved by the Shepherd. If we experience God in this way then we will be like John, the tall and robust milkman, who loves his work. The gleam in his eyes tells everyone that he loves his work and everyone is always glad to see him. The secret of his happiness is this. Although he is very poor, he finds inexpressible joy in this thought, "God is within me. He looks after me in my work, and gives me strength to do it, and this is the reason why I am so happy. He is my shepherd who cares for my every need."
+Lumen, CSC



EDITORIAL

Adoramus te Domine

The spacious grounds of Khumpui Academy at Khumulwng, will witness a gathering markedly different from the one it is generally used to when the Annual Eucharistic Procession will converge in its precincts two weeks hence. The grounds, seasoned by political rallies of all hues, shades, and decibels, and even the occasional orchestra once so popular, lends itself well to this year's edition of what is undoubtedly the biggest annual gathering of Catholics in the State.

The choice of venue displays some innovative thinking on the part of the Catholic Laity of Tripura which has been organizing the Procession year after year for the past 13 years almost uninterruptedly. The relatively quieter ambience of Khumulwng, one hopes, will help to make it a truly spiritual



experience. The Procession has, over the years, trudged along experimental paths and each time emerged better for the exercise. Today it is just about the only annual event that brings together a sizeable number of believers at a Diocesan level. Rail connectivity reaching Agartala and Sabroom has benefitted the Procession, no doubt, but it has also made it a trifle time-conscious. Participants from faraway Parishes might be little anxious about catching the return train, but they do not show that for sure. In fact, the devotion with which the people take part in the programs – be it the Mass, or the Adoration, has always been edifying and inspiring even to the casual onlooker.

No doubt, the Eucharistic Procession forges an identity of sorts that is unique. The procession provides a platform for all Catholics to rally around

the Eucharistic Lord as one community, irrespective of one's ethno-political allegiances and affiliations. Indeed, the best thing about the Procession is what it has, over the years, primarily become – a unique opportunity to adore Jesus in the most blessed Sacrament and to witness to that blessedness in public space. One does well to look back with gratitude to those who have been very instrumental in bringing the Eucharistic Procession to its present position. We look forward with much expectation and eagerness to the Khumulwng edition of the Procession, coming up in a few days' time. May it prove to be a time of blessing for everyone associated with it in one way or the other. **J. Pulinathan, SDB**

Parish News Briefs

GACHIRAMPARA PARISH

Parish Feast



The annual feast of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish was celebrated on 2nd of October 2022, being a Sunday and people could easily participate in the feast. On the 1st of October we had a half a day program for the people. That was about on the need SCC in our parish, and the 7-steps method. Fr. Lancy D'Souza CSC, the SCC in charge of the Diocese and the Parish priest of Kumarghat Parish, was the resource person. Fr. Lancy took keen interest in conducting the program. And people well appreciated it.

In the evening our Bishop arrived. It was great joy for us to have our Bishop amidst us. The evening we spent with our parishioners, who put up some cultural program too.

Next day we had the feast day Mass and celebration. Our Bishop was welcomed by all the parishioners with a shawl, and there after Bishop distributed honorary candles to different *mondoli* office bearers. Bishop Lumen presided over the Mass and many Priests from the neighbouring Parishes concelebrated. Many religious sisters joined the celebration. After Mass we had the festal meal for all. **Fr Felix Pinto, OFM Cap.**

KUMARGHAT PARISH

Women's Annual gathering



After Covid-19 the Kumarghat Maria Sangha women were fortunate to come together to celebrate the 12th annual gathering for two days on 24th and 25th of September at Garo II village. Total 185 Women from 15 villages participated in the program. The topic was "Blessed are you among all Women". The day began with lighting the lamp. Fr. Lancy in his speech stressed on family prayer, role of Mother Mary in the church, role of Maria Sangha in their own villages and how to walk in the foots steps of Mother Mary. He also to make the Bible a part of life. He appreciated them for their activities and asked them to be united and strong.

Sr. Jolly the diocesan Women Coordinator spoke on importance of reciting rosary every day and said that rosary is the most powerful weapon in our hands.

Mother's Day also was celebrated and it was appropriate time to thank all the mothers along with Mother Mary. Mothers play an important role in the family and without mothers there is no life in the family. Mothers sacrifice their whole life for the sake of family. In the evening dance, singing and saying bible competitions were organized. All the winners were given prizes. Garo-II village along with Central level Maria Sangha Women organized the logistics. Sr. Bastian was over all in-charge of the program. All the women were very happy and appreciated and enjoyed the program. **Sr. Bastian D'silva, FS**

AMBASSA PARISH

Marriage Preparation Course



Ambassa (Tripura) October 5, 2022: The Parish organized three days of marriage preparation for 38 participants. There were participants from Tuikarmaw and Kattalcherra Parishes too. Fr. Hormis John CSC took class on 'what is Christian Marriage, The Grace of the Sacrament of Marriage and Unity and Indissolubility of Marriage'. Unearthing a few cases he made the participants understand what marriage is. Mr. Sankunga Darlong gave input session on 'The Purpose of Marriage: Love and Procreation, the Christian attitude Towards Sex, the Morality of Marriage, Marriage and the problem of

Drinking'. With his practical knowledge on family life he made the class very interesting. Dr. Asok Debbarma dealt with health issues through diagrams and pictures. He gave classes on 'Menstruation, Danger of early Pregnancy, Abortion, and Use of water'. Fr. Ivan D'Silva the Parish priest elaborately spoke on 'Biblical Teachings on Marriage, Family and Spiritual Life, Pastoral and Social Communication'. Mr. Parbath Marak the Parish Convener for the Evangelization Committee & Indrajit Sangma the parish catechist, spoke on 'SCC, The role of family in the Local Church, Christian family and family and the Church'. During the evaluation all expressed satisfaction with the Course. The Course concluded with the distribution of the Certificates from Agartala Diocese.

Annual Women Association in Ambassa



The Catholic Church Ambassa Parish Women Association organized two days of annual Conference in Kekmachara sub-stations of the Parish. There were more than 90 women participating in the yearly Convention which began on 9th October. The first session was by Mrs. Nayanmoti Debbarma, the Secretary of the parish Women Association. Later, all the women and people from the village took a procession into village praying the Rosary. After this Mrs. Debbarma called on leaders from different villages to read the Report and submit them for consolidation. Mr. Kamal Debbarma conducted the 'Bible Quiz'. On the following day 10th October Dr. Asok Debbarma took the class on Hygiene and Health, followed by Fr. Ivan D'Silva the parish priest who took a Session on Mobile and Social Media. Two days of Annual Convention concluded with the Holy Mass and Lunch. *Ivan D'Silva, SVD*

BAIJALBARI PARISH

Youth Program & Parish Day

YOUTH PROGRAM: The Catholic Youth become very vibrant at Baijalbari Parish which was manifested in the Youth Programme from the 7th to 9th October. There were 101 Youth who gathered at Baijalbari, which was animated by Suhel Debbarma, EM, a Parishioner of Baijalbari. He energized the young with his sweet message. Fr. Paul Panachikkal officially accepted everyone and gave a short Introduction about the goal of the youth gathering and the day was concluded with holy Mass by Fr. Merkush Iswary. On 8th October, the Youth began the day with a Bible meditation. Then Fr. PJ Joseph enriched the young with his engrossing talk, which was followed by a

discourse of Ryan Debbarma. The Youth were divided into different circles and there were varieties of competitions that were organized like singing competitions, dancing competitions, party games, etc. Fr. Paul also invited Uttam Debbarma to animate the young. There was an Adoration service, Rosary, and Confession which was followed by holy Mass.

PARISH DAY: On 9th October, the Youth started the



day with an hour of Adoration. There were about 800 faithful who participated in the Parish Day from different villages. The Holy Mass was presided over by Bishop Lumen Monteiro along with six Priests. His thought provoking homily made a deep impression on the parishioners assembled. During the Mass, there were 63 young people who received Confirmation and 65 children received first Holy Communion. There were many religious Sisters from different Congregations who came to be part of the celebration. On the same day, the new Parish church foundation was blessed by our Bishop Lumen in the presence of the Parishioners. The Parishioners also put up a cultural program on the occasion of the Parish Day. The day of celebration was successfully concluded with a sumptuous lunch for everyone. *Fr. Paul Panachikkal, SDB*

KAMARANGA PARISH

Silver Jubilee Bells ring in joy & peace



The parishioners of St. Raphael Church, Kamaranga celebrated their Silver Jubilee on 22nd and 23rd of October 2022. It is the first parish that Bishop Lumen Monteiro erected in 1997 after becoming Bishop of the Diocese. The Silver Jubilee of the Parish began a year ago with Silver Jubilee Candle procession to every village and every family in the Parish. Parishioners prayed the silver jubilee prayer for unity, harmony and faith. Reading the Bible and

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Catechism for children were given importance during this period. Various awareness programs were organized for Youth, Women and Men. Holy Family Sisters from Delhi and Fr. Jomon James SVD from Mumbai helped in strengthening family prayer and faith in every village.

The culmination of the Jubilee was on 22nd and 23rd of October. A grand procession, blessing the Jubilee plaque and the newly painted church were done the 22nd. This was followed by a cultural program in which

each *mondoli* participated. The Jubilee Mass was celebrated by our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro along with a large number of Priests and Religious from the various Parishes along with the faithful from the whole Parish. This was followed by a felicitation program, lighting 25 candles, and cutting the jubilee cake. All the pioneers and Parish Priests till date were felicitated. The Silver Jubilee celebration was truly a celebration of faith. *Fr. Arun Minj, SVD*

News Briefs from the Diocese

NESNIM – North Eastern Students' National Integration Movement



"Cultivating a healthy mind and body is the key to the overall development of a person," said Prof. (Dr.) Manik Saha, Chief Minister of Tripura, while inaugurating the 13th edition of NESNIM (North Eastern Students' National Integration Movement). He lauded the Holy Cross Fathers for their efforts in providing for the overall development of the students. This year from the 30th of September to the 3rd of October, Holy Cross Educational Foundation organized the 13th edition of NESNIM at Holy Cross School, Agartala. From its initial stages, NESNIM has grown to be a mega-event with about 500 students and 100 animators from 25 Schools, representing over fifteen diverse communities spread across Meghalaya, Assam, Mizoram, and Tripura participated in it enthusiastically. This year the theme was TEEN HEALTH: OUR WEALTH. The focus was on positive aspects of students' life to eliminate harmful energies and addictions. The Sessions were animated by FAYTH Clinic, Mumbai. Afternoon time was spent on outdoor competitions, and every participating school had the opportunity to do a thematic presentation on the stage and an artwork.

The four days event saw the presence of Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, Bishop of Agartala, Shri. Abhishek Chandra, IAS, Special Secretary, Department of Industries and Commerce, and Fr. Simon Fernandis, CSC, Provincial Superior of Holy Cross Fathers who, while lauding the efforts of Holy Cross Educational Foundation, invited the Students to create a healthy body and mind for the wealth of our society. The 13th Edition of NESNIM ended with a

pledge by the participants to keep themselves healthy for a better nation and society.

Fr. George Jacob, CSC

9th Diocesan Youth Convention 2022



The Agartala Diocese Youth Commission organized its 9th Diocesan Youth Convention at Montfort School, St Alphonsa Parish Khumulwng, from the 6th to 9th of October. 1,300 Youth from all over the Diocese attended the Convention. The Theme of the Convention was "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13) The inaugural ceremony on the 6th evening put everyone at ease and the colourful presentation on the stage by a few Parishes depicted the variety of cultures in our Diocese. Each evening a few Parishes presented their items and this showcased the joy and talents of our Youth.

Fr. John Barman, Director of NERYC from Guwahati was our special Guest and Resource Person. In his Sessions on the Bible he pointed out that there are no shortcuts to reading the word of God. He who does not know the Bible does not know God, said by Fr. John Barman, quoting St. Jerome. Other prominent Speakers were Fr. PJ Joseph SDB on 'WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION, Fr. Jeevan SVD on CHRISTIAN MORALITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, and Bro Devassy SG on THE NEED FOR QUALITATIVE EDUCATION.

Our Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, offered a special Mass for the Youth and blessed the Youth of the Diocese. In his talk he began with these words: 'Everyone says that Youth are the future of society; but our Holy Father Pope Francis says that, Youth are "the now of the church".

The mega event concluded with the installation of the new DEXCO Members, a motivational speech by

the Executive Member of TTAADC Mrs. Dolly Reang, and with the Youth taking a pledge with lit candles which was led by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, that they would resolve to stand for Christ in all circumstances. *Miss Sandhya Hrangkhawl*

Hrangkhawl Catholic Ramunna



All Tripura Catholic Hrangkhawl tribe had organized the 15th Annual Convention from October 6th to 8th in Kamlachara, A m b a s s a . The Hrangkhawl people came from different Parishes of Agartala Diocese. There were 230 participants for the 3-days Conference. The theme of the Conference was "For everyone who makes himself great will be humbled and everyone who humbles himself will be made great" (Lk 18:14b).

The gathering started with welcoming Bishop Lumen, the Bishop of Agartala Diocese. Participants lined up on either side of the road with tribal attire, flowers, and songs as they led the Bishop to the venue. Along with Bishop Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD the parish priest and Fr. Cyprian Pinto, SVD were also present on the joyful occasion. Bishop Lumen presided over the Holy Mass during which he prayed for the success of the gathering. After the Holy Mass Bishop and Fathers were felicitated with plants and not with flower bouquet or traditional dress, because the Master of the Ceremony Mr. Thomas Hrangkhawl said, "we give importance to the ecology and that is why we are offering you this plant to take care". After the inaugural program dinner was served for all. *Ivan D'Silva, SVD*

4th National Conference of Women Commission

Religious Nuns and Women leaders from 78 Dioceses all over India were present for the 4th National Conference of Women Commission at NAVINTA Pastoral Centre, Lucknow, UP organized by CCBI Women's Commission from 6th to 10th October. Sr. Lidwin Fernandes UFS the national Executive Secretary was the main organizer. The theme was "Chosen to be a Missionary in the Synodal Path". Sr. Jolly FS, the Diocesan Secretary and Mrs. Praheli Debbarma the joint Secretary for Women Commission represented the Diocese of Agartala at the 4th National Conference. Those present at the Conference made a big impression in faith formation and cultural diversity as the members exhibited their cultural and traditional attire and items of specialty on the second and third day of the program. The program was represented by



all the 14 Regions of the Commission and Archbishop Francis Kalist of Pondicherry and Cuddalore, the Chairman for CCBI Women's Commission. Others present were Bp. Gerald Mathias of Lucknow, Bp. Gerald Almeida of Jabalpur, and Emeritus Abp. Albert D'Souza of Agra, Fr. Reginald Pinto, and Fr. Chetan Machado.

The Regional Secretaries presented their reports and action plan together with the challenges they face at the Parish level. The Sessions on Sacraments, Code of Canon Law, Role of laity, Gender inequality in the Church & Scriptures were covered by Fr. Sebastian Francis, Ms. Maria Sangeeta and Rev. Dr. Stephan Alathara the Deputy Secretary General of CCBI. The special Award Ceremony was organized on 9th October by the faithful of Lucknow & Agra Region. Northeast Region bagged the Award for Best Region and a number of Northeastern Dioceses also captured the Award for having 100% Women Cells at the Parish level. Sr. Jolly FS the Diocesan Coordinator for Women Commission received the Award for the Diocese of Agartala for having 100% women cell in all the Parishes. Other Awards were also given for the best individual who excelled in the field of social, political, economic and charitable works. It was thus an educative and interactive program. *Sr. Jolly Kottarathil FS*

Refresher Course for Catechists – Relax, Refresh, Recharge

Refresher Course for all the Catechists of our Diocese with the theme *RELAX, REFRESH AND RECHARGE* was organized at Pastoral Centre from 11th October to 13th October. The 3-day long Course had Sessions by Fr. Sunny SDB, Fr. Amalraj, and Fr. Valentine SVD. The participants were very much elated to have in their midst

Refresher Course for Catechists – Relax, Refresh, Recharge

our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, for this course. Bishop through his Session invited all the Catechists to understand the importance of the Holy Eucharist and covered various topics of importance to them. There were 30 Catechists who attended and benefitted from this three days refresher course. During the evaluation they expressed their joy by thanking all the Animators for coming and spending their time and proposed to have many more such sessions. *Bro. Anvesh*



Sr. Elinda MSMHC - Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession

Sr. Elinda MSMHC - Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession

Sr. Elinda Pariong MSMHC celebrated her Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession on October 15, 2022 at Ferrando Nivas, Udaipur. The thanksgiving Jubilee Eucharist was presided over by our dear Bishop Lumen and concelebrated by twelve priests from the nearby Parishes. During the solemn Eucharist the Bishop Lumen gave first Holy Communion to our five hostellers who were well prepared by the Sisters.

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The Eucharistic celebration and the felicitation ceremony was followed up by the family meal in which Sr. Maya Pohshna MSMSHC, the Provincial Counsellor for Social Apostolate, MSMHC Sisters from Tripura Region, religious Sisters from different Congregations under Bishramganj, Pitra and Tuikarmaw Parishes, Parish Council members, School Managing Committee members, PTA president, Parents of the



Elinda.

hostellers, and the entire staff from Don Bosco School were present. The MSMHC Sisters of Ferrando Nivas, Udaipur along with Sr. Elinda thank Bishop Lumen Monteiro and everyone present for making the day very special and memorable for Sr. *Sr. Tessa, MSMHC*

JUST News Briefs

One day training on Entrepreneurship

JUST conducted a 'One day training on entrepreneurship' for the members of SHGs under JUST, in Tripura on 21st October, 2022 at JUST office, Agartala. Mr. N. Selva kumar, from Chennai, an entrepreneur himself, specialised in Plate making from



areca nut leaf was the resource person. 50 SHGs Members from 5 federations and a youth club attended the training. As the whole world is going towards the alternative to the one-time plastic

materials to save the "Earth our Only Home", JUST took up this initiative to make the people aware of the importance of being Eco-Friendly. The participants understood that the process of making plate from Supari leaf (Areca leaf) starts from planting Areca saplings in their surroundings. Collection of Areca leaf from the locality itself would be an important income generation activity for many poor people. JUST would do the necessary things to encourage and promote this to save the Earth, our Only Home. The SHG members were also given training on mushroom cultivation. The participants were provided mushroom seeds and

Seasonal vegetables seeds for promoting kitchen garden in their area.

Children's Festival & Annual Sports Day celebration

Children's festival & Annual Sports Day was held in all the 10 JUST Coaching



Centers under Ganganagar R.D Block on 10th October 2022. The sports began at 10 a.m. Many students took part in the competitions. A great interest was observed among the students and

the guardians. All the games and sports were fascinating to watch. There were several sports events such as high jump, long jump, blind hit and running race. The children were asked to play fair game and learn to accept defeat even if they fail to win. The village leaders are invited as guest and at the end of the day the guest handed over the prizes to the winners. The Annual Sports is beneficial for the progress of the Students in terms of extracurriculum activities among the students. The guardian were also excited with the Celebration of the Annual Sports as it also helps in Collaborating with all the neighbouring villages in marking the unity of the people. *Mr. Robert Lushai*

Bishop's Program for November 2022

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| 01: Clergy Meet, Agartala | 15: JUST General Body Meeting, Damdamia |
| 02: All Souls Day, Mariamnagar | JUST GB Meet |
| 04: Golden Jubilee, Holy Cross School Agartala | 17: Meet SVD General Visitator |
| 05: SSpS Convent Silver Jubilee, Moharpara | 18-21: Aizawl 75 years of Christianity Jubilee |
| Ruby Jubilee Holy Cross School, Tuikarmaw | 22-23: CSC Seniors Meet, Agartala |
| 06: Parish Mass, Nandan Nagar | 24: School Annual Day, Gokulnagar |
| 06-12: CBCI & CCBI Meet at St. John's Bengaluru | 26-27: Hamjakmapara Chapel Blessing under Moharpara |
| 13: Holy Eucharistic Procession, Khumwlnwg | |

Our Distinguished Guests

- Frs. Godwin Selva Justus, Godwin Sounderaj & Cyril Mesmin, from Kulithurai Diocese, TN
- Dr. Paula Goel, Dr. Mansi Dugar, Dr. Ashish Goel, Mr. Niket Swaant & Mr. Nitin Poojari from Fayth Clinic, Mumbai
- Sr. Sara Grace, MC Regional Superior from Shillong
- CM Frs. Dominic Rosario from Germany & Estheppan from Chennai
- Fr. John Burman, MSFS, NERYC Director from Guwahati
- SVD Frs. Sebastian Xalxo & Medard Tirkey from Kolkata
- Fr. James Shaymal, CSC, from Bangladesh
- Fr. Mathew Jacob OIC Provincial from Trivandrum
- OIC Frs. Cyril and Sojan Thomas Provincial Councilors
- Frs. Charles Kumar, YF Bosco, Arulappan & Balasamy, PPs from Chennai
- Fr. Sanji Yamaoka, SJ Provincial Socius from Japan & Fr. Bony James, SJ
- SVD Frs. Michael Pereira & Caetano Mascarenhas from Goa
- Fr. James Zodiniana from Aizawl