



Pastor's Corner

When we look at the news on our televisions or read it our newspapers these days, we are well aware of the hardship and pain that exists in our world today.

There are painful scenes of war, feminine and terrorism, and presently of the war in Ukraine. Even at the time of Jesus there was inequality, injustice, and poverty. He would have seen it, experienced it, and been very familiar with it. But it is into that world that he came with the gift of peace. It is into our war-torn world today that Jesus comes with the same good news. It is in and through our world today that we experience and share in his resurrection. It is in and through our ordinary daily lives that Jesus comes risen from the tomb. In the world where there is the reality of suffering, violence and injustice, we are called to be people of hope. This is not ordinary human hope. This is the hope that comes to us through the Resurrection of Jesus. In the face of sadness, difficulty and pain, we are called to look to and rely on the resurrected Jesus and not just on our strength and resources.

After his Resurrection, Jesus' first words to the disciples were, "Peace be with you." While the war in Ukraine continues to kill military personnel and civilians and to displace millions, one thing that we are hoping and praying for is Peace. "Before the danger of self-destruction, may humanity

understand that the moment has come to abolish war, to erase it from human history before it erases human history," Pope Francis said in another plea for peace more than one month after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Pope Francis has consecrated Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and asked the world to pray for peace in that region. And pray we did! Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Schevchuk of Kyiv-Halych strongly believes that 'Prayer has won Wars' and so he says, "We encouraged our Christian people to pray and participate in the sacraments, because we know that prayer has power. We know from history that prayer has defeated evil many times and has won wars."



Soon we will celebrate Easter, the feast of Hope. The resurrected Jesus comes to us as we are. But he also comes as he is –through the power of God he is resurrected– with the gift of new and everlasting life. Where there was despair, God brought us hope. Where there was darkness, God has brought light. Where there was hatred, God brought us peace. Where there was death, God brings us not just life, but new and everlasting life. These are the gifts that God offers each of us through the resurrection of Jesus. God is with the Peacemakers not with those who use violence. To our war-torn world may the Peace of the Risen Lord come and remain! Happy Easter. **+Lumen, CSC**



EDITORIAL

Halfway this month and we arrive at the greatest celebration of our faith, Easter, the Solemnity that celebrates Jesus' resurrection, signifying

his victory over death and evil.

It is most unfortunate that, even at such a time as this, there is a war raging on somewhere on the planet. The heart wrenching images of the Russia-Ukraine face-off that we see on television make us cringe. We are appalled at the levels of insensitivity we human beings can descend to. And we begin to fear ourselves, at what ordinary mortals like us might be capable of! We begin to question the very notion of 'civilization' itself.

And when we are through with our bit of philosophizing about global moral decrepitude and



the dreadful things it engenders, we return to our ordinary lives, and to issues we need to grapple with, right here, right now. Yes, we do have some advantages, sitting cosily as we are, thousands of kilometres away from where the shelling and shooting is!

From the media we gather that Pope Francis is quite disturbed and very concerned about the pain and sufferings this man-made catastrophe is causing to human beings. His pro-active engagement is not prompted by political considerations but compassion and Christian sensitivity.

The example of the Pontiff might be a huge invitation to Dioceses and Church bodies throughout the world to do two things: first, to examine and see if they have similar concern for the sufferings of people who live within their own jurisdictions. Secondly, to see if we

War and Peace

are, given the meagre opportunities that exist for young people of our state to be schooled in matters of morals and faith, unwittingly fanning the flame of insensitivity among those entrusted to us.

Our fears may not be totally unfounded because alongside our alarming obsession to succeed and make a mark in life we also sense within us rising levels of insensitivity to the pain and problems of fellow beings.

The Easter festival we are about to celebrate gives us hope. From the darkness and decay of the tomb, the Lord arose in glory. He not only threw open wide the gates of heaven for us to enter after death, but also made it possible for us to live here on this earth as children of one Father. May our strife-torn world hear and take to heart His Easter greeting "Peace be with you." (Jn. 20:19). HAPPY EASTER!

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

Parish News Briefs

AMARPUR PARISH

Pastoral Visit at Athambhagya Molsom Para



On 6th March 2022 Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, confirmed a number of faithful at St Peter Church, Athambhagya. It is a Molsom village under St Joseph Vaz Parish Amarpur. There was a solemn welcome to His Lordship at the village gate at 10.30am. Bishop was the main celebrant of the Holy Mass and concelebrated by Fr. Pratap MSFS the Parish Priest, and Fr. Athikho MSFS the Assistant Priest. In his homily the Bishop exhorted the faithful to overcome temptations and be a witness of Christ through a dignified life. After the Holy Mass, the faithful cordially extended their love and hospitality to the Bishop, Fathers and Sisters, especially Sr. Rose, SD, the Provincial Councillor of SD Delhi Province and Sr. Rejith, SD from Meghalaya. In the middle of the felicitation two young men expressed their desire to join the catholic faith and were warmly welcomed. Thereafter, there was a fellowship meal which concluded the day's event.

Fr. Athikha MSFS

MOHARPARA PARISH

Annual Parish Sabha & Marian Grotto Blessing



The Annual Parish Sabha was held at the Parish Centre from March 11th to 13th with the theme "First Seek the Kingdom of God". The Sabha was inaugurated by Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC. Fr. Arbok CSC the Parish Priest presented the Annual Parish report. Then the Bishop addressed the delegates and called upon to make the church more vibrant and participatory. Various *mondoli* reports

were presented and a detailed discussion was held.

The second day Sessions were animated by Fr. Joe Paul CSC. He spoke on the theme and conducted an interactive session on Synodality wherein the people participated actively. Time was set aside to clarify doubts and acquire right knowledge on various faith matters.

The Sabha was concluded with Solemn Holy Eucharist presided by our dear Bishop who in his homily called upon the faithful to be spiritual and united. The same day the newly built Marian Grotto was inaugurated by Fr. Hormis John CSC and blessed by Bishop Lumen.

The parish community also expressed deep sentiments of gratitude to the retired catechists Mr. Gurumohan Molsom and Mr. Joybahadur Hrangkhwal, and thanked them for their services. The parish community welcomed Fr. Roby CSC the newly appointed Assistant Parish Priest and Fr. Hormis John CSC. The parish Sabha was concluded with the community meal.

Fr. Alfred D'Souza, CSC

KUMARGHAT PARISH

Youth Camp



A Youth Camp was organized at Kumarghat on 27th March. There were 165 boys and girls from fifteen villages who participated in the program. The Resource Persons were Fr. Lancy CSC, Mr. Lala Darlong, Mr. Roitua Darlong and Sr. Bastian D'Silva FS. The following topics were dealt with: Youth and Church (Synodality), Youth and career guidance, Youth responsibilities, Youth and Leadership. After lunch the participants were divided into village wise groups and various questions were given to them for discussion. This was followed by the general assembly where Secretaries shared the reports. This was followed by evaluation on the day's program. Most of the Youth expressed satisfaction and wanted to have such camps for a longer duration. They came to know many useful things which are applicable to their lives. At the end of the program Fr. Lancy the Parish Priest proposed a vote of thanks and gave the final blessing. The youth dispersed with a happy heart carrying home the values they had learnt.

Charismatic Retreat

On 27th March, a charismatic Retreat was organized at the parish Centre. The preacher was



Mr. Vicky DCruze from Kolkata. Nearly 500 people participated in the Retreat. The preacher highlighted on the importance of Mother Mary in our lives and emphasized that the holy rosary is a powerful weapon to fight against all the odds and temptations in life. Using various Biblical passages he enlightened the people of how we go against God's plans and commit sin against God and one another. In such situations we need to read the Bible more often and know God's ways and follow them. Thereafter he led us for the healing and anointing hour. At 3.30pm there was holy Mass by Frs. Lancy & Lourdu. At the end of the Retreat Fr. Lancy thanked the Resource Person and all the participants. The Retreat ended at 5pm followed by dinner for all the participants.

Sr. Bastian FS.

KAMARANGA PARISH

Women Pledge to Leadership on International Women's Day

The day started with the Holy Eucharist praying for the Women at St. Raphael Church, Kamaranga-

Tripura. Men prayed and expressed their appreciation for the great commitment and contribution of Women to the family, Church and society. The Seminar appreciated their participation and highlighted the importance of Women leadership in the Church and the society. The new leadership Team was formed for the Parish. The Women pledged to organize and lead the women groups in the village community and the church actively.



Fr. Arun Minj SVD

Journeying together for SCC...

No one can deny Synodality has influenced and affected the very life of the Church. We could witness Synodality in the Meeting of National SCC Team with Northeast Dioceses on 14th and 15th March 2022 at Silchar, Assam. We fifteen of us journeyed together with Bishop Lumen Monteiro for Agartala-Aizwal Zonal



Level Meeting to Silchar to strengthen the SCC in the Dioceses.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

Diocese News Briefs

SCC AA Zonal Animation Program

SCC Zonal Animation for the Dioceses of Agartala and Aizawl was held at Seva Kendra, Silchar, on 16 March 2022. The delegates from both the Dioceses were present, of which 15



members were from the Diocese of Agartala, including Bishop, Priests, Sisters and Laity. The Zonal Animation began with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Bishop

Lumen Monteiro of Agartala in the presence of Bishop Stephen Rotluanga of Aizawl, and Priests, Sisters and parishioners of Holy Cross Parish Silchar. Later, the meeting proper began with the Bible enthronement and lighting of lamp. Fr. Lancy D'Souza CSC, Zonal SCC Coordinator welcomed all the participants. The keynote address was given by Fr. George SAC, the National SCC Coordinator. He stressed the importance of having SCC groups in our parishes and presented the National perspective by sharing his experiences of evangelization through SCCs from across the country. The SCC Regional Coordinator, Fr. Hippolitus Toppo, shared the Regional SCC Commission's plans for 2022 for North East Dioceses. In view of strengthening the SCCs, Dioceses went into respective groups to make an Action Plan for the year 2022 and also for the upcoming three years till 2025, which is the Silver Jubilee Year of formal starting of SCC in North East India. The animation program was concluded with an Evaluation and words of gratitude by Sr. Juliet MSMHC.

Fr. Fredy Madukkakuzhy SVD

International Women's Day

9th March 2022, Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST) celebrated "International Women's Day" with the theme "Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow" together with the Women

Commission of the Diocese of Agartala at JUST premises Agartala. More than 300 Women from all 24 Parishes of the Diocese and some SHG Members took part in the celebrations.



Mrs. Barnali Goswami the Chairperson, Commission for Women in Tripura was the Chief Guest. Other special guests were Bishop Lumen Monteiro, Ms. Devasmita Chakraborty the Law Officer, Mrs. Gita Debbarma, Sr. Mary Halam CSC and

Fr. Lathees S, Director of JUST. In their addresses they all encouraged the Women to be in the forefront for achieving their goal in life. They stressed on the importance of education for girl children and protecting and safe guarding the Rights of Women. Fr. Lathees S. the Director of JUST helped the Women in electing the Committee Members of five Deaneries for effective planning and conducting of programs for the Women in the Diocese. The Executive Committee of Women Commission was very active in organizing the day's program together with JUST Staff. Sr. Jolly F.S the Diocesan Secretary for the Commission proposed the Vote of thanks.

Sr. Jolly FS

SCC North Zone Meeting

Kumarghat & Ambassa Deanery as North Zone met together on March 18 for the SCC Parish leaders Meeting in Chailengta Parish. There were 47 participants from different parishes.



Fr. Thomas Pereira CSC welcomed the participants to Chailengta Parish. Mr. Piangloma Darlong the Secretary, briefed the participants about the gathering and read out the agenda. The

local parish leaders led the seven steps method of Bible sharing with the Bible procession. Then there was a presentation of the reports from

all the parishes about SCC activities. The Secretary appreciated the good works done through the SCC Groups. The members spoke about the necessity for training at the Deanery level. Some said that it is better to have a training program in the villages because of better participation. The Meeting was concluded with lunch. *Ivan D'Silva, SVD*

Blessing and Inauguration of JUST Centre & Opening of the Silver Jubilee Year of JUST

“JUST CENTRE”, the new Office of Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura at Damdamia was blessed by Bishop Lumen Monteiro and inaugurated by Fr. Paul Moonjely, the Executive Director of CARITAS INDIA on 19th March 2022. Together with Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, well-wishers and people from Damdamia village, there were over 120 people present for the occasion. The second part of the day's program was the inauguration of Silver Jubilee year of JUST. The Focus Areas of the Jubilee year are: Medicine Free Society, Formation of SHG's in all the Parishes,

Reaching out to new areas for Social Justice, and Caritas Parish. Fr. Lathees S, the Director of JUST, explained about the Focus Areas and shared the activities and achievements of the Organization. Fr. Paul Moonjely, Executive Director of CARITAS INDIA and Bishop Lumen Monteiro appreciated the role played by JUST in empowering and educating the different communities in Tripura through various Projects. Former Directors of JUST Fr.



Arul J, CSC & Fr. Jeevan Kennady SVD were also honored. They both shared their experiences of leading JUST in promoting social Justice and Peace among the people of Tripura. On this occasion JUST remembered all the Fatima Sisters and Staff who rendered their selfless services in the past and at present. *Mr. Cyril Darlong*

JUST News Briefs

Lead Farmers leaving a trail of Success

In the West Tripura District of Tripura, Caritas India formed two farmers clubs Wabusa and Borgachia villages. In record time Yarung farmer club of Borgachia village showed exemplary achievement after getting trained by Caritas India Partner, Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST), ICAR and other agencies. Formed in November 2013, the farmer club carried on with the FARM program. The trainings on Integrated Pest Management, Integrated Nutrient Management, and sustainable agriculture practices helped the farmers to implement these new methods of farming and achieve a better yield.

Arun Debbarma, a lead farmer from Yarung Farmers Club, identified by JUST implemented the learnings from the training in his field which has given promising results. Now his annual income is between Rs.250,000 to 300,000 by selling his farm surplus produce like maize, medicinal herbs, beans, bitter gourd & paddy in the nearby market. Arun also has been spearheading the idea of spreading the spirit of hard work among his fellow farmers in his village and it is heartening to see that at least seven



other members of Yarung Farmers club are already following him and started earning well.

The success of Yarung Farmers club motivated Wabusa Farmers Club to follow in their footsteps. Arun's inspiring story went beyond his village and Hiranmala Debbarma, (51), President of the Wabusa Farmers Club, was motivated to start cultivating crops by availing a loan of Rs.5,000 in 2015. Today, Hiranmala is a proud farmer earning approximately Rs.300,000 annually by selling crops like banana, bitter gourd, okra, ash gourd, chilies, etc., in the nearby

market. Mr. Robert Lushai, Coordinator of FARM NE Program said that Mrs. Hiranmala Debbarma is a hard-working and determined lady who always aims higher to become a self-sustained and contented woman. She has the potential to improve the standard of her family. These Farmers Clubs not only create a ripple effect in the community but also lead the way towards food security and sovereignty.

Mr. Cyril Darlong

Bishop's Program for April 2022

02: Basaiha Chapel Blessing, Chailengta
03: Installation of new PP Chailengta
10: Charkolokpara, Khumwllwng Parish
12: Pastoral Meet at JUST Hall
Chrism Mass at SFX Cathedral

14-17: Holy Week Services, Agartala
18: Meet SCC Superior General
19-22: NE Bishops Meet, Itanagar
24: Confirmations, Pitra Parish

Our Distinguished Guests

- Sr. Miriam, FSM Provincial from Bangalore
- Sr. Regina, FSM Councilor from Tamil Nadu
- Sr. Lissy, SKD Delegate from Miao, Arunachal
- Sr. Benny Fernandes, UFS Provincial from Dimapur
- Sr. Juliana Pereira, UFS Vice Provincial from Dimapur
- Sr. Rose, SD Procurator from Ghaziabad
- Sr. Rejit SD, from Meghalaya
- Fr. Baltha, Fr. Kennedy, and Fr. Jeyaseelan from Aizawl Diocese
- Fr. Clement Amo CSC, from Barunga, Assam
- Fr. Poly Moonjely, ED of Caritas India from Delhi
- Sr. Lisa Chetri, MSMHC Provincial from Guwahati
- Fr. Prashanto CSC with Staff from Khawzawl, Mizoram
- Sr. Christina, SKD, Asst. General from Kerala