



Pastor's Corner



A young lady sat in a bus. At the next stop a loud and grumpy old lady came and sat by her. She squeezed into the seat and bumped her with her numerous bags.

The person sitting on the other side of the young lady got upset and asked her why she did not speak up and say something. The young lady responded with a smile: "It is not necessary to be rude or argue over something so insignificant; the journey together is so short. I will be getting off at the next stop."

This response kept me thinking: "It is not necessary to argue over something so insignificant; our journey together is so short". If each one of us realized that our time here is so short, that to darken it with quarrels, futile arguments, not forgiving others, discontentment and a fault-finding attitude, would be a waste of time and energy. Whatever troubles anyone brings us let us remember that **our journey together is so short.**No one knows the duration of this journey.



Our Journey Together is so short!

No one knows when their stop will come. **Our journey together is so short.**Let us cherish neighbors, friends and family. Let us be respectful, kind and forgiving to each other. Let us be filled with gratitude and gladness. After all, **Our Journey Together is so short!**

With the COVID-19 pandemic raising its ugly head the reality of our journey being short has become all the more imminent. But let us keep thinking of what more can I do for the other in this short journey of life? Pope Francis suggests that *"the COVID-19 pandemic is the best opportunity to perceive that our call involves helping the poor, spending time among those who suffer, and moving our hearts towards the helpless and hopeless, to bring the mercy and love of God the Father for everyone.* The Pope's call during these troubled times is a pointer and a boost for us as religious, priests and baptized laity. Pope Francis says, *"We cannot keep our 'spirits buried behind closed doors', seeking security and being concerned about our wellbeing. [...] We can be beacons of hope and a sign of the certainty of God's presence in the suffering."*And what's more? **Our Journey Together is so short!**

+Lumen, CSC

Editorial



Quite suddenly, one can almost touch that ashy odor of death around. We've seen people making quiet exits from the stage of life. Characters we had got used to, characters we were genuinely fond of, and characters that naively

perhaps, we had thought would be there always...

suddenly, one needs to live with that deafening stillness, the unbearable emptiness, the unfair 'unfinishedness' of it all... very like a house of death! Nay, it is the house of death, indeed.

With the passage of time the severity of grief lessens! How deceptive that is when we know time itself is unrelenting in its march toward finitude. Ain't 'death', after all, the one big thing whose certainty that even those who generally feel bored, nothing much ever happens, can rest assured of!

For Christians the world over, the month of November is a lot about death and the dead. We who read this wait to be counted among that ever



Death Thoughts in November

growing band. As we await entry into that 'undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns' November is a little bit about us too, perhaps. About time and again fine-tuning perspectives on life, love, and everything it holds in the light of the grand inevitability of death.

Death is also, probably, the one occasion the Church personnel will get surely involved in a person's life. Once life has ebbed out, and all vestiges of breathing human passions are stilled, it's as if the minister has come into his forte. It is surely a comfort to have someone around who seems to know what needs to be done, even if they are only some rituals, because teary eyes

and aching hearts prevent even the strongest from thinking calmly. For some of us church personnel it's a mournful celebration in the common lot of humanity. We find our own eyes moistening, our voices coarsening. For others, those lines printed in italics in the book of rituals, get the better of even such an occasion.

Come to think of it, we do not have much of that ritual

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thing, either. What we as a Church have by way of post death obligations and rituals seem very minimal when seen against the intricate and often tortuous set of rituals that other faiths have. Should that necessarily be an advantage for us, at all times? Do such minimal requirements seem desirable for a grieving family that is regretting it cannot do anything more for the beloved departed?

It's November again. It beckons us to take to the doorsteps of our grieving families the message of 'him who conquered death and rose again'. How shall we do so? We need to figure out. Perhaps, instruction on the efficacy of the Holy Mass for the Dead. Perhaps, beginning the practice of the Office of the Dead. Perhaps, many other things... Whatever that, something tells us, it must amount to more than having to place few fresh flowers on mounds of mud once a year, however lovingly.

J. Pulinathan, SDB

KAMARANGA PARISH

Parish Feast celebrated...but with caution



In the midst of the Covid19 Pandemic, we the SVD Community at Kamranga Parish celebrated the Parish Feast of St. Raphael on 27th September with a minimum of faithful, observing all the protocols.

Though the Feast is on 29th September it was anticipated to Sunday with the prior permission of our Bishop, being the Parish Feast. The Parish Community was very happy to have our dear for the Parish Feast Day celebration in spite of the pandemic. We began the celebration with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Bishop Lumen. Before beginning the Mass, Assistant Parish Priest Fr. Sushil Machar SVD welcomed all the Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, Faithful from various Mondolis and especially Rev. Bishop, Fr. Jeevan SVD, Vice Regional of Guwahati and the new Parish Priest of Kamranga, Fr. ArunMinj SVD. After the homily the Installation service of the new PP took place. Fr. Arun SVD was installed by Bishop as the new Parish Priest of Kamranga by handing over the keys of the tabernacle. After Holy Eucharist, we had a short felicitation program for Bishop on his Jubilee, the Fathers, Brothers and Sisters. The festivities culminated with a fellowship meal.

Fr. Sushil Machar, SVD

MOHARPARA PARISH

Twidu mondoli gets a new Church

October 1st 2020, was marked as a red letter day in the chronicles of St. Joseph's Church Twidu, under Immaculate Conception Church Moharpara. God has blessed the 50 years of faith concretely, when the new Church building was inaugurated and



blessed. The event commenced with a grand welcome to the Shepherd of our Diocese Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro CSC. The new Church building was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Simon Fernandez CSC, the Provincial of

Holy Cross Fathers Northeast Province, followed with the blessings by Most Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC. After the Holy Mass a short felicitation and cultural program was organized wherein the Guests were welcomed and felicitated. Bishop Lumen exhorted the people in his address to be faithful to Church services and to be united as one family. The memorable event came to the end with the agape meal being shared by all.

Rosary Procession to celebrate Feast of Mother Mary

Moharpara Parish organized a Rosary Procession on October 7th 2020 as part of the Feast day celebration of our Lady of the Rosary. The Rosary procession was held in Yesu Kristo Jayanti Church Gamaku and in Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Moharpara. Many faithful took



part in the prayerful event with devotion and respect to Mary our beloved mother. The Adoration with Praise and Worship to the Eucharistic Jesus enabled the faithful to experience God's presence and love in their life. The Adoration enabled the faithful to experience the love of Christ foster devotion and love for the Eucharistic Lord.

Fr. Arbok, CSC

GACHIRAMPARA PARISH

Festal Celebration of Parish Feast cum Jubilee of Bishop Lumen Monteiro

"For it is in giving that we receive". "Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words." "It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching." Recollecting some



inspiring words of St. Francis of Assisi, we the Parish community of Gachirampara under the leadership of Fr. Felix Pinto the Parish Priest, celebrated the grand festival of our Patron Saint

on 4th of October. The Holy Eucharist was presided over by our beloved Bishop Lumen Monteiro, C.S.C. His presence and the presence of other Priests and Religious of our Deanery made us indeed glad on this auspicious occasion. Fr. Kiran Monis and Fr. George Godwin introduced the Saint before the Mass both in English and Bengali respectively. Bishop in his homily emphasized the relevance of St. Francis' values in the modern era.

After the Holy Eucharist the Parish Priest along with parish community honored Bishop Lumen on his Silver Jubilee with *risha*, as the choir echoed a melodious song. The joy and singing continued at the presbytery for the cutting of the Jubilee cake. *Fr. Kiran, OFM Cap.*

Kumarghat Deanery Meeting

The first ever Meeting of Kumarghat Deanery was held on 5th October at St. Paul's Parish, Kumarghat. Bishop Lumen and 17 Priests attended it. Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC, the newly appointed Vicar Forane, welcomed all. Bishop Lumen who is celebrating



the Silver jubilee of his Episcopal Ordination was felicitated in the Meeting. Bishop Lumen gave the Recollection Talk on the theme "Follow Me". This was followed by Adoration and Sacrament of Reconciliation led by Fr. SahayaLourdu CSC. After the Input Session by Bishop Lumen, a general Session was chaired by Fr. Lancy D'souza CSC, the Vicar Forane. Fr. James Morais SJ was appointed as the Secretary. After the business session Fr. Lancy, CSC proposed the vote of thanks and the meeting came to an end at 1pm followed by Lunch. *Fr. Lancy, Vicar Forane of Kumarghat*

Depacherra Deanery Meeting

The first Deanery Meeting was held on 07/10/2020 at Depacherra. All the Fathers of this Deanery were present for the Meeting. Fr. BhuvanSarkar, the Vicar Forane welcomed Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC and Fathers for the Meeting. Fr. Antony Balan gave the Recollection Talk and conducted the Adoration. Bishop Lumen gave the Input Session on The World Mission Sunday and some Instructions on



the liturgical practices during this pandemic.

The animation and the motivational talk motivated us to work unitedly at the Deanery. At the end of the sharing and discussion it was decided that the next Deanery Meeting will be on 10/11/2020 at Tuikarmaw Parish. The Meeting ended with lunch.

Fr. Bhuvan, Vicar Forane of Depacherra

Moharpara Deanery Meeting

The first Deanery level Meeting of was held on 6th October at Moharpara. Fr. ArulCSC welcomed Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC and the attendees from the five different Parishes under the Deanery. The day began with a Recollection Talk by Bishop Lumen on the theme "Follow Me". Adoration and confession followed the Talk.

The Clergy Meeting began with welcoming our Bishop with a bouquet of flowers and *risha*. The Dean welcomed everyone for the meeting. Bishop gave the input session followed by business session presided over by the Vicar Forane, Fr. Arul CSC. It was decided to have the clergy meeting in different Parishes on a rotation basis, on every first Tuesday of the month at 09:30 am. The next Meeting is at

Baijalbari, on 3 November. Fr. Arul concluded the meeting by thanking everyone. The Deanery level gathering is an opportunity to know each other more closely. Our thanks and appreciation to Bishop Lumen for creating Deaneries in our Diocese to help us become more effective and participatory in our ministry. The scheduled program ended with the fellowship meal.

Fr. Arul J. CSC, Vicar Forane of Moharpara



Agartala Deanery Meeting

The first Meeting of Agartala Deanery was held on 08/10/2020 at Agartala Cathedral from 9.30 am to 1.00 pm. There were seventeen Priests present. The Deanery meeting began with Recollection and Adoration led by Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC.



After the tea break, Fr. Robert Mathias CSC, the Dean of the Agartala Deanery welcomed BishopLumen Monteiro, CSC, to give the Input Session. Bishop firmly yet vividly enlightened us on the meaning and ecclesiastical importance of the Deanery and the vital role to be played by the VF by quoting the code of the Canon Law Can.553-555. Bishop then continued on the basis of the letter from Vatican.

Fr. Robert Mathias, CSC presided the second Session.

- Deanery Meetings will be conducted on rotation basis in each parish of the Deanery.
- Next Deanery Meeting will be at NandanagarParish on 3 November 2020.

Fr. Robert, CSC, Vicar Forane of Agartala

TCSACAGM Online Competitions 2020

TCSACAGM Online Competitions-2020 Phase-I is just over. On behalf of the Education Commission I offer my sincere thanks to the Principals and Headmistresses of all the Schools under the Diocese of Agartala for taking the initiative and cooperating with us to conduct the Online Competitions successfully. 27 Schools have participated which is quite appreciable under the given circumstances. All the participants have shown good competitive spirit. It was very difficult for the Judges to select the best ones. At the same time it was an edifying experience for all of us to adapt ourselves into the online format. I extend my special thanks to Fr. Bobby, CSC, Principal of Holy Cross School Agartala, who willingly agreed to coordinate the event jointly with the Secretary. The planning and execution of the Event through the digital platform was possible because of our combined effort. I express my heartfelt gratitude to the honorable Judges who have patiently gone through all the audio and video clips minutely in order to make an unbiased judgment. *Bro. Peter Veda, SG*

International Peace Day celebration

The Peace Staff conducts International Peace Day with the target groups in the month of September 2020. During the International Peace Day the Peace Staff and School Peace Club Animators shared about International Peace Day with the peace club members about the Theme of 2020 “Shaping Peace Together”. In an act of a small gesture the students along with Peace Club Animators enthusiastically participated in drawing, football match and cleaning the school surrounding in order to spread awareness in keeping the surroundings clean and beautiful and also to be a role model for others to keep cleanliness. The Peace Club Members also participated in Video Competition where they spoke on: What Peace means to them; what changes they brought in themselves after being a Peace Club Member; and what they



would do in days ahead as peace activist.

Medical Camp

JUST organized two Medical Camps at Dharmani Para and Krishnajoypara under Ganganagar R.D Block in Dhalai District on 8th and 11th of September. Around 216 people benefited from the Medical Camp. The objective of conducting the Camp was to create awareness of general health among the people, provide general health care services and counseling them on basic healthcare and hygiene. Majority of the people who attended the Camp were suffering due to lack of proper drinking water facilities. People were diagnosed with various problems such as acute fever, gastric, loose motion and malnourishment. All the children were provided with medicines and vitamin tonics and those suffering from loose motion were given ORS.



Mr. Cyril Darlong

News Tidbits from all over

Indians rally behind Jesuit arrested for 'Maoist' links

New Delhi: Cities across India on October 12 witnessed an unprecedented show of solidarity with an octogenarian Jesuit priest who has been arrested and jailed for alleged Maoist links. From New Delhi to the North East, from Bengaluru to Patna, and from Kochi to Mumbai, hundreds of people from all walks of life, who are saddened, shocked and indignant, stood up against the arbitrary arrest of the 83 year old Jesuit priest. In New Delhi, some 200 people gathered at downtown Jantar Mantar to observe the National Day of Solidarity for Father Stan Swamy. Medha Patkar of Narmada Bachao Andolan (save Narmada campaign), who joined the program through Zoom meeting, said her heart beats for Father Stan, who “worked for Atmanirbhar Adivasi” (self-reliant Tribal). The one-hour meeting was opened by Fr. Stanislaus D'Souza, SJ. The participants included Archbishop of Anil Couto of Delhi. A press release noted that the National Investigation Agency, India's counter-terrorist task force, October 8 arrested Father Swamy from his residence near Ranchi, capital of Jharkhand State, in “a false and fabricated case to the Bhima-Koregaon” violence on January 1, 2018. The agency then took the 83-year-old priest to Mumbai the next day where a charge sheet was presented at the Sessions Court that sent him to judicial custody until October 23. (Courtesy: Matters India)



Caritas India gets best NGO award from Dr. Harsh Vardhan

Caritas India, the social development wing of Catholic Bishops' Conference of India has received Healthgiri Award 2020 for best NGO for Healthcare Services during Covid-19. The award was presented by Honorable Minister, Shri Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Health and Family Welfare to Fr. Paul Moonjely, the Executive Director of Caritas India in a virtual ceremony organized by India Today. “Caritas India is happy to receive this Award as this is a recognition of our humble efforts to mitigate the sufferings of humanity in the wake of this COVID Pandemic,” said Fr. Paul after receiving the award. He also shared that “There was a lot of fear of pandemic and hopelessness amplified with the exodus of migrants. But the institutional strength of the Church as a humanitarian collective helped us together to team up and reach out to the last mile with the amazing support of the Church leadership. I dedicate this award to all our COVID warriors, health workers and volunteers in different parts of the country at community and institutional levels. It gives us added courage and heightened motivation to march forward with our mission of love and care even amid new challenges. We are indeed humbled by this honor.” Caritas India during the COVID-19 Humanitarian Response went to the extra mile to show solidarity and support to the vulnerable and marginalized sections of the society. Caritas India adopted a strategy of “Be Informed, Be Trained, Be Cautioned, Be Connected and Be Compassionate”, in line with Caritas Internationalis.

(Courtesy UCA India)

Our Readers Write

Thanks a lot for your newsletter LINK. It's always interesting to read what's going on in your Diocese. Even now in this corona period the activities didn't stop and you remained busy. But above all I am always very interested in your foreword, in your sharing, in your quotes. What you ponder this time 'aspire to make a difference' makes a lasting impression.

LieveStiers, Belgium

Thank you very much for the October issue of LINK. It's inspiring to see so many pastoral activities in your Diocese in spite of the prevailing Covid-19 situation. Your message is indeed thought provoking.

Sr. Euginia Tiew Susngi FMA, Shillong

Thanks for LINK, always so full of news of the activities of the Diocese. It looks as if Covid has not reached Tripura as yet...
Conrad CSC, Montreal, Canada

Thank you for the informative and motivating newsletter LINK. So many activities are carried on in spite of the pandemic and the faith of the people is kept alive. **Sr. Marina BS, Siliguri WB**
Thanks indeed for sending me the Newsletter LINK. I was very happy to run through the news and your opening message. Felt very happy reading to see how pastoral life is picking up in the Diocese of Agartala after the COVID lockdown. **Fr. Jolly, Caritas India, Delhi**

Our Distinguished Visitors

Sr. Marie-Fay, AC vice Provincial from Kolkata
Sr. Ann-Imelda, AC Councilor from Kolkata
Fr. StanyRoshan, OFM Cap. Delegate from Mizoram