



Pastor's Corner

A writer and a farmer were talking one day in a local café about the farmer's soybean and corn crops. Rain had been abundant in recent weeks, and the results were evident. The soybeans and corn were shooting up dramatically. "All of this rain must be a great relief to you," the writer said. The farmer replied, "My crops are especially vulnerable now." "What do you mean?" the writer asked. The farmer replied, "Even a short drought could have a devastating effect." "Why is that?" the writer asked. The farmer explained, "When it rains so much, the plants are not required to push their roots deeper into the earth in search of

water. All of the roots remain near the surface. If a drought hits and begins to dry out the earth, it also dries out those shallow roots. The plants then die quickly." He concluded, "A good plant needs deep roots that can withstand what happens above the ground."

In our Diocese we can understand this metaphor quite well as our people are new in their faith. The initial excitement for the Lord and his Church is often gone as fast as it came and because the roots are not very deep they swing to the other side at the slightest challenge that comes their way.

Deep Roots



Let us choose to send down roots into what is truly life-giving and enduring. Then, when times of stress hit our life, a deep-rooted love of God will give us the power to endure. If the roots are deep and strong, the tree needn't worry about the wind. As the Prophet Jeremiah writes: "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord... He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; the leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." (17:7, 8)

+Lumen, CSC

Editorial



Hinduism, as practiced by some indigenous people of Tripura, has an impressive array of practices. Take *pujas*, for instance. There are specific *pujas* earmarked for almost each day of the week: *honiboro* on Sundays, *mangalchandi* or *manasa puja* on Tuesday, *laxmi puja* on Thursday, *soni puja* on Saturday. Besides these weekly observances, there are also monthly and annual events like Saklu Mwtai puja, Ekadoshi, Krishna Janmastami, Harisabha and so on.

It is also equally remarkable to see the fervor with which most of these are celebrated. The Thursday *Laxmi puja* is performed in the evening, on the rontok, after having fasted the whole day. *Ekadoshi* too is preceded by daylong fast. Some offer the *Soni puja* on Saturday clad

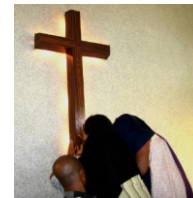
only in the loincloth they just bathed with.

And the annual *puja* of *Saklu Mwtai* or *Mwtai kotor*, which women offer in an enclosed and exclusive area in the courtyard, has stringent rules. Not only must they fast the entire day, but while the *puja* is on, they cannot indulge in the pleasure of drinking water, swallowing the spittle, or (come to think of it,) even farting!

It is surprising that after coming over to Christianity, the same people find it hard to make time to attend Sunday Mass, which is all what the new religion often asks of them by way of observances. It is surprising that individuals who before becoming Christians, thought it the order of the day to fall prostrate before a *Ghusai*, do

Untenable Passages

pranam, and even drink the water into which he dips his toe, find it hard to salute their priest, 'or while calling prefix his name with the respectful 'father'.



In earlier times, when the Brahmin visited a tribal household for a ritual, they had to offer to the holy person a whole load of goods including, paddy, fruits, ritak (clothes), cot, and if the

occasion was *shradh* of the dead, a cow - that a boat or a bullock cart was needed to carry away the 'offerings'. It is surprising how households with such experiences, after entering the Christian faith, find it hard to make a contribution or offer 'one-tenth' to the Church. Amusing, indeed!

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

Bodhjunnagar Parish

Chapel Blessing: May 15th stands as an important day for Saint Andre Parish, Bodhjunnagar as Bishop Lumen Monteiro Blessed and inaugurated a Chapel at Pottapara. The entire parish of Saint Andre gathered together to witness and professes their faith along with the local *mondoli*. It was a long cherished dream of the local *mondoli* to have a Chapel dedicated to St. Francis Xavier. Bishop Lumen called upon every Christian to be a living temple of God, and to be committed witnesses in the family and society. It was a Chapel build not only with cement and bricks but entire Parish Contributed their little might, through "shramdan". The young and old came together, through Maria sanghas, youth groups to be part of this celebration. Fr. K.J. Abraham the Provincial Superior thanked the local Community and Sisters. During the felicitation program a prayer book in Kokborok was released by Bishop Lumen along with the first Parish news letter. Every one joined in festive lunch. Thanks to the meticulous planning of Fr. Jilson, CSC and SABS and Holy Cross Sisters.

Feast of Corpus Christi: On Sunday 10th June, the Feast of corpus Christi; the



first Holy Communicants were delighted to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, from the hands of his Lordship Bishop Lumen Monterio. During the Holy Eucharist presided over by Bishop, a new Parochial Administrator was installed in the person of Fr. Jilson Chollanal, CSC. After the Eucharist a felicitation programme was organized for Bishop, Fr. K. J. Abraham, CSC Provincial of Holy Cross Fathers and new parochial administrator, Fr. Jilson, CSC. It was also the feast day of SABS Sisters and rightly the celebrations came to an end with a festive agape at the SABS convent.

Chandrakant Parkhe, CSC

Ambassa Parish

The Day of Pentecost in Ambassa Parish: Age old good traditions are always kept up in the Church and continued in the future too. As per the tradition, Holy Spirit Church, Ambassa celebrates parish feast on the Day of Pentecost. This year we witnessed double celebrations which also doubled our joy. On the evening of 26th May



there was a colourful celebration of 16th Episcopal ordination anniversary of Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, our beloved bishop. There was an hour of adoration to thank the almighty followed by a short cultural programme. During the cultural programme Bp. Lumen Monteiro, CSC was felicitated and honored with traditional risha for his commendable service to the Diocese. Bishop Lumen in his speech expressed his gratitude to God for His providence and to the people for celebrating his Episcopal anniversary and praying for the Diocese.

On the following day 27th May, Pentecost Sunday, the church feast was celebrated in grand manner. Large number of people had gathered for the celebration. At the start of Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Bishop, Fr. Joachim Kullu, SVD, explained to the people about mystery of the Holy Spirit, its fruits and the gifts. On this feast day, 73 people received. At the end of the programme fellowship meal was served for every one present.

Fr. Nabin Lakra, SVD

Nandannagar Quasi- Parish

Parish Retreat: The Quasi parish of Don Bosco Nandannagar organized a three-day Charismatic Retreat for the parishioners from 1-3 June. The Retreat, led by Fr. Joshi and Team from Gandacherra, offered the participants a wonderful experience of the Lord. The well- animated sessions of preaching were interspersed



NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

with inspiring music led by Mr. Rajeev. On the last day of the Retreat, the large crowd that had gathered also got an opportunity to take part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. *Fr. P.J, SDB*

Khumlung Parish

Merini Jatra/Rosary Procession

Devotion to Mother Mary leads to faithfulness to Christ. Why we must develop devotion to Mother Mary, etc., were the messages given to huge crowd of hostellers and parishioners on the occasion of *Merini*



Jatra/Rosary procession to close the Marian month on 27th May. The Rosary procession began at 4 in the evening at 4 places Khumtoya, Debrakami, Subomanipara (a non-catholic village) and Champknagar simultaneously, symbolizing 4 mysteries of the Rosary leading to Khumlung Church. Messages on devotion to Mother Mary and the importance of the Rosary in our families and life were delivered by different village leaders.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

More 'Milk' from Rubber Trees!!!

Tripura is going to take over South India in its rubber cultivation. The soil is fertile and climate is conducive for rubber plantation. The majority of the inhabitants are going to 'harvest cash' from rubber cultivation. It is one of the important sources of income (besides going green). Along with our Bishop Lumen and Fr. George CSC we decided to plant rubber. Fr. Arun Minj SVD our Rector began demarking and clearing the land three months ago sacrificing home holidays. Seminarians accompanied the



Rector in clearing and putting manure, sacrificing at least a week of games. We are happy that we have planted 2,500 rubber saplings in our property. We hope and pray that we will get plenty of milk from the rubber trees and enhance our self-sufficiency.

Rajendra Reang, Seminarian, Champknagar

Kathalcherra Parish

Youth Seminar

Kathalcherra Catholic Youth came together at the parish premises for one day seminar on Sunday, June 10. The seminar was

aimed at bringing the parish youth back under the banner KCYM (Kathalcherra Catholic Youth Moment) and making the moment active and vibrant. 'Role of Youth in the Family' being the theme of the day, the resource person emphasized on the responsible role of youth in bringing the family together through prayer, love & fellowship. Keeping the Holy Family as the Model, the youth resolved to strive for family unity & peace through constant sharing and forgiveness. The seminar was also an occasion for the members to be reminded about the guiding principles of KCYM and the role of office bearers at each mondoli. A tentative yearly program was approved during the Seminar.

Fr. Valerian Castelino, CSC



Bible Seminar for North East Region

“Your word is lamp for my feet, a light on my path” (Ps 119:105). Fr. Thomas Manjaly, Bible Secretary for N.E. Region organized a Bible Seminar for N.E. Region at Pastoral Centre, Shillong from 15th to 17th May. There were about 30 participants from different Dioceses of North East. Fr. Nabin Lakra, SVD, Secretary for the Commission for Bible represented Agartala Diocese. “Ignorance of Bible is ignorance of Christ,” said St. Jerome. During the Workshop more emphasis was given on daily reading of the Word of God carefully and personalization of it. Word of God can be used effectively for pastoral ministry, for which one needs to deepen his/her knowledge about the Scriptures. At present there is fervent need for training of Lectors, because the Word of God must be proclaimed effectively and make it come alive and active. *Fr. Nabin Lakra, SVD, Secretary*

Bethany Sisters in Northeast clock Gold

Bethany Sisters celebrated the Golden Jubilee of their presence in Northeast India at Guwahati on 28th May with a solemn Eucharistic service and a felicitation program. One of the pioneers was present for the jubilee celebrations.

Heeding to the urgent plea of Msgr George Breen CSC, the then Prefect Apostolic of Haflong Mother Macrina BS, the then Superior General of the Congregation braved to accept the mission in North East India. Filled with true missionary spirit the dauntless group of four took up a daring venture, almost a leap in the dark and reached Kolasib, Mizoram on 28 June 1962.

Assam which included most of the present North Eastern States including Mizoram, was economically and educationally underdeveloped and more significantly it was in turmoil.

The ministry begun by the pioneers in the field of education has grown and today there are 197 Sisters working all over Northeast and West Bengal in the fields of education, social work and medical care. Among them are 67 local sisters. They have 2 formation houses and 30

communities.

The Congregation of Bethany Sisters known as the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany, was founded by late Msgr. Raymond Francis Camillus Mascarenhas, in Mangalore, in 1921. Bethany Sisters worldwide number around 1,350 and work in 24 States of India and a few countries abroad.

To mark the Golden Jubilee the Congregation has opened three missions: one in the Miao Diocese in Arunachal Pradesh, the second at Nalbari in Bongaigaon Diocese, and third at Khayenpur in the Diocese of Agartala, informed Sr Noeline BS, the Provincial Superior. *Source: CRI*

Fatima Sisters rejoice at Silver Year in Northeast

The Sisters of Our Lady of Fatima expressed their gratitude to God on completing 25 years in the Northeast on 29th February through a meaningful theme “In Symphony of Gratitude, We Recommit Our Faith Journey”.

The Sisters of Our Lady of Fatima popularly known as 'Fatima Sisters' with their headquarters in Pune, Maharashtra, made their first entry into the Northeast at the invitation of Rt. Rev. Robert Kerketta, the then Bishop of Tezpur. 29th February 2012, Rt. Rev. Robert Kerketa the emeritus Bishop of Tezpur together with Rt. Rev. Thomas Pulloppillil, the Bishop of Bongaigaon and few other priests concelebrated the meaningful Eucharist in the presence of the sisters and well-wishers.

Sr. Ventura Fernandes the Regional Superior while extending a word of welcome to all, exclaimed, “we are here this morning to say, 'Thank You God' for the past 25 years. Sr. Santan Nago the Superior General expressed her gratitude towards the Sisters as well as the Bishops and priests for their continued support.

The Fatima Sisters had their humble beginning in Bellary in 1893 and rose to its new life in Pune from 1951. Presently 430 in number, they carry out the mission of Christ through the two Provinces of Mumbai and Bangalore and one Region in Northeast. They have 80 houses in 13 States in 34 dioceses of India and abroad

Source: CRI, Sr. Luzan Pereira



NEWS FROM THE JUST

Health Awareness Program at Bishramganj:

On 25th May, JUST organized a Health awareness program on herbal remedies and safe drinking water under IDEA project at Adavasi colony, Bishramganj. Sr. Grace was the facilitator of the program along with Mr. Vincent Debbarma, coordinator of the project. 36 participants attended the program. The sessions/topics included awareness on preventive healthcare, prevention of waterborne diseases and herbal remedies. Sr. Grace interacted with the people explaining the diseases caused by water and the remedies that can be used. All the people took active part in the program.

Vincent Debbarma

Peace Rally at Waimbuk: A massive Peace Rally was conducted at Waimbuk village under Damchera R.D. Block, North Tripura. This Rally was conducted under Peace Project on 30th May. There were about 300 participants who took part in the Rally. Mr. Daniel Debbarma Project Manager of JUST represented the organization. The theme of the rally was “Give Peace a Chance”.

Daniel Debbarma



- Fr. Jerome D'Souza, SVD from Mumbai
- Sr. Josma, MC Regional from Shillong
- Fr. David Pinto from Karwar Diocese
- Fr. George Maliekal, SDB Provincial and Councilors from Silchar
- Fr. Shaji, ML, CSC from Umkiang

NEWS FROM THE JUST

Greatly appreciating your timely news-bulletin and heartily enjoying the humor. *Udumala from CCBI*

Thanks for the Link; prompt as usual; I still thought today was the 31st! *Olivers, Pune*

Very interesting, Bishop. Where do you gather all these? *Mirabelle, Kolkata*

Got the link and your special message about congress. That was really good. I laughed a lot reading it. How true! *Alice, USA*

Again you did it... on the dot... that is surely «extra» ordinary... and for so many years! *Conrad, Canada*

Thank you for June LINK. We enjoy laughing and thinking whenever we receive the LINK. *+Lumon, Imphal*

I thank you again very much for the new LINK which I have sent at once to our confrere from NE-India Ignatius Gari, who is studying here in Germany. *Rudi Tengler sdb Deutschland*

Thanks for the funny English words...especially Congress...there is also a congress in the USA and lots of people complain about it! *Alan, Nairobi*

Thanks for the Link. The ultimate truth sometimes is a laughing stock! I like the PRO and the CON. *Mark, Dubai*

Thank you for the June LINK which came promptly as it always does, rain or shine. This time the Pastor's Corner is brilliant, as it normally is with jokes and anecdotes, but this time it was "extra" ordinarily brilliant. In spite of many preoccupations keep up the good humour. Thank God for the good work done in the Diocese under your leadership, as I read here and there. Salaams to your co-workers. *+Evarist, Karachi*

The June LINK was wonderful. *Gott, Virginia, USA*

NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Papal Appointments



On 15 May, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Bishop Varghese Chakkalakkal, Bishop of the Diocese of Calicut in India and simultaneously appointed him Apostolic Administrator for the vacant seat of the Diocese of Kannur.

CBCI new Spokesperson



Indian Bishops appointed Fr. Dominic D'Abreo as its Public Relations Officer. The priest from Vasai Diocese replaces Divine Word Fr. Babu Joseph, who held the post for more than 9 years.

Indian Catholic Nun nominated



Sr. Mariola Sequeira, of the Mission Sisters of Ajmer (MSA), is nominated member of Minority Commission. In a first perhaps in the whole of North India, Rajasthan Government has nominated her as a member of the State's Minority Commission. She is known in the human rights circles as an "activist nun".

Fr. Ceyrac passes away



A name that inspires many people in the world... Fr. Ceyrac Pierre SJ (98) Founder Director of All India Catholic University Federation expired on 30.05.2012 at Chennai.

Nearly a million for Pope's Family Mass



Welcomed by 850,000 flag-waving pilgrims gathered at Bresso airport, Pope Benedict XVI looked tired but cheerful as he drove through the crowds in his pope-mobile, stopping several times to wave to children and kiss babies. The Pope said traditional family values and Sunday rest were key to escaping the ills of modern society and reached out to divorced people Sunday at a mass to close the World Meeting of Families in Milan. "Dear families, despite the relentless rhythms of the modern world, do not lose a sense of the Lord's day," the Pope said, describing the tradition of resting on a Sunday as "an oasis in which to pause... and celebrate the family." The Pope told pilgrims gathered together from 154 countries, in a reference to the West's increasing openness to unconventional families.

Congress Hosts Eucharistic Procession



Some 12,500 pilgrims from around the world participated in a Eucharistic procession through the streets of Dublin, where the 50th International Eucharistic Congress is being held. The procession, which concluded a

day of workshops and presentations dedicated to the theme of "Priesthood and Ministry in the Service of Communion," began at the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) Arena where Mass has been celebrated nearly every day of the Congress.

The 50th IEC concluded on Sunday with the *Statio Orbis*, celebrated in Croke Park Stadium in Dublin, Ireland. The *Statio Orbis* was divided into two parts: first, a series of performances, testimonies, and presentations and, secondly, the celebration of Mass, presided over by papal legate Cardinal Marc Ouellet, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops and the papal delegate. At the close of the Mass, Pope Benedict XVI, speaking from the Vatican in a pre-recorded message, greeted all those who participated in the Congress. The Pope reflected on the theme of the Congress saying that the notion of *koinonia* (communion) has been central to the understanding of the Church, its relationship with Christ, and in the sacraments, particularly, the Eucharist. Towards the end of his statement, the Pontiff announced that the 51st International Eucharistic Congress in 2016 would be held in Cebu City, Philippines. As the announcement was made, thousands of participants from the future host nation waved their flags and applauded with joy.

(Zenit.org)

Floating 'water chapel' to serve tourists

Bishop Martin Su Yao-wen of Taichung signed a memorandum of cooperation recently with a local ship-



building company to produce a floating Catholic "water chapel." Able to hold 48 people, the "water chapel," will sail on Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan's second-largest body of water, to

serve tourists and pilgrims. The chapel is scheduled to be inaugurated at the end of this year and will become a venue for Sunday Masses, weddings and sightseeing services, Liao said. The project aims to raise money to help disabled children.

Source: ucanews.com

BISHOP'S PROGRAM FOR JULY 2012

- 21: Return from USA
- 22: Parish Program, Khumlung
- 23: Meet AC Provincial
- 24-25: CBCI-CARD Meet, Delhi
- 25-27: Caritas Regional Chairmen Meet, Delhi
- 28-29: Parish Program, Gandacherra
- 30: School Extension Blessing, Gandacherra
- 31: Clergy Meeting, Agartala