



Pastor's Corner

Snippets from Pope Francis – Simple yet Profound

Tells young people: Skip Google, Search God first

Everyone needs help to mature and to grow as a person of faith, Pope Francis told young people in Bahrain, so reach out to someone a bit older and wiser and don't georgette to pray. "Before you go to the Internet for advice, always seek out good counselors in life, wise and reliable people who can guide and help you, like parents, grandparents, teachers, the elderly and a good spiritual guide", the Pope told students at Sacred Heart School in Awali on 5th November. "Each of us needs to be accompanied on the road of life. And turn to God, who is always there, waiting for you to ask him to give you a hand," the Pope said.



Tells pharmacists: Combat throwaway culture with culture of care

Meeting with the *Apoteca Natura* network of Italian pharmacies, Pope Francis spoke about the need to rediscover a "new harmony between us human beings and Creation." He told the pharmacists that their efforts to promote holistic care with natural products reminded him of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon

Basin in South America. "Indigenous cultures always have a healthy attitude of living-well with Creation and the environment, which is not the sweet life or taking it easy. Rather, it is the harmony of the person and their family living with Creation." Pope Francis also noted that our globalized world has created a clash of cultures, in which the throwaway culture of consumerism is pitted against the culture of care.

"Today we are not allowed to remain neutral. A choice must be made, because the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor demand responsibility." Each of us, he said, must choose between the two in our simple, everyday actions. The Pope concluded his address to pharmacists of the *Apoteca Natura* network with an invitation to embrace the culture of care and create an economy centered on the human person and the common good.

Let this Advent Season be a time to start walking boldly into the light trusting that the light is enough. We can filter the goodness of God, giving thanks for all the goodness of creation, and combatting the throwaway culture of consumerism with the culture of care. MERRY CHRISTMAS. **+Lumen, CSC**



EDITORIAL

Christmas round the Corner

After two editions of subdued Christmas celebrations in the years past, we have once again stepped into the season of Advent with much anticipation of a Christmas like the old times. However, we know that celebrations don't become meaningful without adequate preparation. In his circular letter for advent, our dear Bishop Lumen delineates ways in which the faithful can be prepared for the coming festival. "I want our Priests to reach out to each *mondoli/motha* by offering them the Sacrament of reconciliation and thus help them to prepare for the joyous feast of Christmas. There are many traditional practices like Christmas caroling, Christmas crib, the Christmas tree, Christmas cards, and 'advance' Christmas that will help us celebrate Christmas externally. At the same time let us not lose sight of Jesus who is the primary focus of the Advent



Season. Let us prepare a fitting dwelling place for Him in the crib of our hearts."

One cannot overstress the importance of his words because Christmas celebrations, like elsewhere, tend to become mere external merriment even here in Tripura. Christmas, which occurs a couple of months after the euphoria of the Pujas has subsided, might seem to some like a godsend opportunity for us Christians to indulge in unbridled enjoyment and excesses. Unwittingly perhaps, but at times, we ourselves are to blame for draining out of Christmas its deep mystery and solemnity. We allow the fun and frolic that surrounds Santa Claus to be the cynosure of all eyes at our Christmas Carols, and our songs on such occasions have, necessarily, to be 'made-to-dance' numbers. That we are yet to come across a

Kokborok Christmas song that is not fast-paced, and set to a dance beat, is indicative of the limited way we understand Christmas, perhaps. It also adds a peculiar urgency and relevance to the Bishop's invitation, "let us not lose sight of Jesus who is the primary focus." By pointing out that the sacrament of reconciliation is an important way to prepare for Christmas, the Pastor underscores the need to pay heed to the spiritual aspect of Christmas, first and foremost.

The Churches generally get unusually full at Christmas. It would be such a beautiful Christmas, if everyone who throngs our Churches on Christmas eve, and even those that do not, were given the opportunity to renew themselves through the Sacrament of reconciliation during these days of preparation for Christmas.

Merry Christmas to you and your family!

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

In Memoriam



The Diocese of Agartala is deeply saddened to hear of the sudden demise of Rev. Fr. Tomy Thekkel MSFS on 10th November 2022 in Kerala. We express our heartfelt condolences to the MSFS Province of Dibrugarh and to all the family members of Fr. Tomy who mourn his untimely death, and we pray for his soul.

Fr. Tomy had worked in Tripura for some years and was the first Parish Priest of St. Francis de Sales Parish and also the Principal of SFS School in Sindukpathar. The Diocese of Agartala is grateful for his services and as he has gone to his eternal reward, we pray for the repose of his departed soul. RIP dear Fr. Tomy.

Congratulations

CBCI new Office Bearers



REV. DR. ANDREWS THAZHATH
ARCHBISHOP OF TRICHUR
President



MOST REV. DR. GEORGE ANTO
ARCHBISHOP OF MADRAS-MYLAPOR
Vice-President 1



MOST REV. DR. MAR JOSEPH THOMAS
BISHOP OF BATHERI
Vice-President 2



MOST REV. DR. FELIX MACHADO
ARCHBISHOP-BISHOP OF VASAI
Secretary General

Congratulations

CCBI new Office Bearers



Card. Filipe Neri Ferrão
President, CCBI



Abp. George Antonysamy
Vice President, CCBI



Abp. Anil Joseph Thomas Couto
Secretary General, CCBI

- President: H. E. Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrão (69), Archbishop of Goa and Daman
- Vice President: Most Rev. Dr. George Antonysamy (69) Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore
- Secretary General: Most Rev. Dr. Anil Joseph Thomas Couto (68), the Archbishop of Delhi.

Greetings

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace to men on whom his favor rests
- Luke 2:14

With th' angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem!
Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!

Link wishes every one
a Blessed Christmas

Merry Christmas

DEPACHERRA PARISH

Parish Feast celebrated with gaiety



Christ the King Parish Depacherra commenced their Feast day festivities with the *Triduum*, inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Allwin with the Holy Mass and hoisting of the Parish flag. Fr. Lawrence Darlong the Parish Priest along with Asst. Parish Priest, Fr. Amalraj, organized a fruitful parish *sabha* for two days for the parishioners wherein, resource persons Frs. Abraham and Harry CSC, spoke on the Sacraments; Fr. Bhuban on the Synodal Church, and Fr. Ivan SVD, on marriage and family.

Besides the Input Sessions they also had Group singing and Quiz competitions, Group discussion and Election of the new Parish Council Members. There was a felicitation and cultural program on the eve of the Feast to enhance the mood of celebration. Fr. Thomas Pereira CSC, the Dean of South Zone was the Chief Guest and Frs. Bosco, Cyprian and Praveen were present among other Guests.

The Feast day Holy Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC, wherein 45 members of the Parish received their first Holy Communion and the new Parish Council Members took their oath. This was followed by Holy Eucharistic procession. Hundreds of faithful from all the different *mondolis* enthusiastically participated in the grand Feast Day celebration which concluded by lowering of the Parish flag and a sumptuous meal shared by everyone. *Bro. Subrai Jamatia*

KUMARGHAT PARISH

Bible Camps

The annual Bible camp was held in the Parish from 3rd of October to 30th of October at three different sub-stations along with the Parish center. On 3rd October Bible camp was conducted

in Monaipara where children from the other sub-stations namely Chaiguri, Kurmapara, Saidacherra



attended. On 5th it was conducted in Garo-II for which children from Garo-I, Masli Reang, and Twinaisa attended. Then it was held in Betcherra on the 16th for which children from Ratacherra and Kanchancherra participated. Finally, it was held at the Parish Centre for which children came from Shantipally, Sunaimuri, and Kumarghat.

Soon after the holy Eucharist the Bible was taken in a procession and placed on a decorated lectern. A prayer was said before the commencement of the Sessions. Children up to class X were the participants and the total number of participants who attended were 212. Sr. Bastian, Sr. Vera, Sr. Tarcisius, Cat. Subia Deb Barma, Mr. Roitua Darlong and Mr. Lala Darlong were the Resource Persons. They gave sessions on these topics: Fundamentals of Catholic Faith, knowledge about the Holy Bible, Biblical stories, Sacraments, and most importantly on the Rosary.

The importance of reading and living the Bible in the family and personal prayer were stressed during the Camp. The qualities such as 'Loving, Patience, Understanding, Gentleness, Forgiving, Prayerfulness, Kindness and Generosity' were explained to the participants through examples of persons in the Bible. There were action songs and children participated very vibrantly in all the activities. Many games were conducted and the winners were given prizes. Refreshments were served to the children. Children were happy saying that they have gained a lot out of the Bible Camp. At the end of camp there was an evaluation in order to customize for the future.

A big thanks to Fr. Lancy CSC, Fr. Lourdu CSC, Sr. Bastian FS, Sr. Vero Antony MC & Sr. Tarcisius MC for organizing the Bible camp in the Parish. Thanks to all Parents for sending the Children for the Bible camp, to the Resource Persons and Parish Council Members for the other arrangements. *Bro. Jojoppa*

News Briefs from the Diocese

12th Diocese level Holy Eucharistic Procession at Khumulwng

The 12th Diocese level Holy Eucharistic Procession was held on 13th November 2022 at St. Alphonsa Parish, Khumulwng (The City of Flowers). Exuberating with joy and great jubilation the faithful of our Diocese had actively participated in the





The long awaited day had begun with the Holy Eucharist which was presided over by our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, and concelebrated by all the clergy of our Diocese. After the Holy Mass, the Eucharistic Lord was carried in procession through the roads of Khumulwng, which is the Headquarters of the Autonomous District Council (ADC). It was heartwarming scene to see the devotion and reverence of our faithful in the Eucharistic Lord who didn't even bother

about the scorching sun that shone on them. Fr. Leenus VC led the faithful during the Praise and Worship that followed the Adoration. The Bishop concluded with the solemn benediction. As he thanked everyone he declared 2023 as the 'Year of the Eucharist' for our Diocese.

We thank all, especially the CLT Members and Khumulwng Parish, and all who contributed wholeheartedly for the success of the Eucharistic Procession.

Bro. Anvesh

Media Education for the Students of St. Arnold School, Gandacherra



November 5, 2022: St. Arnold School Gandacherra organized a one day colloquium on Media Education for the students of Class III, IX & X. There were more than 186 students participating in the tutorial class given by Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD the secretary for the commission for Social Communication of Agartala Diocese. Gandacherra is the Sub-Division of Dhalai civil District, once upon a time known for underground activities and Malaria. Now the situation has improved considerably and there is a pressing need from the parents to educate their children in the English medium schools. The principal of the school Fr. Prasad Rao had requested for a seminar on Media Education to train the senior students, that they may be trainers for others. The resource person Fr. D'Silva began the Class with explanations on Communication and then he developed on the subject Social Media. With so many video clips and PowerPoint presentations the sessions were inspiring. The 'Media' subject was so exciting, that there was spontaneous participation in the hall. The resource person explained clearly about the influence of Media on the children and youth, Media & advertisements, Media & films and Mobile use.

News Bureau, Gandacherra

Communication, Media Awareness, and Value Based Education

Kanchanpur (Tripura) November 10, 2022: St. Francis of Assisi English Medium School organized a one day program on Media Awareness and Communication for the Students and Teachers. There were 107 participants for the one day program held in the School Hall. Fr. Ivan D'Silva SVD the Secretary for the commission of Social Communication of Agartala Diocese was the Resource Person. Through the PowerPoint presentation and video clips he made the

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class lively and interactive. He made the participants aware of Social Media and Mobile. In social media he touched upon the topics of Media & Violence, Media & Advertisements, and Media & Online classes. The Session on Mobile was eye-opening for all the participants. With apt video clips the Session was informative and practical. He explained the advantages and disadvantages of the mobile and internet. He said, "People at large have benefited from the Android Mobile but at the same time some families have been ruined." He cautioned everyone "Let us not be the slaves of mobile. The mobile is smart but we have not become smart to handle it". The Principal Fr. Kiran OFM Cap thanked the Resource Person for the informative Sessions. *News Bureau, Kancharpur*

Holy Cross School Agartala – 50 years Journey by Tanmoy Roy Chowdhury



Excellence, Brilliance and Virtuous, all these words are synonymous with Holy Cross School Agartala, an establishment of holistic development. It is an institution of true wisdom, a scholarly temple of joy where the mind and the heart find equal importance. It is a foundation which has churned out the best erudite souls. In the last fifty years of its journey, Holy Cross School Agartala has built a name which resonates with the belief in providing quality education and creating the best next-

generation scholars.

For 50-plus years, Holy Cross has provided a rich lineage of administrators and scholarly Priests for education in this part of the world, proving their dedication and commitment to society. Holy Cross School, Agartala, in all these excellent years of growth, have stood tall with their mission of educating the heart and the mind. The well-placed alumni are a witness to the commitment of Holy Cross School, Agartala, over these years.

In the last fifty years of struggle, fifty years of growth and fifty years of staying true to their mission with the contribution of committed Teachers, and Staff, Holy Cross School Agartala has garnered the gratitude not only of its students but also every other stakeholder who have kept their faith intact in the education process of this school. As an Alma Mater and home to many, this School has always created the backbone for thousands of students who build a future in today's fast-paced world. Whether art, science, sports, or any other field of study, this Institution has been able to nurture the germ and enthusiasm of excellence in students. That is why the excellence of education in Holy Cross School, Agartala, will always have a long run.

Career Guidance for Class X & XII Students at Holy Cross School Tuikarmaw



Two days of Career Guidance was offered to the Students of Class X and XII of Holy Cross School Tuikarmaw on November 15 and 16. Mr. Anbuvaran and Mrs. Nalini from Chennai were the Resource Persons. Fr. Thomas John CSC, Director of ASHA, whose spirited involvement made this program a huge success. The program was well appreciated by the Students and Teachers alike. A total of 168 students benefitted from this initiative of Asha Holy Cross in the lives of Students entrusted to our care. *Fr. Renju, CSC*

News Briefs from all over

Asian Bishops eye new formation pathways in digital age

New ways for the formation of Catholics in the digital age were among the issues discussed during the general assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) in Bangkok, Thailand.

"Finding new pathways for formation, worship

and digital ministry in the post-pandemic era" was the topic Professor Pablito Baybado Jr. addressed on 19 Oct during the two-week long FABC general assembly that concluded on 30 Oct. "People actively construct or make their own knowledge, and that reality is determined by the experience of the learner," said Baybado, deriving inspiration from the motorcyclists who "stop, pray and go" at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Manila. "Dynamics is



the very structure that facilitates the construction of a deeper meaning of the Christian faith," said Baybado, who teaches theology at Manila's Santo Toma University. Baybado, executive secretary of the FABC Office on Education and Faith Formation, also wants the Church to advocate "at various levels for a new social structure that places the integral unit of the family as the highest value... It must even be reflected in the very language that we speak here in Asia, the very language that we use in worship and information, must be creative, inclusive and bridge- building." - <http://www.canews.com>

Pope Francis tells the people of Ukraine that their pain is his pain

Nine months from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Pope Francis writes a letter in which he expresses his sorrow and closeness to "the noble and



martyred" Ukrainian people. The letter was written by Pope Francis to the people of Ukraine exactly nine months from the unleashing of "the absurd madness of war", months in which he has launched over one hundred appeals for the "martyred" nation. It is addressed to all: to the women, victims of violence or war-widows; to the young men sent to the front; to the old people who have been left alone; to those who have become refugees or displaced persons; to the volunteers and the priests, to the country's authorities. It is to all of them that the Bishop of Rome conveys closeness asking that they not lose courage in a time of hardship and trial, and expresses his "admiration" because, as history has already demonstrated, they are "a strong people, a people that suffers and prays, cries and struggles, resists and hopes: a noble and martyred people". *Vatican NEWS*

Bishop's Program for December 2022

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| 01: DF Meet, Gokulnagar
Meet Manos Unidas Representative | 19: Silver Jubilee, Don Bosco School Agartala |
| 03: Clergy Meet & SFX Feast, Agartala | 24: Midnight Mass, Mariamnagar Parish |
| 04: Confirmations, Cathedral Parish | 25: X'Mas Mass, Don Bosco Parish,
Nandannagar |
| 08: CSC Provincial's Jubilee, Agartala | 27: Khumpuilwng Silver Jubilee,
under Khumulwng Parish |
| 09: Meet with CSC Superior General | 29: Deanery Youth Program at Bodhjungnagar |
| 11: Baraikapla Chapel Blessing, Pitra Parish | 30: Twimairang Golden Jubilee,
under Khumulwng Parish |
| 12-14: St. John's GB Meet, Bengaluru | 31-01: Pastoral Program, Gandacherra Parish |
| 14: Christo Mela, Tuikarmaw | |
| 15: Silver Jubilee of Sr. Nutan MSMHC | |
| 16-19: Silver Jubilee of Jongksha Parish,
Meghalaya | |

Our Distinguished Guests

- Fr. Babu Joseph Kallanchira, SVD General Visitor, from Republic of Chad
- Fr. Maxim, SVD Provincial from Guwahati
- Bishop Stephen Rotluanga, CSC, from Aizawl
- BS Srs. Surekha Cleopha, Edleburg, Jean-Marie, and Alice from Silchar Province
- CSC Frs. Leo & Jose Sarpathil, from South India Province
- CSC Frs. David Adaikalam & Justin from T.N. Province
- Sr. Theresa Varkey, MSMHC, from Shillong
- Fr. Anto Tharakan, SDB, from Miao
- Fr. Andreas Panna, SDB, from DB Tura
- Fr. Ethelbert, SDB, from DB Maligaon
- Fr. Mathai Kotharathil, SDB, from DB Mao
- Fr. Nazarius Lakra, SDB, VP from Dimapur
- Fr. AL Jose, SDB, from Pastoral Centre Shillong
- Fr. James PA, SDB, from Lawngthlai Mizoram
- Sr. Lucious, BS Provincial from Silchar
- Sr. Clara, BS Councilor from Silchar
- Fr. Sabu Francis, MSFS Provincial from Guwahati