



# DIOCESE OF AGARTALA

## Link

Lead Us Onward

Agartala Diocesan Newsletter

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### Pastor's Corner

#### The Real Attitude of Giving



Someone asked Bill Gates, Is there any person richer than you? He said, yes, only one. Many years ago, I had been dismissed and I had gone to New York airport. I read titles of newspapers there. I liked one of them and I want to buy it. But I didn't have change (coin). So abandoned the idea, suddenly, a black boy called me and told me, "This newspaper for you." I said, but I don't have change. He said, "No problem, I give you free". After 3 months, I went there. Coincidentally, that story happened again and that same boy gave me another free newspaper again. I

said, I can't accept it. But he said, "I give you from my profit."

After 19 years, I had been rich and I decided to find that boy. I found him after one and half month's search. I asked him, do you know me? He said, "Yes, you're famous Bill Gates." I said, you gave me free newspaper 2 times many years ago. Now, I want to compensate it. I am going to give you everything that you want. Black young man replied, "You can't compensate it!" I said, why? He said, "Because I gave you when I was poor. You want to give me when you are rich. So, how do you compensate?" Bill Gates said, I think that black young man is richer than me. You don't have to be rich or wait to be rich to give. The real attitude of giving is sharing what you have.

Teachers are givers! 5th of September is Teachers Day in India. It is a special day dedicated to Teachers, to appreciate and thank them for their special vocation of educating the student community. The Teacher's role today is far more complex and different than it was a few decades ago. Nevertheless, the Teacher continues to be

respected as being the most important after parents. In fact our former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam puts Teachers on the same level as parents. He once said "If a country is to be corruption free and become a nation of beautiful minds, I strongly feel there are three key societal members who can make a difference. They are the father, the mother and the teacher." What a great tribute from a great man to a noble profession of a revered Teacher! Happy Teachers Day.



+Lumen, CSC

Link wishes all our Teachers a very Happy Teachers Day. Thank You dear Teachers for your dedicated service.

### Editorial

#### Just another Inconsequential Matter...Really!



People refer to our schools as 'missionary schools' although what they mean might be 'missionary-run schools'. It's clearly a misnomer unless there is something 'missionary' about better English and good-looking uniforms and of course, decidedly better results. (*What if our schools were really 'missionary' schools? May be, that's a 'what if' question we can think about some other time.*)

'Better results' yes; there's no doubt about it. I know it from the coaching classes we run. Our students are *Madhyamik* (Secondary Board) exam failed tribal students from Bengali Medium Schools of the State.

Most parents of students in our English medium CBSE schools, would not be able to sleep in peace if their ward, who should have got 96.6% in the Board exams, for some reason got only 96.5%. They aren't wrong, perhaps. That's one side of the

coin.

The other side is equally interesting. It was hard to believe what I saw in the *Madhyamik* marksheets of students who came seeking admission to our coaching classes. *Mathematics 00, Science 02, Social Science 01*; another, *Mathematics 00, Science 05, Social Science 03* etc. These marks are out of 80. Getting 00 for Mathematics is considered quite normal. Not scoring above 10 marks for even one subject is considered, again, quite normal. Students who are unable to write in English 'How are you?' or write the joint letters of the Bengali alphabets... after being in a school for at least 10 years...

Well, in every group, there are a couple of exceptionally dull students, you might say. No, way... this is not that. I am talking about the average tribal student in the Bangla medium school. They are the majority. This is the scenario of majority of the students. Considering the fact that English medium schools only serve a small percentage of the student population, we can say, this is the story of majority of students from the tribal community. 33 schools this year registered 100% failure!

The only thing more shocking than the mark sheet is the acquiescence of the parents and of the whole society to what's been going on for decades. I have not come across any serious form of protest, *andolan, michil,*

memorandum or even a discussion by any groups political or non-political, about this. Is it because it's someone else's problem? *My children, after all, are doing rather well, in the English Medium school!* That being that, it's amusing, the uproar that at times happens, when there's a slight flaw, a small oversight in any of our schools!

The Church has often been praised for its contribution to education. Despite the tendency of some to find fault, it is clear that our 'missionary' institutions are contributing a great deal to the cause of education. At the same time, we perhaps ought to acknowledge and feel humbled that for the vast majority of students in our State, our claim of contribution to education will feel like a piece of fiction because they do not come directly under its ambit. Is there something more we can do for this large segment of the population in a field we are known to possess expertise and experience? Or shall we be mere onlookers as the society gaily marches on to its perdition in a slow, steady and silent manner?

J. Pulinthanath, SDB



## DEPACHERRA PARISH

### Paharpur faithful receive the Holy Spirit

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 was a memorable day for the faithful of the Paharpur under Depacherra Parish. On this day Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, came to Nabinpara to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to thirty two of our Parishioners. During his homily the Bishop catechized the faithful on importance of the Holy Eucharist. He said "we need to be rooted in our faith



and have a strong belief in God; only then would we be able to be witnesses of the Lord in our daily life and work". Many

people from the neighboring villages also participated in this joyful event that showed the unity that exists in the various *mothas* of the Paharpur area. After the Eucharistic celebration a small Felicitation program was conducted by different *mothas*. On this joyful day Fr. Prasad Rao, Sr. Roshni SRA and Sr. Velina SRA were present for the program, which ended with a fellowship meal. **Fr. Bhubon Sorkar**

## MARIAMNAGAR PARISH

### Local *mondoli* Feast

Dupcherra village under Mariamnagar Parish celebrated the Feast of their village chapel on 15<sup>th</sup> July. The Bethany



Sisters from Khayerpur helped the parishioners to prepare themselves for this annual celebration. A large number of parishioners gathered to celebrate the Feast of Sacred Heart. Our Bishop Lumen Monteiro was the main celebrant and the people welcomed our dear Bishop with great joy and enthusiasm. At the Holy Eucharist presided over by our dear Bishop Lumen he insisted that the love of the Sacred Heart is to be emulated by all of us by being loving to one another like Jesus has shown us with his Sacred Heart that is burning with love for all. After the Holy Mass the Parish Youth

performed some cultural dances as a thanksgiving to our dear Bishop, the Fathers and Sisters. The program ended with an agape.

## Divine Retreat Centre Mariamnagar

As the part of the Divine Retreat Centre's ministry we started night Vigil every second Saturday. Last two months a large number of faithful participated from different parishes. Many people could experience the real touch of God through this night vigil adoration. We humbly request all the Parish priests to encourage the people to participate the night vigil. Next month the night vigil will be on 11 August. It starts at 8pm on Saturday and concludes with morning Mass at 5am on Sunday. **Fr. Abraham VC**

## TUIKARMAW PARISH

### Blessing and Inauguration of St. Thomas Chapel Battali

29<sup>th</sup> July 2018 was a red-letter day for the faithful of Battali village as they have now a new 'house of God' to pray and to worship together. This historical day began by welcoming our Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, in the Garo traditional way. This was followed by the blessing of three



new statues which were taken in procession to the Church and were placed in their respective niches while the choir sang a hymn of blessing. After this Bishop Lumen inaugurated and blessed the newly built Village Chapel. During the holy Eucharist which followed the blessing, Bishop Lumen exhorted them to be regular to attend church services. The Bishop also appreciated the people for taking this great initiative to build the house of God and sharing their resources to make this big dream come true. On this day the Village celebrated their annual feast day as well. The local *mondoli* felicitated our dear Bishop, the Parish Fathers, Sisters, Catechists and senior members of the village. The celebration ended with a sumptuous community meal. **Fr. Alfred, CSC**

## AMBASSA PARISH

### Spiritual Renewal for Parish Women

Ambassa: July 29, 2018: Women of Ambassa Parish decided to have a day set apart for their spiritual renewal. More than 100 Women from different villages of the Parish invited Fr. Jomon SVD, to motivate them spiritually. Fr. Jomon and his Team rejuvenated the Women through

Praise and Worship.

The Preacher started the day with the Holy Mass and called on everyone to get filled with the Eucharist. After the Mass he spoke with concrete examples and his own experiences how marvelously God



worked in him. The time was set apart for lunch and refreshment after which they got back into the mood of praise and worship. During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Father Jomon went around to lay his hands on everyone. Many repented their sins, some fell on the ground and others had their tears rolling down their eyes. Before it concluded some of them gave testimony of what the Lord has done to them.

**News desk, Ambassa**

## GANDACHERRA PARISH

### Blessing & Inauguration of Vianney Home

Newly constructed presbytery of St.



Arnold Parish, Gandacherra was blessed and inaugurated by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, D.D, on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2018, in the presence of Parish Priest Fr. John Bosco, Priests, religious, Parish Council Members and Parishioners. Fr. Bosco, the Parish Priest thanked the benefactors of the project for helping financially to build a new Presbytery. After that Bishop Lumen blessed and explained the purpose of new presbytery for a parish for its pastoral activities and wished the Parish Priest and the workers for the successful completion of the construction of the new presbytery. Finally, the Parish Priest thanked Most Rev. Bishop Lumen, Diocesan Priests and Religious Fathers, well wishers, parishioners and neighbors, for their gracious presence on this occasion.

**Fr. George. S.**

## MOHARPARA PARISH

### Youth Sunday

12-08-2018-Youth Sunday was celebrated at Hadupa *motha*. About 100 Youth from different *motha's* participated in the celebration. The theme for the day was: *Sak Sakno Poitono Rak Rwdi* (Jude 1:20) (Strengthen yourself in Faith). The celebration began with the Holy Eucharist. The Session was animated by Fr. Joe Paul CSC the Secretary of HCEF. The Youth were given the opportunity to deliberate and share their thoughts in different Groups. The new Flag of the Parish Youth was blessed and unfolded by Fr. Joe Paul CSC in the presence of youth President of the Parish. At the end of the celebration, a short message was given by Mr. Amar Prem Jamatia and the day was concluded with the festive meal.

### Maria Sangha

One day seminar was conducted for Maria Sangha Presidents and Secretaries of each *mondoli's* of the Parish at St. Peter's Church Rangamura. The program commenced with the Holy Eucharist. The Resource Person was Sr. Mary David, FS, Secretary of Women Commission. The topic of the Seminar was the Church's teaching on Marriage and Family. 100 Women Leaders participated in the Seminar. The next gathering is on 14<sup>th</sup> October at Twithampui.

### Assembly Hall inaugurated

The long awaited dream of having an assembly Hall came to reality on 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2018. It was indeed a remarkable day for Notre Dame Holy Cross School Mohorpara. The inaugural function began with a grand welcome to the Chief Guest and other Guests. Mr. Maver Kumar Jamatia, Minister of Tribal Welfare and Forest for Tripura was the Chief Guest. Other dignitaries were Fr. Simon Fernandez CSC, Provincial Superior, Fr. Joe Paul CSC Secretary of Holy Cross Education Foundation, Mr. Ashis Ranjan Das, Fr. Valerian, CSC, Financial Administrator and Mr. V. Darlong DC of Telimaura. The function was enriched with the presence of other Priests, Sisters and Parents.

Fr. C.R. Paul, CSC

## KUMARGHAT PARISH

### Marriage Preparation Course Youth

In order to form as exemplary Catholic families there was two days training programmed for 10 couples from different villages of the Parish. The Resource Persons were Mr. Lala Darlong, Abraham Reang, Sr. Pushpa, Sr. Tarsisius, Mr. Santosh, Mr. Subia and Fr. Arul. The main topics covered were: 1. Marriage is a Sacrament. 2. Parenting. 3. Children are gifts of God. 4. Faithfulness of the spouses. 5. Family Prayer. 6. Natural Family Planning. 7. Financial Management. The participants expressed enthusiasm during the Course and said it benefited them to strengthen their families. Fr. Arul, CSC

## Seminary Day 2018

As the resplendent sun rose in the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> August there was something very special in the firmament of Jeevadhara Diocesan Minor Seminary. It was a great day of joy and celebration. We marked the beginning of the celebration with the solemn Holy Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Bosco, Parish Priest and Principal of St. Arnold Gandacherra and concelebrated by three priests, assisted by two Deacons. A few family members of our seminarians were also present. Several *motha* leaders, the Parish Secretary, Fr. Lawrence Darlong and Fr. Bosco also spoke. All of them thanked the parents and stressed the need for Diocesan priests. The love and support by Fr. Valentine SVD the Rector of the Seminary, Dn. Cyprian SVD and all the Seminarians made the day a colourful. The celebration ended with the community meal. Fr. Stany Pereira, SVD



## Media Literacy & Social Communications at Holy Cross School, Panisagar

On August 2nd and 3rd Holy Cross School Panisagar had two days classes on Media Literacy and Social Communications by Fr. Ivan D' Silva, SVD, the Coordinator of Social Communication for Agartala Diocese. 240 students of Class VIII to X actively participated in the awareness classes. The Resource Person explained about the basic principles of communication and good communication. He also elaborately explained on Media & Violence, Media & Women, Media & Films, Media & Gender, Media & Advertisement and Media & Mobile. The Diocesan Coordinator spoke on the topic of 'Mobile & Fake news'. Many said that they forward the articles, photos and videos from the WhatsApp without examining whether they are true or false. Fr. Ivan stressed on the need for students to be critical viewers and users of media.

News Desk, Ambassa

## Media Education for Kamaranga Parish Youth

Ambassa, August 19, 2018: St. Raphael Parish Kamaranga organized one day Seminar for the Youth. 40 Youth from different villages participated in the Media Education Seminar conducted by Fr. Ivan D' Silva, SVD, the Secretary for the Commission for Social Communication for Agartala Diocese. The Resource Person touched on various issues of Social Media, Mobile, Drugs and Fake news. He started with burning issue of Tripura 'Drugs'. He explained to them how teens get addicted to drugs and what the consequences are. He called on the youth and said, "Be a responsible youth in the villages to eradicate the menace of drugs and all other hard substance that harm our youth and society." Then he elaborately dealt with the Media and Television. He said, "Don't be passive graspers of media but critically analyze each." Some Youth had doubts on the WhatsApp forwards-how far are they authentic and should they be forwarded as received? Finally there was a discussion on fake news and mob lynching. The Youth felt that the classes were very good and should be attended all the Youth.

News Bureau, Ambassa

## Community Health Association of Tripura

Health Commission, Agartala, organized a day's program, CHAT Meet- 2018 in collaboration with JUST Agartala on 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. It was the first ever gathering with the lay catholic Doctors, Nurses and paramedics involved in health ministry along with the Fathers and Sisters of the Dioceses. The theme was A voice to lead and a heart to heal. Dr. Ashok Debbarma the Resource Person explained the health scenario of our State Tripura. Fr. Devdoss CSC





expounded on the theme taking the gospel examples. We were privileged to have Fr. Paul Thettiyl, the Director of NECHA (North Eastern Community Health Association) who gave the glimpses of the origin of CHAI (Catholic Health Association of India). Thanks to Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC who appreciated the caring attitudes of the Nurses and called them the

'Unsung Heroes'. Fr. Jeevan SVD facilitated in the Action Plan where we came up the few agendas to be implemented through the year. Many appreciated and were delighted to be the part of the gathering.

*Sr. Prema Misquith, BS*

## JUST News Nuggets

### Distribution of Health Care Kits to Students

As a part of health care to students and promote health and hygiene among the community 350 children from 10 JUST Coaching Centers were distributed nail cutter, two bathing soap and a pair of slipper each by Jana Unnayan Samiti Trpura (JUST) from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018. The Director of JUST Fr. Jeevan Kennady, Ambassa Parish Priest Fr. Ivan and the Project Coordinator Mr. Lilmohan Reang visited the centers and distributed the health care materials to the students. During the distribution Fr. Jeevan Kennady told the students to make full use of the materials and always maintain health and hygiene. He advised



them to have bath atleast twice a day with soap and to trim their nail and also comb their hair always. Fr. Ivan suggested the students to be always regular and study well. The students as well as the guardians are very excited to receive such type of materials and assured to make full use of it.

### Plantation Festival (Bufang Kaimani Ter)

Plantation festival was held on 9th July at Borgachia School playground. The theme was "Let us celebrate plantation as a festival, a green festival for humanity". The festival was jointly initiated by JUST, CFLE and DISA. More than 500 people from three villages Borgachia, Khampar Para and Wabusa attended the program. More than 4,000 saplings of people's choice were distributed among the villagers. Much emphasis was given for homestead plantation. One 'traditional healer' was asked to grow herbal



garden by planting important medicinal plants used in traditional medicines. Since the trees in the School campus are uprooted by high speed winds it was suggested to raise a bamboo-based multipurpose windbreak on its boundary. MLA Mr. Ashis Das was the Chief Guest. A number of School students from Agartala International School also participated in the Festival. The participants took a pledge to conserve nature and uphold humanity.

*Mr. Cyril Darlong*

## 2018 winners of 'Asia's Nobel Prize' --2 Indians named

1. A Mumbai-based doctor, Bharat



Vatwani, who has been recognized for "his tremendous courage and healing compassion in embracing India's mentally-afflicted destitute", started an informal operation of bringing mentally-ill street persons to their private clinic for treatment.

2. Sonam Wangchuk, who set up a rehabilitation foundation to rescue mentally-ill persons living on the streets, along with a widely known Ladakhi engineer and education reformist thus improving the life opportunities of Ladakhi youth, has been recognized for "his uniquely systematic, collaborative and community-driven reform of learning systems in remote northern India.

Established in 1957, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is Asia's highest honor and is widely regarded as the region's equivalent to the Nobel Prize. The Ramong Magsaysay Awards will be conferred officially to the recipients on August 31 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Manila. *Source: UCAN*

## Bishop's Program for September 2018

- 02: Pastoral Program, Amarpur Parish
- 03: JUST GB Meet, Agartala
- 04: JUST AGBM  
Clergy Meet, Agartala
- 08: Meet with BS Superior General
- 09: Pastoral Program, Kathalcherra Parish
- 10-12: NERPC, Guwahati
- 13-15: NE Bishops Council, Shillong
- 16: Holy Cross Parish Feast, Bagbasa
- 17: Silver Jubilee, SCCG Sisters, Panisagar
- 21-22: TCSAGAM, Holy Cross Agartala
- 23: Pastoral Program, Bodhjungle
- 26-29: CBCI Standing Committee Meet, Bengaluru
- 30: Parish Feast, Kamaranga

## Our Distinguished Visitors

- Fr. Melvil, SJ, Provincial from Guwahati
- Fr. Hector D'Souza, SJ, Socius from Guwahati
- Fr. Jack Rayan, CSC, President of Kings College, PA, USA
- Fr. Tom Looney, CSC, Campus Minister, Kings College, PA, USA
- Fr. Paul Thettiyl, NECHA Director from Guwahati
- Fr. Sydney Dias, CSC, from Bengaluru