



DIOCESE OF AGARTALA

Lead Us Onward



Agartala Diocesan News Letter

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Leaders today should be Informative, Performative & Transformative

The church in which we live today is facing a plethora of challenges and often, rightly enough, the finger is pointed to the leadership. Leadership is crucial in a community, not in the least being for a church community. Fr. Thomas Manjaly, Professor Emeritus of ORIENS Shillong says that "Like the people of Israel, our people are looking for leaders who are visionaries to give them direction and guidance for a goal in life and a message of hope in life-threatening circumstances." In a recent article on Pastoral Collaboration found in Mission Today (Vol. XXI) Fr. Manjaly devotes some paragraphs on the role of Leaders, especially on how they should act today. He says that "Rather than following one's own fixed ways or becoming blind imitators, there is need to think creatively, identify new needs, devise new methods and strategies, set definite goals through systematic planning, and act decisively."

He goes on to add that "Leadership today has to be informative (enlightening communication), performative (prophetically challenging and motivating to action) and transformative (inviting to change). In other words, the leaders should be able to provide a vision to the community and society, nurture their faith and sustain their hope.

Speaking on the leadership of Pope Francis, whom I think all church leaders should emulate, Fr. Manjaly says that "Being the moral voice or being the voice of God in the world has been an important feature of his ministry. This has been illustrated in so many ways in his personal life and in his teachings. He is seen as "the most powerful voice on earth for those not being heard." It has been said that while people came to see Pope John Paul II, to listen to Pope Benedict XVI, but now they come to see, listen, to draw inspiration from Pope Francis. Only leaders who inspire can make a difference."

He warns about the danger of mistaking

Pastor's Corner



"good management for good leadership (for mission), and as a result excise a culture of control. In the process, so much potential is lost in routines and so engage in the transmission model. The management executes the agenda that the leader sets. The manager can only add, while the leader alone can multiply." These are just some excerpts from a very practical essay which we, church leaders, would do well to read and follow! God bless.

+Lumen, CSC



Trapped in the Net

Editorial

The emergence of Social media has changed not only the communication scenario, but almost every area of life. It has lent voice to individuals and peoples that did not have a voice or could not let their voice be heard for one reason or other in the past. This one reason alone perhaps is enough to give it adequate credence and validity. We daily see how it shapes opinions, unites people, promotes causes.



Until recent past, the indigenous peoples of Tripura acutely felt this lack of avenues or channels to express to the outside world their feelings, ideas and opinions, as individuals and as a people. Language was not the only reason, although it was one. Kokborok or other tribal languages

did not have their own media platforms.

The peculiar power structure in the state made it difficult for their voice to be heard. The emergence of the Internet and Social media changed it all. Today there is no dearth of platforms.

Many make good and responsible use of it. Some wallow in the freedom it offers but forget the responsibility attached to it. For them it is as if the floodgates have opened and have swept away all need of restraint, reason and respect.

We as educators and Church personnel perhaps want to do our bit, but we realize it's not easy. At times, we ourselves are the victims of other's unfettered freedom. We feel we could help young people use social media in ways it will contribute to growth,

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Congratulations!

Our sincere CONGRATULATIONS to the newly elected Superiors

Bro. Varghese Mandapam, SG, newly appointed NE Provincial Superior of Montfort Brothers, Guwahati

Sr. Marcella AC, newly reelected Provincial Superior of Apostolic Carmel, Kolkata

Sr. Berchmans SRA, newly reelected Provincial Superior of Queen of the Apostles, Mumbai
Sr. C. J. Mary, UFS, newly reelected Provincial Superior of Ursuline Sisters, NE Province, Dimapur

Sr. Elizabeth Miranda, SCC, newly elected Superior General of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod

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community building, unity, hard work, faith in God and many such things. Although they sound good and look good on the paper, we know it's an uphill task.

Media education ventures for youth that solely focus on responsible media use fail because media education is very little about media per se. Instead, it is a lot about addressing issues and problems faced by the young person. For example, may be, he or she feels the need to be seen, heard and counted. Denial of that legitimate desire can cause angry and negative posts on social media. It's not enough merely to educate that person about not taking his anger to the public realm.

Or take for example, the delusion that posting is caring. It implies that the person who does not give a rejoinder or thumps-up or at least insert an emoji to a post does not care about what is posted. Conversely, it encourages the equally naïve thought that all those who do it actually care!

In import and extent it's now become too big a matter for anyone to remain indifferent to. Then there is also the point about our credibility to take on this. Although young people are often blamed for being addicted to social media, the truth is, it's not just the young. It's enchantment cuts across professions, positions and age. We, who are prone to reprimanding young people on account of this, could for a change, look at how we fare in this matter.

J. Pulinathan, SDB

TUIKARMAW PARISH Installation and Farewell



The faithful ST. Mary's Parish Tuikarmaw gathered together on 13th January 2019 to receive and welcome the New parish Priest Fr. Sojan CSC and Bid farewell to Frs. Abraham CSC and Alfred CSC. The day began with the Holy Eucharistic celebration Celebrated by Fr. Abraham C, CSC . The parish Priest was installed on this day by Fr. Hormis John CSC the Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Agartala. Fr. Hormis in his

Homily invited people to experience the real love of Jesus remain close to his love. He invited to people to strengthen the family living and called upon them to form families in faith. After the Holy Eucharistic celebration short felicitation program was organized for the outgoing Parish Fathers and a warm welcome was given to Fr. Sojan CSC. Fr. Alfred the Assistant parish Priest welcomed the gathering. Mr. Supran Marak the parishioner thanked both the outgoing Fathers and expressed the deep sentiments of gratitude. Fr. Kanikaki CSC the representative of Fr. Simon CSC the Provincial Superior of Holy Cross, expressed the words of gratitude to both the outgoing Fathers and welcomed new Parish Priest. Fr. Sojan CSC addressed the gathering and thanked everyone for their cooperation for the day's event. The Day ended with a community meal *Fr. Alfred, CSC*

KATHALCHERRA PARISH Parish Sabha and Adieu



The Annual Sabha of Kathalcherra Parish was held from 1 to 3 Feb at Kukkicherra *mondoli* on the theme, Church and the Sacraments. A large number of people gathered and listened to Fr Bosco who explored on the theme. Fr Ishwar



set the tone of the theme on the first day through a meaningful introduction. Reports from various Villages, Organizations of the Parish, Election of new Parish Secretary, Bible Quiz and other Competitions were the highlights of the Program. Added to this was the birthday celebration of our dear Bishop Lumen. The last day was filled with mixed emotions as we bid farewell to our dear Fr Lancy CSC who served the parish for the last six years. People were grateful for his commitment and

dedication with which he cared for his flock admonishing them to deepen their faith, care for the poor, and his tireless work to build the five village chapels. Reviving and rejuvenating SCC in the Parish speaks volumes of his effort to build the faithful into one body.

He was also given a befitting Farewell in both the Schools at Kathalcherra and Dhumacherra. *Sr. Prema, BS*

MARIAMNAGAR PARISH Students Blessing Day



Divine Mercy Retreat Centre arranged a Student's Blessing Day on February 17th as a Day of Prayer in preparation for the Board Exams. A big number of Students participated and spiritually prepared for their exams as they realized the need of Holy Spirit in their life of study. Many Students were able to experience the presence of Jesus with them and this experience was helpful for them to get rid of the tension and fear of Exams. Fr. Lourthu CSC was the main Preacher and he motivated Students to keep trust in God. The Day of Prayer was concluded with holy Adoration and holy Mass.

Fr. Abraham, VC

MOHARPARA PARISH New Parish Priest Installed



The faithful of Moharpara Parish gathered on 3rd February to welcome the new Parish Priest Fr. Arul J, CSC and Fr. Alfred CSC and bid farewell to Fr. Agi Paul CSC. The gathering began with holy Mass presided over by Fr. Agi Paul. During the holy Mass the new Parish Priest was installed by Fr. Jevan Kennady, SVD. After the holy Mass a short Felicitation was organized for the outgoing Parish Priest and welcome

was given to Fr. Arul and Alfred. Mr. Amar Prem Jamatia the Parish Secretary welcomed the gathering and Mr. Uttam Roy Jamatia thanked the outgoing Parish Priest with deep emotions and sentiments. Fr. Simon CSC the Provincial thanked Fr. Agi Paul for his selfless service to the Parish and School and appreciated him for all the development done for the mission as well as thanked Fr. Arul for his willingness to take up the Parish. Fr. Agi Paul addressed the gathering and thanked the people for the support and encouragement he received. Fr. Arul the new Parish Priest thanked the people for the welcome given to him and expressed his joy and happiness to take up the Parish. The gathering comes to a close with a community meal being shared by all.

Marriage Preparation Course



One day Marriage Preparation Course was conducted in the Parish on 8th February

for those Couples whose marriages were scheduled before the Lenten Season. Fourteen persons from different villages participated in the program. The Resource Persons for the day were Mr. Uttam Jamatia and Catechist Thomas Hrangkhawl. The program concluded with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. Arbok Lyngdoh CSC, the Parish Youth Animator.

Gamaku mondoli Silver Jubilee

Yesu Krista Jayanti Church Gamaku celebrated the Silver Jubilee of the arriving of the faith on 17th February, 2019. The celebration begins with



the *Triduum* from 15th February where marriages were rectified and Baptisms were conferred. On the last day of the *Triduum*, three hours of Adoration was conducted and people were given a chance for the Sacrament of Confession and through Praise and Worship in adoring the Eucharistic Lord.

On the Jubilee Day, the celebration begins with the unveiling of the Jubilee Memorial Stone by the Most Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, followed by the Jubilee Mass. During the homily Bishop praised the community for nurturing the faith and growing deeper in it. He exhorted them to

work for better unity and collaboration by focusing on the theme of the Jubilee "Heavenly Father...they may be one as we are one". In 17:22 The celebration was solemnized with 118 candidates receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Cultural Programs and Felicitation were conducted and this added color to the celebration. During the program, the Jubilee Souvenir was released by Bishop Lumen in the presence of all. The celebration was concluded with a festive meal for all. *Fr. Arbok, CSC*

KUMARGHAT PARISH Installation, Gratitude, & Parish Sabah

Kumarghat Parish celebrated Annual Parish Sabha at Betcharra Village on 27th January, 2019. The solemn Eucharist was presided by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, and concelebrated by the Fr. Arul J CSC, Fr. Lancy CSC and Fr. Simon CSC Provincial Superior and several other Priests. This celebration was also an occasion to thank Fr. Arul for his selfless service to



the Parish for six years and to bid him Farewell from the Parish. During the holy Mass Fr. Lancy D'Souza CSC was installed as the new Parish Priest by our dear Bishop Lumen. The presence of 80 First Holy Communion children in white dresses added colour and meaning to the celebration.

After the Mass there was a short farewell programme which included Speeches from the different Leaders of the *mondolis* expressing their gratitude and presenting gifts to Fr. Arul CSC. Fr. Aneesh Mathew CSC Assistant Priest express his gratitude to Fr. Arul for being a good pastor and a very good companion to him personally. Fr. Lancy the new Parish Priest expressed his gratitude to Bishop Lumen and the parishioners, and solicited their cooperation in the future. It was also a joyful moment as the Birthday of our dear Bishop Lumen was celebrated amidst cheers of song and cutting of the cake. The celebration concluded with a fellowship meal shared by all which was prepared by the faithful of Betcharra *mondoli*. *Deacon Marbelous, CSC*

KATHALCHERRA PARISH Installation of new Parish Priest



On 17th February 2019 the Parish community was happy to welcome Fr Abraham CSC, the new Parish Priest of Good Shepherd

Parish. He was installed as the Parish Priest of Kathalcherra Parish by Fr Hormis John, CSC, the Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Agartala. Fr Valerian CSC, Fathers from Chailengta and Sisters were present for this event.

Sr. Prema, BS

JEEVADHARA MINOR SEMINARY

Rise to Shine

Most of us feel very happy when we think of the sports week or family feast of our formation days, because the fun that we had experienced cannot be forgotten. Fun always has the ability to bind the community. This became real today in Jeevadhara Diocesan Minor Seminary as we celebrated Family Feast on 22nd & 23rd of January. The motto for the family feast was 'Rise to Shine'. The celebration began with a Prayer service followed by the Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. Stany Pereira SVD. The whole community was divided into two groups under inspiring names. Those two days brought forth the celebration of togetherness to the maximum. Together all of us celebrated our talents and got refreshed and rejuvenated. The Competitions have made us aware of our own capabilities and helped us to grow in our weaknesses. Finally Prizes were given to the Winners and the Family Feast concluded with a festive dinner. Though the Family Feast is over we are sure that it has brought us closer to each other and indeed closer to God! *Fr. Stany Pereira,*

Diocese News Nuggets

Darlongs celebrate Centenary of Christianity

Puranbari village in Kathalcherra Parish is almost 100% Catholic and this was reason enough for them to celebrate the Centenary of the coming of the faith by their Protestant counterparts in Tripura. On 7th and 8th February 2019 the Darlong community in Puranbari celebrated the Centenary of their Faith. Most Rev. Stephen CSC was the main celebrant of the holy Eucharist. The presence of both Bishops Most Rev Lumen Monteiro CSC of Agartala Diocese and Most Rev. Stephen Rotluanga CSC of Aizawl Diocese added much color to the celebrations. A large number of Priests and Religious from different parts of the Diocese joined the massive faith community of Puranbari to celebrate the unique event. After the solemn holy Mass there was a festive reception with speeches, dances and a cultural extravaganza.

Sr. Prema, BS

Thank you dear Bishop for February LINK... Indeed you are very careful not to break the LINK at all, month after, year after year. Thank you very much and congratulations for such a precision. *Sr. Celine, FMA, Agartala*

Thanks again for your faithfulness in keeping in touch through LINK. And best wishes on your birthday. *Tony Krisak, USA*
I wish to thank you for the "LINK" with great information and touching messages. *Fr. Sunny Joseph, Dimapur*

You are in my thoughts and prayers often. As Winston Churchill said in a brief but memorable address at his alma mater: "Never give up, never, never, never, never, never give up." And then he sat down. *Willy, CSC, USA*

Thanks a lot for your on-time email containing our Diocesan Newsletter LINK. Every month, it is a pleasant and timely surprise. *Mariaraj, CSC, Agartala*

Thanks for LINK that again without fail comes in to fill us with news of all the activities of the Diocese. *Conrad, CSC, Canada*

Catholic World News Nuggets

Bangladesh fetes 500 years of Christianity

Bishop Lumen writes: "I had the unique privilege of being invited to the 5th Centenary celebrations of Christianity in Bangladesh. Archbishop Moses Costa, CSC, reminded me that Tripura was once a part of the Vicariate of Chittagong and was insistent that 'their Jubilee was also our Jubilee.' **UCAN reports:** "Thousands of Catholics celebrated 500 years of Christianity in Bangladesh by paying tribute to early missionaries, martyrs, and Mother Mary from Feb. 7-8. The celebrations coincided with an annual pilgrimage to the popular Our Lady of Lourdes shrine in Diang, Chittagong Archdiocese. About 7,000 people including 11 bishops, 75 priests, 18 religious brothers and 80 nuns flocked to the two-day program. On Feb. 7, they paid tribute to early Christian

Launching of new Project



On 4th February JUST launched a new project "SFOORTI" (Support to SHGs for Organizing and Optimizing Resources to Transformation of Individuals) at JUST Hall Agartala. The Project was officially inaugurated by the Chairman of JUST Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro by lighting the lamp. This was followed by welcome address by JUST Director Fr. Jeevan SVD. This was followed by a Workshop on "Visioning with Federation Leaders and Office Bearers and also developing DIP". The Resource Person was Mr. Dhananjoy Debbarma (TCS). 30 SHG Women Federation Leaders participated in the Workshop. Then the Resource Person explained about different Schemes such as MNREGA, PMAY, Mudra Loan, (PMMY), Beti Bachao Beti Padho and Women Helpline.

Community Action



Mr. Sankar Debbarma, Secretary of Hamari Farmers Club in their monthly meeting in the month of January 2019 brought the agenda on doing community action by cleaning the road from Radhanagarpara to Mohandaspara. During the monthly meeting the group decided to invite their fellow farmers from Dumrakarik to help them on cleaning the road. The road was narrow and full of bushes that made it

difficult for the people especially the school going children to cross the road. This made the groups to take action on it. So on 17th January 2019 two Farmers Clubs cleaned the road and now the school students and the village people are able to use the road without fear.

Mr. Cyril Darlong

martyrs who were buried in Diang's old cemetery in 1607. Chittagong was made the seat of East Bengal Vicariate in 1845. It fell under the control of Dhaka Diocese from 1886-1927, when the Holy See created Chittagong Diocese. It was elevated to an Archdiocese in 2017.

The Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop George Kocherry and Holy Cross Archbishop Moses M. Costa of Chittagong also unveiled a new "Rosary Garden" at the Marian shrine as a sign of respect. On the afternoon of Feb. 7, thousands of people joined a candlelight Rosary prayer procession around the hills of Diang. Catholics have been making this pilgrimage for nearly 40 years, thanks in part to the charitable and promotional efforts of Brother Flavian Laplante, a Holy Cross missionary from Canada. He devoted himself

to providing education and social services for the poor and needy in Diang in the 1940s and set up the Marian grotto and ashram (hermitage) in 1946 so people could flock there to pray. It was designated a shrine three decades later. Brother Flavian died in 1981 and was buried nearby. In 2009, he was declared a "Servant of God," the first step toward sainthood. On Feb. 8, Archbishops Kocherry and Costa joined a number of bishops in offering a special Holy Mass at the shrine. "Today, we gratefully remember the martyrs of Diang and Chittagong, who shed their blood to keep up their faith. Our faith is a legacy of their extraordinary faith and their holy blood," Holy Cross Bishop Lawrence Subroto Howlader of Barishal Diocese said during the homily.

Bishop's Program for March 2019

- 03: Pastoral Program, Mandwi Parish
- 04: Clergy Meet, Agartala
- 06: Ash Wednesday Parish Mass
- 08: Women's Day celebration at JUST Agartala
- 09: Blessing SCC new School Building at Tuithampui
- 10: Pastoral Program Moharpara Parish
- 11: Blessing UFC new School Building at Laxmicherra
- 16: Ruby Jubilee of Episcopacy of Bishop Mamalasserry
- 17-18: NE Bishops Meet at Tura, Meghalaya
- 20-22: Caritas Asia Meet at Bangkok
- 23-24: Waagurpara Chapel Blessing under Sindukpathar Parish
- 31: Parish Pastoral Program

Our Distinguished Visitors

- ◆ Fr. Paul Olphindro SDB, Provincial from Shillong
- ◆ Mrs. Maryanne, Lorna & Leena Xavier, Lay Women from Mumbai
- ◆ Sr. Katharina Mock, SCV Superior General from Germany
- ◆ Sr. Bernadette, SCV Councillor from Germany
- ◆ Sr. Primosa, SCV General Councillor from Kerala
- ◆ Mr. Isaac, Johnson, Arokiadas & Raja from Chennai
- ◆ Fr. Pius Thuruthiyil, CMF Provincial and Team from Shillong