



Link



Pastor's Corner

The Company You Keep Shapes Who You Become

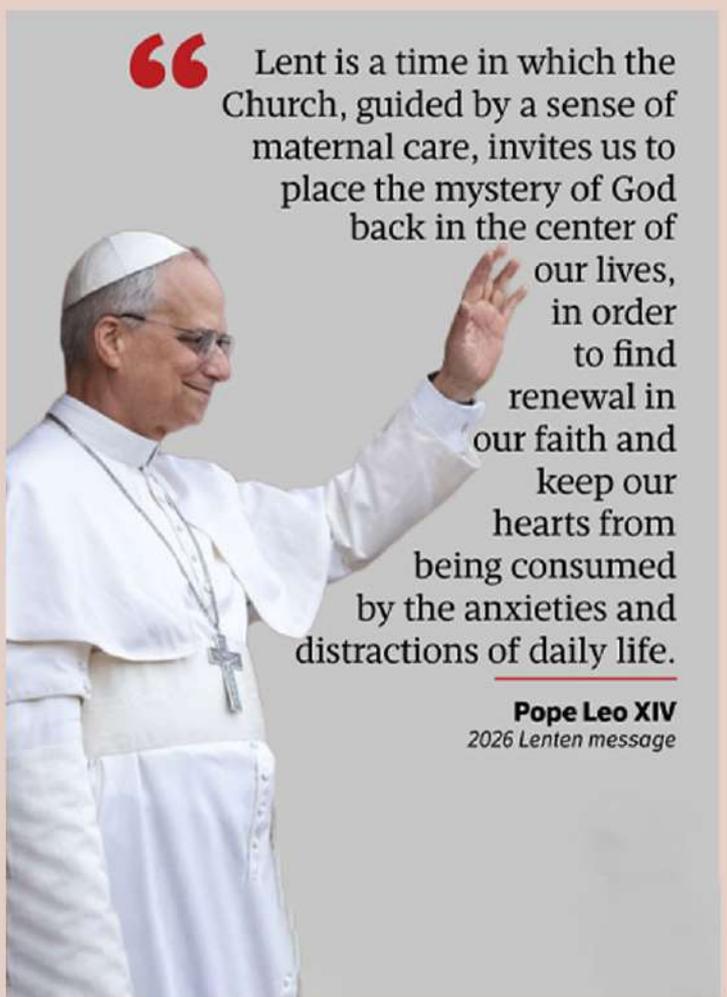


This motivational writeup in *Charisindia* helps as a good reminder to protect ourselves from virus threats. The author, Thomas ISAC writes: The other day, a colleague approached me for help with an Excel file saved on her USB drive. Curious, I gently asked where she had used the USB before bringing it to me. She handed me the drive, and I plugged it into my computer. To my surprise, the folders on the USB weren't visible. It quickly became evident that the USB was infected with a virus. I informed her, expecting her to understand the situation. But instead, she was puzzled and argued, "How can it have a virus? It's a brand-new USB, just two days old!" I explained it to her. She had connected the USB before bringing it to me. She said she had used it at a shared computer in her hostel. That was all it took—a single connection to a virus-infected computer to compromise her new USB.

This incident left me thinking about life and the people we associate with. Just as a clean USB can get infected in moments, so can our thoughts, habits, and values be influenced by the company we keep. No matter how "new" or "pure" someone may feel, constant exposure to negativity or unhealthy influences can taint even the best intentions. This simple incident serves as a powerful reminder for all of us. The people and environments we surround ourselves with shape our thoughts, values, and actions. If you're constantly in the company of toxic individuals, those who spread negativity, or those who lack integrity, it's only a matter of time before their influence begins to rub off on you. The incident of the virus in the USB drive mirrors how quickly bad influences can disrupt a life. But this story doesn't end there. Just as a computer can protect itself from threats with antivirus software, we too can equip ourselves with a defense system to guard against negativity and harmful influences. Antivirus software acts as a defender. It scans, detects, and neutralizes viruses that attempt to harm a computer. In our lives, virtues, good habits, and strong character traits play a similar role. These traits act as our "antivirus," shielding us from the harmful effects of bad influences. Determination, spiritual practices, goal-oriented living, commitment, and resilience are just some of the "defenders" we can develop. When we cultivate these qualities, they form a protective layer, enabling us to face challenges and remain untainted by negativity. At the same time, we must be cautious of the "virus-infected" influences around us. These can come in the form of toxic relationships, harmful habits, or environments that don't align with our values. Recognizing these threats we must protect ourselves by avoiding situations or people that consistently bring us down. If you find yourself already "infected", don't lose hope. Just like antivirus software can remove threats and

restore a computer, we can cleanse our minds and hearts. This analogy teaches us a profound truth: the company we keep and the environments we immerse ourselves in are powerful forces that shape who we become. A new USB doesn't stay unaffected by a virus-infected computer. Similarly, our purest intentions can be tainted if we constantly expose ourselves to negativity or unhealthy influences. Choose your company wisely. Seek relationships that nurture your growth and environments that inspire you. Build your internal "antivirus" by cultivating habits, virtues, and a purpose-driven life. Be mindful of the connections you make and the paths you walk. Let us strive to develop our inner defenders, stay true to our values, and walk paths that lead to growth, positivity, and purpose.

+ Lumen, CSC



“ Lent is a time in which the Church, guided by a sense of maternal care, invites us to place the mystery of God back in the center of our lives, in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life.

Pope Leo XIV
2026 Lenten message

Spiritual Mentoring

As we are in the examination season in Tripura, and most families have children giving one exam or other, it is easy to see the extraordinary care most parents take to ensure that their children's exams go well – their tones are softer, words are kinder, and the grub is better. Some of them even accompany their child to school and stay there until the exam is over.

In our context, one seldom comes across such mentoring of children by parents in spiritual matters, however. That should be a cause of concern because long before a child learns catechism in the parish or hears a homily at Sunday Mass, he or she should be learning what faith looks like at home, from the parents.

If a doubt arises about how competent our parents are to do it, we need to remember that "spiritual mentoring," is not something complicated or reserved for theologians. It is simple and very practical. It is a mother teaching her child to make the Sign of the Cross before sleep. It is a father taking his children to Mass even after a long week of work. It is parents forgiving each other and showing their children that prayer is not just for church, but for everyday life. We know that ordinary practices like daily rosary, Holy Mass etc. form extraordinary Christians.

Church history shows us powerful examples of parents shaping the faith of their children.

The tears, persistence and the quiet mentoring of Sainty Monica led her son Augustine eventually to conversion. One thinks of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, whose both parents simply lived their faith sincerely and consistently. From that home came a great saint. Mama Margaret would lead her son Johny Bosco to the window and showing the starlit sky say, "if the sky is so beautiful how much more beautiful would heaven be!" Pope John Paul II often spoke about the deep influence of his father, who would kneel in prayer at home.

In today's world our children are exposed to many influences through mobile phones, social media, and changing cultural values. If we do not guide them spiritually, someone else will. Spiritual mentoring cannot be left only to priests, sisters, or catechists. They may assist—but parents are surely the first teachers of the faith.

The future of the Church in Tripura is not only in our institutions—it is in our homes, around our family prayer mats, at our dinner tables, and in the quiet example of parents who love God.

May our homes become small Nazareths, where children learn not only how to succeed in life, but how to walk with Christ—today, and for the rest of their lives.



J. Pulinthanath, SDB

As families in Tripura carefully guide their children through exam season, this reflection reminds us that spiritual mentoring deserves the same attention. Faith is first learned at home—through simple prayer, forgiveness, and loving example. When parents nurture faith daily, homes become small Nazareths, forming lifelong disciples of Christ.

In Loving Memory of Fr. Willy Raymond, CSC

Former Director of Holy Cross Family Ministries

We pray for the soul of Fr. Willy Raymond, CSC,
who passed away
on 16th February, 2026 of a massive heart attack.

Fondly remembered by the Diocese of Agartala

*Eternal Rest Grant unto him, O Lord,
And let Perpetual Light Shine upon him.*

Fr. Willy as he was fondly called,
was a great friend of our Diocese and has
helped in a number of ways.

He was a personal friend of
our Bishop Lumen who deeply
mourns his loss.



GANDA TWISA PARISH

Youth Empowerment Seminar



A Youth Seminar was conducted on 8th February at St. Arnold Parish, Ganda Twisa on the theme "Youth Empowerment." 83 youths participated in the seminar. The seminar was led by Fr. Sebin Kunnappallil, the Parish Youth Animator, and Sr. Aruna Kansus S.Sp.S. The seminar featured insightful sessions on navigating peer pressure, understanding one's purpose, and staying consistent in faith and values. These interactive talks equipped the youths with practical tools to tackle life's challenges and stay focused on their goals. The first session was conducted by Fr. Sebin who spoke on the topic of Peer Pressure. He explained the different types of peer pressure commonly faced by today's youth. The youth were encouraged to learn to say "NO" to wrong influences, avoid bad company, and put on the armor of God, trusting in God's guidance to make the right choices. The second session was conducted by Sr. Aruna on the topic of change your angle, stay faithful and growth will follow. In this session, the youth were encouraged to look at life from different perspectives and to understand situations with patience and openness. This session reminded the youth that faithfulness in small, daily actions shapes character and leads to long-term growth. The seminar aimed to empower youths to be confident, faithful, and positive influencers in their communities. As they return to their daily lives, they are equipped to make a difference, armed with new friendships, insights, and a renewed sense of purpose. The program concluded with a common meal.

Fr. Sebin K

KUMARGHAT PARISH

Installation of new Parish Priest



On 8th February 2026, Kumarghat Parish joyfully witnessed the installation of Rev. Fr. Sojan Augustine as its new Parish Priest. The ceremony was officiated by Rev. Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD, Dean of Ambassa Deanery who represented the bishop, in the presence of nine priests, religious sisters, and around 300 lay faithful.

The holy Eucharist was presided over by Rev. Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC, the outgoing Parish Priest. The liturgy was solemn and prayerful, marking a meaningful transition in the life of the parish. During the rite of installation, Fr. Ivan entrusted the pastoral care of the parish to Fr. Sojan, encouraging him in his new responsibility.

Fr. Lancy was warmly thanked for his dedicated seven years of service to the parish community. The faithful expressed their gratitude for his guidance and welcomed Fr. Sojan with prayerful support as he begins his ministry at Kumarghat.

Fr. Francis Xavier, CSC

DEPACHERRA PARISH

Bishop Lumen blesses new St. Mary's Chapel at Hapaiya Para



Depacherra, February 22, 2026: St. Mary's Catholic Church, Hapaiya Para, was inaugurated and blessed by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, Bishop of Agartala, on February 22, 2026. The ceremony marked a significant milestone for the local Catholic community at Hapaiya Para.

Parishioners from various sub-stations gathered in large numbers to attend the blessing of the new church and participated in the Holy Eucharist, celebrating the spiritual significance of the new house of worship.

The parish community extends its special thanks to Mrs. Dolly Reang, EM, TTAADC, for her generous contribution that made the construction of this chapel possible. Gratitude was also expressed to Bishop Lumen Monteiro for his blessings and guidance. Acknowledgement was given to the vision and efforts of Fr. Lawrence Darlong, Parish Priest, whose leadership and dedication led to the construction of this new church, fulfilling the spiritual needs of the parish. This new church will serve as a spiritual centre, and a symbol of faith, fostering unity and devotion among the villagers.

Fr. Derrick Augustin

TUIKARMAW PARISH

Maria sangha Convention



Parish level, the 4th Maria Sangha Convention was held on 7th and 8th February, 2026, at St. Paul's Church, Laxmichara. We were privileged to have four resource persons for the program. Namely

Sr. Mary Halam CSC, Sr. Pramila Lobo UFS, Fr. Leenus and Catechist Lebyo Reang. The program was well organised, and 120 women attended, and the total participants were 170, including men and children. During the program, the Bible Quiz, singing and dancing competition was organized and it was nice to see that all participated actively. Holy Eucharist, adoration and confession were also held during the program, and many came for the Sacrament of reconciliation. It was also a wonderful moment for the Laxmichara Mondoli members to come together and support one another for such a meaningful program.

Fr. Jerome, CSC, Parish Priest



MESSAGE FOR LENT 2026
"LISTENING AND FASTING"
LENT AS A TIME OF CONVERSION
BY POPE LEO XIV



Dear brothers and sisters, Lent is a time in which the Church, guided by a sense of maternal care, invites us to place the mystery of God back in the center of our lives, in order to find renewal in our faith and keep our hearts from being consumed by the anxieties and distractions of daily life.

Every path towards conversion begins by allowing the word of God to touch our hearts and welcoming it with a docile spirit. There is a relationship between the word, our acceptance of it and the transformation it brings about. For this reason, the Lenten journey is a welcome opportunity to heed the voice of the Lord and renew our commitment to following Christ, accompanying him on the road to Jerusalem, where the mystery of his passion, death and resurrection will be fulfilled.

LISTENING

This year, I would first like to consider the importance of making room for the word through listening. The willingness to listen is the first way we demonstrate our desire to enter into relationship with someone. In revealing himself to Moses in the burning bush, God himself teaches us that listening is one of his defining characteristics: "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry" (Ex 3:7). Hearing the cry of the oppressed is the beginning of a story of liberation in which the Lord calls Moses, sending him to open a path of salvation for his children who have been reduced to slavery. Our God is one who seeks to involve us. Even today he shares with us what is in his heart. Because of this, listening to the word in the liturgy teaches us to listen to the truth of reality. In the midst of the many voices present in our personal lives and in society, Sacred Scripture helps us to recognize and respond to the cry of those who are anguished and suffering. In order to foster this inner openness to listening, we must allow God to teach us how to listen as he does. We must recognize that "the condition of the poor is a cry that, throughout human history, constantly challenges our lives, societies, political and economic systems, and, not least, the Church."

FASTING

However, in order to practice fasting in accordance with its evangelical character and avoid the temptation that leads to pride, it must be lived in faith and humility. It must be grounded in communion with the Lord, because "those who are unable to nourish themselves with the word of God do not fast properly." As a visible sign of our inner commitment to turn away from sin and evil with the help of grace, fasting must also include other forms of self-denial aimed at helping us to acquire a more sober lifestyle, since "austerity alone makes the Christian life strong and authentic." In this regard, I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbor. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.

REFERENCES:

1. APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION DILEXTE (4 OCTOBER 2025), 9.
2. AUGUSTINE THE USEFULNESS OF FASTING, I, I.
3. BENEDICT XVI, CATECHESIS (9 MARCH 2011).
4. PAUL VI, CATECHESIS (8 FEBRUARY 1978).

BEC Silver Jubilee at NEDSSS Guwahati
Delegates from Agartala participate



The BEC (Basic Ecclesial communities) Silver Jubilee was celebrated by the 15 Dioceses of Northeast India from 29th January 2026 to 1st February 2026 at Social Forum, Guwahati. The theme of the Silver Jubilee was "Word of God Transforming Northeast through BECs". Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Religious and Lay Faithful from the Northeast region as well as from other regions participated in the Silver Jubilee celebration. The celebration brought together delegates from various dioceses, including 20 delegates from the diocese of Agartala, led by Fr. Lancy D Souza, the Diocesan BEC Coordinator, Fr. Sebin Kunnappallil, Diocesan Assistant BEC Coordinator and Fr. Derrick Augustin, Depacherra Deanery BEC Coordinator. The Jubilee celebration featured sessions by the dignitaries and discussions on strengthening and promoting Basic Ecclesial communities in the region. BECs have been playing a vital role in transforming the Church in Northeast India, promoting inclusivity, addressing social issues and transforming the Church in the neighborhood through Gospel sharing. The Silver Jubilee celebration was an opportunity for the delegates to reflect on their mission and renew their commitment to spreading the Gospel. The Jubilee celebration ended with a Holy Eucharistic celebration and grant finale at St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Byrnihat.

Fr. Sebin Kunnappallil,
Asst. Coordinator

The First Floor at Depacherra a Boost for the Holy Cross Higher Secondary School



Depacherra, February 21, 2026: A significant milestone was achieved at Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Depacherra, with the inauguration of the first floor of the Higher Secondary Block. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Bishop Lumen Monteiro, C.S.C., who officially opened the new facility and blessed the premises.

The event saw a gathering of priests, enthusiastic students, dedicated teachers, parents, and alumni all of whom contributed to the excitement of the occasion. The new Floor is a testament to the school's commitment to providing quality education and better infrastructure to its students.

The school management extends its heartfelt gratitude to LED and Hilfswerk Liechtenstein, whose generous support made this project possible. The school management fondly remembers and thanks the tireless efforts of Fr. Prasad Rao, the Financial Administrator and Fr. Lawrence Darlong, the Principal for making this new floor a reality. The addition of the new floor with classrooms is expected to enhance the learning environment and provide students with improved facilities to pursue their academic goals.

The inauguration also coincided with the celebration of the Pearl Jubilee of Bishop Lumen's Episcopal Consecration and the establishment of the Diocese of Agartala. The occasion was marked with the cutting of the cake and everyone present wished Bishop and thanked him for his guidance and shepherding ministry.

Fr. Derrick Augustin

Catechists Animation Program at Pastoral Centre

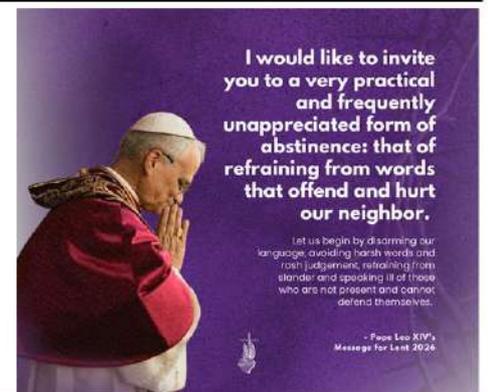
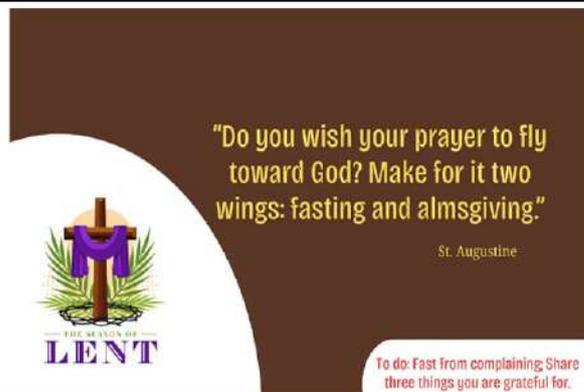


Twenty five of the fulltime Catechists came together on 19-21 February for a periodical animation program. The program began with the registration, evening prayers and introductory session on 19" in the Pastoral Centre Chapel. Fr. Maxim welcomed them for the seminar, briefed them about the seminar and instructed them on their primary task as Catechists in their respective parishes.

The next day began with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Fr. Maxim, followed by input sessions on the Sacrament of Marriage, Preparation and Follow up in Family life by Fr. Amal. It was an interactive session with questions and clarifications on the subject. The Catechists were very grateful for the input given to them on the subject. In the evening there was Way of the Cross with the parishioners and Eucharistic Adoration along with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In the end the Catechists were given a small token of love and appreciation for their dedicated life.

The Catechists also were asked to bring along their program cum report journals which they undertake in their parishes having been endorsed by the Parish Priests. This is the asset of the parish history moments. They were corrected and instructed that this becomes a great treasure of the Church in their respective parishes for future of the Church in Tripura. On the following day they left for their respective places with a renewed spirit.

Fr Maxim SVD, Director



Free Health Camp benefits over 400 Villagers



A free health camp was successfully organized by JUST at Birenjoy Para and Chandiram Para under Karbook Sub-Division of Gomati District on 27th and 28th of January. The camp was conducted to provide basic healthcare services to people living in remote villages with limited access to medical facilities. More than 400 people from the two villages attended the camp and received free health check-ups. The beneficiaries included men, women, elderly persons, youth, and children. People came with common health problems such as fever, cold, cough, body pain, stomach ailments, skin problems, and blood pressure-related issues. Doctors and medical staff from the Karbook Sub-Division carried out thorough health examinations of the patients. After proper check-ups, the doctors provided medical advice and prescribed suitable medicines. All prescribed medicines were distributed free of cost, which brought great relief to poor and needy families. The camp also helped in creating awareness about the importance of timely medical care and regular health check-ups. Villagers appreciated the effort of JUST and the medical team for bringing healthcare services to their doorstep. The health camp was a meaningful step toward improving community health and overall wellbeing in the area.

Awareness and Interactive session for Single Women



An awareness and interactive session was organized by JUST on 1st February at Paharpur under Gomati District as part of the Single Women Project. The session aimed to enhance the knowledge of participants on livelihood opportunities, collective farming, and available institutional support. Single women beneficiaries actively participated and shared their experiences and challenges. The session was facilitated by project staff along with the Director of JUST, Fr. Lathees S., who spoke in detail about the concept of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). He explained the importance of collective action and how joining an FPO can help women farmers access better markets, fair prices, technical guidance, and financial support. The discussion highlighted the benefits of working together to strengthen bargaining power and reduce individual risks. Participants were encouraged to explore opportunities in horticulture as a way to diversify income and improve household nutrition. The team also explained how members can avail various services and support from FPOs, including input supply, training, and marketing linkages. Information on relevant government schemes was shared so that participants can access available benefits and improve their economic condition. The session was highly interactive, with participants asking questions and expressing interest in joining FPO activities. Overall, the program helped build awareness, motivated single women to engage in collective initiatives, and strengthened their confidence to explore sustainable livelihood options.

Robert Lushai

Our Distinguished Guests

- Fr. George Thomas, MSFS Provincial Superior from Guwahati
- Mr. Sunny Godinho, Jesus Youth National Coordinator
- Fr. Vincy, TOR, Jesus Youth Full Time Chaplain
- Fr. Francis Marak from Tura Diocese
- Fr. Promod Digal from Guwahati Archdiocese

Bishop's Program for March 2026

- 01: Mass @ Tuithampui under Moharpara Parish
- 03-07: NE Bishop's Council Meet @ Tezpur
- 10: Meet OFM Cap Provincial @ Agartala
- 22: Women's Day celebration @ Moharpara Parish
- 29: Parish Mass
- 31: Pastoral Meet @ St. Joseph Hall, Agartala
- Chrim Mass @ SFX Cathedral