



LINK

News Bulletin of the Diocese of Agartala



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Editorial

These changing times and their challenges

We cannot be impervious to the rapid changes we see all around us. Never before have thoughts and attitudes changed as rapidly and as drastically as in these times. Of course, 'change' overarches everything. Changes in the physical realm are easy to see and comprehend: the changes that any living organism goes through as time goes by - say, a plant, a child, or anything alive. Or the changes that come across institutions, structures, and cities over time - how patterns change, methods change, and the skyline changes.

We are also seeing how minds, thoughts, and attitudes are now changing at a faster pace than ever before. Attitudes towards Christian institutions have changed a great deal among sections of society almost all of a sudden. It is certainly an engineered thing. The timing and the nature of the so-called 'incidents' prove it.

With a very crucial Lok Sabha Elections around the corner, parties that think it to their advantage to polarize society based on religion, and ethnicity, do so with unmatched irreverence and audacity to garner votes. Given the present national scenario, it is the Christians that are at the receiving end. On the one hand, the fact that in terms of numbers, we are a small group, and our amiable Christian outlook and approach make us a soft target for power-hungry politicians to realize their dreams. On the other hand, we cannot forget that it is the tree laden with fruits that always gets the stones.

It is a pity that a nation known for tolerance, inclusiveness, and diversity is getting intolerant, narrow-minded, and bigoted. Those who, for vested interests, inject poison into the minds of people and turn them against Christians forget history and truth. An empire built on such falsehood shall not stand.

In the meantime, for us Christians, it is a time to realize where our true strength lies. As we rely on God, from whom alone comes help, we do all we can to stand up strong against the vote-driven frenzy of vested interest groups. We also look into ourselves to put our house in order and to fortify it with greater faith and commitment to truth.

A Blessed Easter to all readers of Link. May the Risen Lord bestow his peace upon us all.

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Transform Negativity – Slow Down and Pause!



How do we handle the 'negatives', whether it's someone's attitude, their hurtful gestures or our daily dose of world violence and mayhem? There are three cardinal rules.

First, do not absorb it – don't be an emotional sponge. Second, do not reflect it back; otherwise, you begin a cycle of emotional exchanges which may last a long time. And third, do the one thing which marks us as intelligent human beings – transform it. Even if the scene is a disaster there is some benefit somewhere in it. Even if you are watching two peoples' beliefs or opinions slug it out to the edge of violence, don't take sides. Instead offer a solution and then stand back. Even if the person hates you, accept their state of being and return the light of love. In time, with patience, it will illuminate their darkness, and return to you by the bucketful! Just be patient and wait. *(Inspiration from Brahmakumaris)*

We are deep into the Lenten Season trying to turn away from all that enslaves us. Pope Francis said in his Lenten Message, *"It is time to act, and in Lent, to act also means to pause. To pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Love of God and love of neighbor are one love. Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbor. For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Then the atrophied and isolated heart will revive. Slow down, then, and pause! The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energies. In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travelers."* (Pope's Lenten Message 2024)

+Lumen, CSC

NEWLY APPOINTED BISHOPS



Most Rev. Thomas Mathew
New Bishop of India



Most Rev. Francis Tilly
New Bishop of Pune



Most Rev. Fr. Rajan Chatterjee
New Bishop of Kolkata



Most Rev. Pradyot Singh
Bishop of Guwahati



Most Rev. Augustine Wadhvani
New Bishop of Adoni

Congratulations

Prayers & Wishes to Newly Appointed Bishops to guide their flock entrusted to their care

CHALENGTA PARISH**Cailengta Capsule**

Dated 18.02.2024: After the registration, a little time was dedicated for Confessions. Then, basing on the Gospel theme "Let the little children come to me," (Mt. 19:14) sponsored by the Holy Cross Family Ministries we, the St. Joseph Parish Chailengta team, viz., Fathers, SRA Sisters and Teachers organized a Children's Seminar for our Parish children. Dealing on the topic of Sacraments in general and on the Eucharist in particular, yours truly instructed the participants in an interactive way and the nearly 100 odd children from many villages actively took part. The program was interspersed with lively 'action songs' which everyone enjoyed immensely. Rev. Fr. Binoy John, CSC dealt on the topic of "Jesus and Children." With his mastery of Kok Borok language, he ruled the roost during the Seminar and the participants were deeply touched by his presentation using the PPP. The Queen of the Apostles (SRA) Sisters conducted the Bible Quiz and some entertaining/interesting games. Later, the Winners were awarded prizes. The Seminar ended with a sumptuous meal for all around 3.00 p.m.

Frs. Binoy John & Harry D'Silva, CSC

DEPACHERRA PARISH**Marriage Rectification**

From February 8 -10, in a heartwarming ceremony at the Parish in Depacherra, ten couples reaffirmed their commitment to each other through a marriage rectification. Guided by the Catechists and under the spiritual leadership of Fr. Amalraj, PP, the couples embarked on a journey of renewal and strengthened their marital bonds. Over the course of two days, the catechists meticulously prepared the couples, delving into essential aspects of family life, upbringing, and the

significance of responsible parenthood. Following the comprehensive teachings and reflective discussions, the couples participated in a poignant Confession. On the third day, the couples gathered along with Fr. Amalraj officiating. Each couple renewed their vows and promised to cherish one another throughout their life. The event not only served as a testament to the resilience of love but also highlighted the vital role of faith and community support in fostering enduring marriages. As the ten couples embarked on this new chapter of their journey together, the spirit of unity and devotion reverberated through the halls of Christ the King Parish, inspiring all those present to cherish and uphold the sacred institution of marriage.

Fr. Derrick Augustin

**Inauguration of new
Higher Secondary Block at Depacherra**

On 13th February 2024, Bishop Lumen Monteiro blessed and inaugurated the New Higher Secondary Block at Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Depacherra in the presence of Fr. Lawrence Darlong (Principal), Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, Students, Staff and lay faithful. Bishop Lumen fondly remembered and thanked the benefactors, very especially the organization Hilfswerk Liechtenstein and our Contractor Mr. Rajib Debbarma and his Team. This new building is an initiative to cater to the growing needs of the school which will benefit thousands of students and will be a place of wisdom, where knowledge is pursued with diligence and truth is sought with passion and where our young students are prepared to face the challenges of the world. After the inauguration of the new Block, a short felicitation program was organized. The School Management, Teachers, Students, and people thank Almighty God and are grateful to our Bishop and to the benefactors for this new 'Higher Secondary Block.'

Fr. Derrick Augustin

GACHIRAMPARA PARISH**Faith Formation Program**

St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Gachirampara, held 'Faith Formation Programme' for the Women in St. Peter's Substation, Khodungsei, on 18th February 2024. The event began with the Mass which was presided by Fr. Kiran Monis, OFM Cap., Superior and Principal of St. Francis of Assisi School, Kanchanpur. After the Mass talks began with enthronement of Bible to mark the importance of the Year of the Word of God.



The Parish Women's President Mrs. Annie Chorei welcomed the Resource Persons and the Fathers and Sisters who were present. The first session was on Importance of the Word of God in the Family by Mrs. Shefali Darlong. Sr. Ignatius Mary highlighted The Problems of Women in the Family and how to face the challenges in the Family. The topic of the third session was Marriage and Family by Mrs. Biaki Darlong. The last session was given by Fr. Arun Fernandes OFM Cap on The Church's Teachings on Marriage. The day was concluded with a sumptuous meal as well as a few games and distribution of prizes. Sr. Emily OLG proposed the vote of thanks. Fr. Preetam, Fr. Ajith, Br. Wilson, Deacon Regis and Sr. Reena and the committee members were present.

Fr. Arun OFM Cap.

MANDWI PARISH**The Lord came and walked with us**

"Every day we see God's love in our parish", commented one of the parishioners, on attending the Eucharistic procession on 11th February 2024. On this day the people of Mandwi Parish for the Holy Eucharist, which was presided over by Rev. Fr.

P. J. Joseph SDB. In his homily Fr. P.J. spoke on the centrality of Eucharist in our Christian life. He stressed on the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit of our life. The choir who supported the liturgical celebration with hymns was animated by the Auxilium Girls and Don Bosco Boys.

After the Holy Mass, the Eucharistic Procession started with over 600 holding banners, drums and other instruments. They walked devoutly, singing hymns, as they adored and witnessed their love for Jesus in the Eucharist. The procession began from the Parish Church, proceeded towards the Mandwi Bazar and came back to the Church where we had Praise, Worship and Adoration of the Holy Eucharist. Fr. P. J. conducted a very solemn adoration which was concluded with the benediction and

blessing. Many had come from far and near and all of them were happy and satisfied. At the end, as a sign of unity and joy, all shared a fellowship meal organized and served by the Parish Council.

Fr. Hubert, SDB

KATHALCHERRA PARISH

33rd Annual Parish Sabha



Good Shepherd Parish, Kathalcherra had its 33rd Parish Annual Sabha on 10 & 11 February at Puranbarimondoli. The theme of the Sabha was 'Remain in my Word'. The Sabha began with Holy Eucharist on the first day. Rev. Fr. Pushparaj, Diocese of Aizawl, Dr. Vincent Darlong and Mr. MuanaDarlong were the Resource Persons. There were 460 people who took part in the Sabha. In the afternoon in the presence of Bishop Lumen, the Parish Reports and Association Reports were presented, followed by Adoration and Reconciliation. The first day's activities concluded with cultural competitions after dinner. The second day began with thanks giving Holy Eucharist followed by a Talk by Bishop Lumen Monteiro. There was an interactive session followed by a demonstrative session on SCC way of life conducted by Mr. Paul Sangma. The two days Parish Sabha came to an end with planning for the year, prize distribution and promising to proclaim the Word of God every day of our life.

Fr. C. Abraham CSC

NANDANAGAR PARISH

Don Bosco Feast celebrated



The Feast of St. John Bosco popularly known as Don Bosco was celebrated on

31st January 2024. Prior to the Feast we had triduum adoration services in the Parish Church animated by the Salesian family. It was well attended by parishioners. The feast day began with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. Christopher Mary Warlarpih SDB the Rector of the Institution and concelebrated by Frs. PJ Joseph SDB, Sebastian Palatty SDB and Fr. Dinesh Narzary SDB. After the Holy Mass we had floral tribute to the statue of Don Bosco in Don Bosco Square (Market area). The day was well spent in festive mood. The Bosconians dressed up in their traditional attires, after paying tribute to Don Bosco joined a Rally organized by the School and marched towards the Quarter Bazaar back to the School. There was Exhibition by students themselves portraying the life of Don Bosco in the amphitheatre to commemorate the day.

Since the Parish has Don Bosco as its patron, the Parish day was celebrated on 4th February, the closest Sunday to the feast. The faithful from different Zones gathered for the Holy Eucharist which was solemnized by Fr Christopher the Parish Priest along with the Fathers of the community. On this occasion of the Parish Feast, the Parish Priest profusely thanked the Parishioners, the different religious communities and associations in the Parish. He also exhorted them in these words: "We form the Church. We have a role to play in building up his Kingdom in our family, in our parish and in our Diocese. Your contributions are innumerable both monetary as well as man power. We need unity. So, let us ask ourselves what can I/we do for the Church, not what can the Church do for me/us?" After the Holy Eucharist we assembled in the lawn for a short felicitation program organized by the Parish Pastoral Council in collaboration with the MariaBodol. The feast day ended with a cake cutting ceremony and high tea.

Bro. Khrawburom Wanniang SDB

TUIKARMAW PARISH

Maria Sangha Convention 2024



The 2nd Maria Sangha Convention was held at Holy Cross School, Tuikarmaw, on the 10th & 11th of February. The theme was 'Seek first the kingdom of God.' 85 Women from different mondolis under the parish participated in the Convention. Ms. Ringku Reang, Senior DC and Sr. Depali Costa, CSC were the Resource Persons. Ms. Ringkushared her life experience as a child born and raised in a Catholic family; as a wife and mother, and as a career woman. Her struggles, challenges, endurance, and acceptance were

possible because of her Catholic values learned within her family.

Sr. Dipali Costa CSC talked about how her family members were the motivating factor in her religious life. Apart from the motivation talks and prayers, there was Gospel singing Competition, Bible Quiz Competition, and cultural programs. Fr. Larhees Bosco was the celebrant of the Holy Eucharist on Sunday, February 11th. After Mass, he talked about the important role of a mother in the family. All those who attended were inspired and empowered by the Convention. Our special thanks to Frs. Thomas Pereira, C.S.C., and Renju, C.S.C., for their support in organizing this Convention.

Mrs. Rita Reang

"He is Risen! Alleluia!"



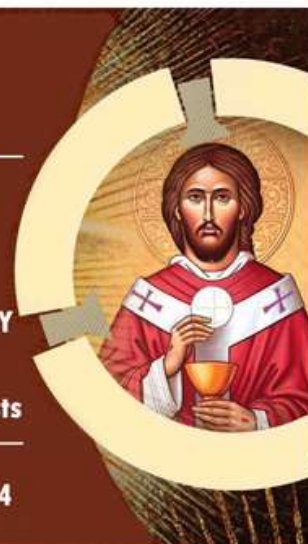
LINK Wishes its Readers

Happy Easter

31st March, 2024

LINK Wishes a HAPPY PRIESTHOOD DAY to all Our dear Priests

28th March, 2024



JANA UNNAYAN SAMITI TRIPURA INAUGURATED ARECA PLATE-MAKING MACHINE



The inauguration of the Areca Plate-making machine at Uruabari village under Hezamara R.D Block marked a significant milestone in sustainable development, as it promises to empower the local community and foster environmental consciousness. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Mr. Francis Kulandai, the President of IVDP and a recipient of the prestigious Magsaysay Award accompanied by his family and Fr. Lathees S, Director of JUST on 27th January.

Fr. Lathees commended the Areca Plate-making machine as an achievement of the commitment of both IVDP and JUST to promote eco-friendly alternatives and provide income-generating opportunities for the local community. During the inauguration, Mr. Francis emphasized on the importance of sustainable

development models that empower communities, create livelihoods, and contribute to environmental preservation. After the inauguration of the Areca plate-making machine, Mr. Francis also had a befitting interaction with the SHGs and their work. The Areca Plate-making machine, supported by IVDP and facilitated by JUST, exemplifies successful collaboration and community-driven initiatives. As the machine has become operational, it is expected to boost the local economy and serve as a model for communities embracing sustainable practices.

Mr. Robert Lushai

HEALTH CAMP in the Community

JUST organized a one-day free Health Camp for the community at Mohanto Para in Karbookon 3rd February 2024 under Karbook R.D Block in Gomati District. More than 150 people, mostly women and children, benefitted from the Health Camp. Most of the beneficiaries belong to Tripura, Chakma and Jamatia community. Dr. Subhendu Debbarma from Karbook Sub-Division Hospital came for the Health Camp along with his 3 Staff members. The aim and scope of a Health Camp includes propagation of health care and facility in the given locality, promotion of a health care and detection of disease, and reaching the unreached community. The purpose of the Health Camp is to create awareness and educate people about healthcare, to identify and address health issues, to promote preventive healthcare, and to reduce the incidence of diseases. The most common diseases that were found during the Health Camp were fever, loose motion, cough, joint pain, skin diseases, and headache. All the children were provided with medicines and vitamin tonics and those suffering from loose motion were given ORS.



Mr. Robert Lushai

Our Distinguished Guests

- Frs. Rayment Peter, Alexis Manohar, Andrew, Eucharist & George Stephen from Chennai
- Fr. Sabu from Dimapur
- Sr. Jessy, SABS, Provincial Councillor from Dimapur
- SABS Srs. Bency & Mary from Dimapur
- Fr. Terrence Rodrigues, Vicar General of Chittagong Archdiocese
- Fr. Pintu Costa from Chittagong, Bangladesh
- Fr. Cyprian Pinto, SVD, from Diang, Bangladesh
- Fr. GP Amalraj Deputy Sec. General of NE Bishops from Guwahati
- Sr. Sunanda SND, NE Women Commission from Guwahati
- Fr. Esaack, NECHA Director from Guwahati
- Fr. Santhosh Dias, CBCI National Health Secretary from Bangalore
- Sr. Philo SCV Superior General from Kerala
- Sr. Rose Maria SCV General Councillor from Kerala
- Sr. Ginsy, SCV & Mr. Thomas Horton from USA
- Fr. Stanny OFM Cap, Definitor from Mizoram
- Fr. Jack Ryan, CSC, General Steward from Rome

Bishop's Program for March 2024

- 02: Jubilee - Assisi School Kanchanpur
- 02-03: Parish Sabah Chailengta
- 04: SVD House Blessing, Khumwlng
- 05: Clergy Meet, Agartala
Consulters Meet
- 07: Claration House Blessing, Suknachari
- 09-10: Diocese Women Convention, Agartala
- 13: Governing Board Meet @ St. John's Bangalore
- 17: Confirmations @ Bodhjunnagar
- 18-20: Visit by Abp. Victor & Bp. Wilbert
- 22: National Day of Prayer & Fasting
- 24: Palm Sunday
- 26: Pastoral Meet, Agartala
Chrism Mass, Cathedral Agartala
- 28-31: Easter Triduum @ Agartala