

Editorial

J. Pulinthanath, SDB



The Pilgrim's Progress

Simultaneous celebrations at Kumarghat and Agartala on 19th March this year, saw the launch of two Churches in the Diocese – St Paul's Parish Church Kumarghat and Don Bosco Parish Church Nandan Nagar, as Centres of Pilgrimage for this Jubilee Year. In a Circular that our Bishop sent, in order to prepare the faithful for this event, he painstakingly explained how the faithful of the Diocese could conduct the pilgrimage so as to derive spiritual benefits in line with the mind of the Church.

Pilgrimage in the context of a Jubilee Year offers the faithful not just an opportunity for physical travel, but for profound spiritual renewal, the Bishop said. Its essential connection to the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist makes it a truly spiritual adventure, — one of personal conversion, repentance, and a closer union with God. He also said that the 'plenary indulgence' tied to pilgrimages during the Jubilee Year is a manifestation of the Church's understanding of God's desire to heal and forgive.

The exhortation given by the Bishop to the parish priests to 'instruct the faithful', need not be limited to matters pertaining to pilgrimage or Jubilee alone, for there is a great deal here that could do with a little instruction.

Take for instance, the small but growing number of faithful in some of our parishes, who are becoming increasingly influenced by Protestant teachings, which, in some cases, lead them to question or even reject longstanding Catholic traditions like Confession, the rosary and Marian devotions. Their specious arguments can also confuse unsuspecting beginners and debilitate their growing faith. This is not to say that our faithful are en masse misguided. Far from it; the above observation applies only to a small segment, for sure. Nevertheless, just because, like the proverbial rotten apple, it is capable of vitiating those near it, we would do well to take stock of such deviations within our flock with utmost seriousness.

To someone whose attitudes have been coloured by protestant sensibilities and teachings, the celebration of the Jubilee and its proposed practices can seem foreign, unnecessary, or even suspicious.

The Parishes of the Diocese must, in this Jubilee year, paying heed to the exhortation of its shepherd, step forward in educating the faithful, helping them to embrace the richness of Catholic spirituality, including the pilgrimages and the indulgences they offer.

A blessed and grace-filled Holy Week and Easter to every reader of Link

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

Pastor's Corner

LEGACY OF GOODNESS



Life is a strange, fleeting journey. One moment, you're the center of attention, basking in the warmth of recognition; the next, you're a forgotten name, a whisper in

the wind. This is the story of being a "ghost"—alive but unseen, remembered but forgotten.

Imagine returning to your high school after two decades. The corridors, once echoing with your laughter and footsteps, now seem foreign. You walk through, hoping to relive those cherished memories. But instead of familiar faces and warm greetings, you're met with blank stares. The walls don't speak of your triumphs, the classrooms don't recall your debates, and the teachers who once praised you have long retired or moved on. A young student stops and asks, "Can I help you? Are you lost?" You realize, in this place where you once belonged, you are now a stranger.

The same goes for your workplace. Once, you were the star employee, the one who brought in clients, closed deals, and lit up the office. Now, returning after years, your name is forgotten, your achievements a distant memory. The new faces, the new stories—none of them include you. Even the old colleagues, if they remain, struggle to remember the details of your time there.

This ghostly transformation is not just limited to places; it extends to relationships too. Friends who were once inseparable drift apart. Time and distance weave their magic, and soon, even the closest bonds can fade. A once-cherished friend becomes a distant acquaintance, their life moving forward without you.

But this isn't a tale of despair—it's a profound life lesson. Life teaches us that everything is transient. Recognition, fame, and even close relationships are fleeting. What truly remains are the experiences we gather, the lessons we learn, and the impact we make, no matter how small or short-lived.

The lesson here is to embrace impermanence. Live fully, knowing that applause will fade, and memories will blur. Instead of chasing lasting recognition, focus on making genuine connections, creating meaningful moments, and leaving positive impressions in the lives of those you touch, even if only for a brief moment.

Being a ghost in life reminds us that it's not about being remembered forever. It's about the quality of the time we spend, the love we share, and the kindness we offer. Even if one day, no one remembers your name, the ripples of your actions will continue to shape the world in ways you may never see. So, live boldly, love deeply, and leave a *LEGACY OF GOODNESS*. Because in the end, it's not about being remembered; it's about making the journey worthwhile. (This was a forward that I received by WhatsApp).

We will soon celebrate Easter—the triumph of life over death and hope over despair. May the resurrection of Jesus fill your heart with faith, peace, and the promise of new beginnings. A blessed and uplifting Easter!

+ Lumen, CSC

Ambassa Parish

Jubilee of Parish Leaders



Ambassa (Tripura) 02 March, 2025: Holy Spirit Church celebrated one day TOT (training of trainers) program for the Church Leaders, BEC leaders, Mothers Association leaders, Youth leaders, etc. There were more than 50 participants from different villages. Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD began the meeting with a prayer and blessing of Family Jubilee Crosses. Mr. Prabath Marak the convenor of Jubilee Committee of the parish informed the leaders that the two Crosses will go to two directions of all the mondolis and reach all the families. Mr. Marak has prepared a booklet of prayers and hymns to be used. The PP exhorted the leaders to learn more about how to conduct the Church service in the absence of a Priest. He said, "a uniform way of conducting Church service, especially on Sundays, is necessary". He taught the leaders the importance of Eucharist and talked about the importance of the Basic Ecclesial Community. He said you must strengthen the BEC units. The leadership seminar concluded with lunch for all the participants.

Ivan D'Silva, SVD

Agartala Cathedral Parish

One day BEC (SCC) Training for Parishioners



A one-day BEC workshop for the parishioners of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral was organized on March 15, 2025, at the Parish Hall. The training aimed to strengthen faith and fellowship among the parishioners by fostering prayer, Gospel sharing, and community building at the grassroots level. The training was facilitated by Fr. Amalraj, the Secretary of the Bible Commission, who guided the participants through various aspects of BEC (SCC). He emphasized the

emphasized the importance of faith-sharing, gospel reflection, and active participation in parish life. A total of 35 participants attended the workshop. The key topics covered were: Understanding the concept of SCC. The role of SCCs in the Church's mission. Biblical reflection in SCC gatherings, how to reflect on the Gospel, and building a Synodal Church through SCCs – Encouraging active involvement in parish activities. The participants actively engaged in group discussions and faith-sharing activities. Many said that the training deepened their understanding of SCCs and motivated them to be more involved in their faith communities.

Mr. Vinod Debbarma,
SFX Cathedral Parish Secretary

Blessing and re-dedication of St. Mary's Chapel, Laxmilunga



March 26, 2025 – was a day of immense joy and gratitude for the mondoli of St. Mary's Church, Laxmilunga, as the renovated church was blessed and

and rededicated by Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, D.D., Bishop of Agartala. The solemn occasion was witnessed by priests, religious sisters, and parishioners, who gathered in great numbers to celebrate this significant milestone in the faith journey of the community. The event commenced with a traditional Adivasi dance, welcoming the Bishop and the priests in a grand procession. This was followed by a brief introduction by the Parochial Administrator, Fr. George S., who expressed profound gratitude to Propaganda Fide, whose generous financial support made this renovation possible. Bishop Lumen Monteiro then proceeded with the blessing of the church by cutting the ribbon, followed by the solemn Holy Eucharist. In his homily, he reflected on the Holy Mass, the altar was anointed and the Chapel was blessed. The liturgy was well-prepared, with melodious hymns sung by the MC Sisters and their inmates, enhancing the prayerful atmosphere. A special felicitation program followed the Mass, where the bishop, priests, and sisters were honored with tokens of appreciation. The event also acknowledged the relentless efforts of the Laxmilunga mondoli and Fatima Sisters in preparing for the occasion. The celebration concluded with a cultural performance by the local children, showcasing the rich traditions of the community. The joyous occasion ended with a fellowship meal, strengthening the bonds of unity and gratitude among the faithful.

Fr. George S., Parochial Vicar

Gondatwisa Parish

A Transformative Experience: Vocation Bible Camp



From March 4th to 6th, St. Arnold Parish Gondatwisa, hosted a memorable and spiritually enriching event, the Vocational Bible Camp. The theme of the Camp was centered on spiritual growth through biblical teachings, and it was structured around a variety of activities. The students were immersed in Bible classes that focused on understanding the core principles of the Christian faith. Through insightful discussions and interactive lessons, the participants gained a better understanding of scripture, and strengthened their connection to the Word of God. The students had the chance to creatively express Bible stories through drama. The skits were a powerful way to bring the scriptures to life and allowed the students to reflect on biblical themes in a personal and entertaining way. The Bible quiz was another engaging activity that tested the students' knowledge of the scriptures in a fun and competitive way. The Vocational Bible Camp was more than just an event — it was truly a transformative experience for the 46 students who participated.

Women's Day Celebration – A Day of Empowerment



St. Arnold Parish witnessed a heartwarming Women's Day celebration on March 16th, as over 90 mothers from various sub-stations gathered to reflect on the role of women in society, family, and faith. The event was graced by Sr. Sunita Kujur, SSPS, who was the Chief Guest, and Sr. Veronica, FS, the Secretary of the Women's Commission, who was the Guest of Honor. The event began after the Holy Mass with a prayer and a warm welcome to all. Sr. Sunita Kujur, in her speech, emphasized the importance of women's empowerment, urging the mothers to not only be strong pillars of their families but also active participants in the growth of their communities. She highlighted how women play a crucial role in shaping the future of society through their nurturing, care, and influence.

Sr. Veronica, Secretary of the diocesan Women Commission, reflected on the role of mothers as the first catechists and teachers of faith. She spoke of how mothers have a unique ability to instill values, discipline, and the love of faith in their children from a very young age. Mrs. Rita Uchoi the President spoke on the challenges women face in the modern world. The Speakers addressed several important topics. They encouraged the women to support and empower one another through mutual understanding and care. The event concluded with a prayer, with women promising to play their roles as the heart of their families and communities.

Fr. P. Amalraj

Tuikarmaw Parish

New Village Chapel at Molsombari



The newly constructed chapel at Molsombari under Tuikarmaw Parish, named after St. Matthew was blessed and inaugurated by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, Bishop of Agartala on 9th March, 2025. The construction was made possible through a generous benefactor, who contributed financially to the project and through the collective efforts of the villagers. The blessing ceremony was attended by nearly 200 people from the village, as well as from different mondalis. The event was marked by a solemn Eucharist, singing, and traditional dances. The villagers also organized a fellowship meal, which was prepared and shared by all.

This chapel is a symbol of Christian unity and collaboration in the village, and its blessing marks a significant milestone in the community's spiritual journey.

Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC

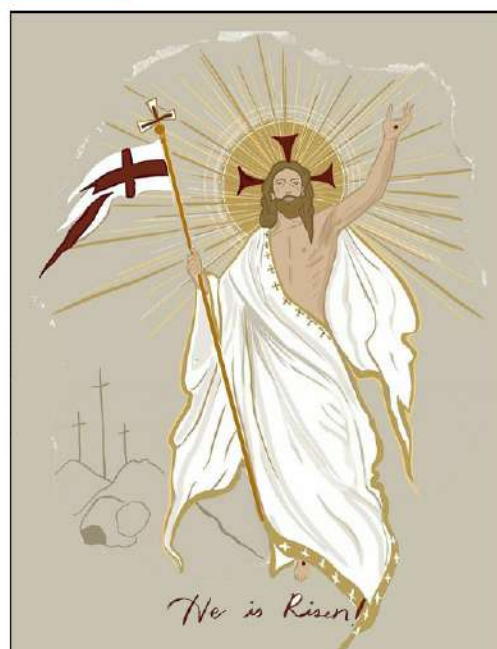
Annual Parish Sabha at Katalia



The Parish Convention (Sabha) is a significant event that brings together the community to celebrate and strengthen their faith. The Annual Parish Sabha of Tuikarmaw Parish was held on 22nd and 23rd March 2025, at Kathalia Village. The Theme of the Sabha was 'Pilgrims of Hope.' Fr. Harry Vaz, a Scripture Professor from St. Pius Seminary, Mumbai, and Fr. Cyprian Pinto SVD were the resource persons. Bishop Lumen Monteiro arrived on 22nd March in the afternoon. He was warmly welcomed by our parishioners. In the presence of Bishop all the monдали presidents read out their respective monдали reports Bishop Lumen then gave a talk on the Theme and addressed some of the pastoral concerns.

On 23rd morning Bishop Lumen, presided over the Holy Eucharist. After the Holy Mass Fr. Thomas Pereira, the parish priest made a power point presentation of Annual Pastoral and Financial report of the Parish for the year 2024-25. The two days of sabha featured a range of activities including worship services, faith formation programmes and leadership training. At the end there was prize distribution and the vote of thanks. The Sabha ended with Bishop's final blessing and a fellowship meal. It was a transformative experience for the entire parish, strengthening their faith and uniting them with each other and with the parish.

Mr. Jagadish Uchoi, Secretary



Wishing
a
Happy Easter
to Our LINK Readers

Hearty Congratulations
to Fr. Fabio Attard, SDB
Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco



Inauguration of Two Pilgrimage Centers in our Diocese

1. St Paul's Church, Kumarghat Annual



On March 19th, St. Paul's Church, Kumarghat, was officially inaugurated as one of the two Pilgrim Centers in the Diocese of Agartala for the Jubilee Year 2025. The event was led by Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC, the Vicar General and Parish Priest, in the presence of 16 priests, religious sisters, and over 700 lay faithful from nine parishes.

The celebration began with a Rosary procession from Holy Cross School, concluding at Mother Mary's Grotto near the church. Fr. Lancy hoisted the Jubilee Flag, blessed the renovated Grotto, and, together with Fr. Ivan D'Silva, inaugurated the Jubilee Door. Then there was a solemn Mass with Fr. Ivan delivering the homily. The Parish Secretary Mr. Roitua Darlong expressed gratitude to all who contributed to the event. The evening concluded with a festive meal, marking the beginning of St. Paul's Church's journey as a Pilgrim Center for the faithful.

Fr. Francis Xavier, CSC,
Asst. Parish Priest

2. Don Bosco Church, Nandannagar



We witnessed a moderate gathering at Don Bosco Church Nandannagar to participate at the declaration of the Parish as a Pilgrimage Centre. Our Bishop, Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, DD, hoisted the flag, blessed the Jubilee Cross, opened the Door, and declared the Parish as a Pilgrimage Centre. The Parish Priest and Dean of Agartala Deanery, Rev. Fr. Christopher SDB, welcomed everyone and explained the meaning of the Pilgrim Centre and how a pilgrimage should be made. He said that all are welcome to make a pilgrimage of hope to our Parish. Being the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Patron of the universal church and patron of fathers, the holy Mass presided over by our Bishop Lumen and the homily, focused on the humble and silent life of St. Joseph.

Mr. R. Debbarma

Women's Day celebrations



Women's Day was celebrated on March 8, at SFX Cathedral Hall Agartala. There was an overwhelming response with over 600 participants from all 25 parishes of the Diocese in attendance. The theme, "Accelerate Action," highlighted the need for joint efforts towards gender equality. The event was graced by Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro as the Chief Guest, along with distinguished Guests including Fr. Ivan D'silva, Fr. Cyprian, Fr. Christopher, Fr. S. George (PP of Cathedral), Mrs. Nandita Debbarma (Hon'ble MLA), and Ms. Monica Debbarma (Senior Scientific Officer, Tripura State Forensic Science Laboratory). It was organized by the Diocesan Women Commission in collaboration with JUST.

The program commenced with the lighting of the lamp by the Chief Guest and dignitaries, accompanied by a prayer led by a woman representative from Moharpara Parish. This was followed by a cultural dance performance by Kumarghat Parish and a welcome song by Cathedral Parish. Fr. Ivan D'silva gave a thought-provoking Talk on this year's Jubilee theme, "Pilgrims of Hope". He encouraged the faithful to embrace repentance and spiritual renewal. Other Guests, including Mrs. Nandita Debbarma and Mrs. Monica Debbarma, shared inspiring messages on women's empowerment, faith, and how self-development contributes to leading a meaningful life and guiding families in Christian values. Fr. Cyprian also provided valuable insights into the significance of Women's Day and the role of women in fostering a faith-filled community. The Women's Day celebration concluded with an inspiring address by Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro, who emphasized the significance of the occasion and the need to work towards equality among all lay faithful. His message encouraged participants to foster inclusiveness, empowerment, and active participation in the Church and society. The event showcased the talents of Women through skit performances, dance performances, and a Deanery-wise quiz competition. A Parish-wise skit competition was also held, adding to the spirit of the celebration. The program concluded with a report presented by Sr. Veronica, President of the Diocese Women Commission, followed by reflections from women representatives of various parishes. The event marked a day of learning, empowerment, and spiritual enrichment for all the attendees.

Sr. Veronica, FS

Deanery level Father's Day for married men



There was deanery level seminar organised for married men (fathers) at Good Shepherd Parish, Kathalcherra on 23 March 2025 on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope". 157 participants took part in the program from five parishes. The program began with the Holy Eucharist at the parish church and animation program was held in Holy Cross School Hall. Animation sessions were conducted on welfare of the spouses and family, common challenges of the family, upbringing of children and family prayer with the theme "a family prays together stays together". The day's program came to an end pledging oneself to be an agent of peace and joy in the family.

Fr. C. Abraham, CSC

Regional Youth Convention Cross visits Agartala Diocese



On 20 March 2025, the RYC Cross made a historic visit to the Agartala Diocese, bringing spiritual renewal to the youth. Hosted at Don Bosco Parish, Nandannagar, the event welcomed over 200 young participants.

The program began at 5:00 pm with the solemn reception of the RYC Cross, handed over by Sr. Wansuk Lyngdoh (RYLA) and Mr. Jonah Huimingam (RYP) to the DEXCO members. This was followed by adoration, confession, and the Holy Mass, presided over by Fr. Christopher Warlarpah, S.D.B., Dean of Agartala Deanery.

After the Mass, the veneration of the RYC Cross took place, and on behalf of Bishop Lumen, the Agartala Diocese Youth Commission gifted the youths a copy of the YOUCAT Faith Course Book. The event was a powerful expression of faith, prayer, and worship, leaving a lasting impact on all who attended.

The Agartala Diocese is grateful for this blessed opportunity and looks forward to more initiatives that nurture the faith and spiritual growth of its youth.

Fr. Derrick, Asst. DYD, Agartala Diocese

Training on Value addition in collaboration with KVK Farmers of Gomati District



18th March, 2025: JUST, in collaboration with Krishi Vikas Kendra (KVK) Gomati District, conducted a training program on preparing fish pickle for farmers in Twikrakma-A, Amarpur Subdivision, under the FARM-NE project. The training aimed at adding value to the local fish produce through pickling. A total of 37 beneficiaries, primarily farmers, attended the session, where they learned the techniques and methods of fish pickling, enabling them to preserve their produce and diversify their products. FARM Project Coordinator Mr. Robert Lushai expressed his gratitude to the participants for their active involvement and thanked KVK for facilitating the training. He emphasized the importance of such initiatives and expressed enthusiasm for future collaborations aimed at providing more skills to local farmers to improve their livelihoods.

Robert Lushai

Inter Youth Club Gathering for Peace Training



JUST organized an inter-youth club gathering for peace at the JUST Hall in Damdamia, bringing together youths from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities. The program aimed to foster unity and promote peace among young people in the region. The event began with an interactive session where attendees engaged in discussions on the importance of inter-community dialogue, idea-sharing, rapport-building, and networking. These conversations highlighted how the youth can collaborate and support each other in times of need, promoting social harmony. The gathering also featured an exciting inter-youth volleyball match, designed to enhance cohesion and understanding among the participants.

The match provided an opportunity for teamwork and camaraderie. The event concluded with a prize distribution ceremony, where the winning team received recognition for their effort and sportsmanship. This initiative by JUST successfully nurtured peace, cooperation, and unity among the youth, setting a positive example for future collaborations.

Robert Lushai

News bytes from all Over



National Conference by CBCI Office for Healthcare

The National Conference of Regional, Diocesan and Religious Congregations Health Secretaries was held on March 12th and 13th, 2025, at the Pope Paul Auditorium, Bangalore. It was organized by the CBCI Offices for Healthcare in collaboration with SDFI, CHAI, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, CNGI and CMHM of India to mark the great Jubilee year 2025. The Conference focused on the theme "Vitalizing the Healing Mission of Jesus." The event brought together key networks of the healthcare within the Catholic Church, with insightful discussions on various topics essential to the future of Catholic healthcare ministry in India. It was attended by 175

participants from all over the country. The Secretaries and the Coordinators of the healthcare office of the Region, the Dioceses, religious Generalates and Provinces. The Conference was inaugurated by Most Rev. Peter Machado Archbishop of Bangalore and presided over by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro Chairman of CBCI Offices for Healthcare. Fr. Santhosh Dias, the National Secretary for CBCI Office for Healthcare, warmly welcomed the participants emphasizing the importance of strengthening the Church's healing mission. Other distinguished Guests included Most Rev. Joseph Arumachadath, Most Rev. George Rajendra, Fr. Mathew Koyickal Deputy Secretary General of CBCI Delhi, Fr. Dr. Mathew Abraham Director General of CHAI, Sr. Dr. Blanch National President of SDFI, Fr. Shinto Mathew National President of CMHM, Sr. Sarla Macwan National President of CNGI and Dr. Abhijeet Sangma Executive Director of the Christian Coalition for Health Delhi. The Conference successfully fostered collaboration and highlighted the important role of Catholic healthcare leaders in finding the way for the future of health ministry in India. The discussions provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by healthcare institutions and the opportunities for growth, innovation and greater community impact in the healthcare apostolate.

Fr. Santhosh Dias, the National Secretary

Our Distinguished Guests

- Sr. Leena, SJA Provincial Superior from Bhubaneswar
- Bro. Kajol Costa, CSC, Principal of St. Philip's from Bangladesh
- Bro. Satto Purification, CSC, Formation Coordinator from Bangladesh
- Fr. T. Xavier, SVD, General Assistant from Rome
- Sr. Liss Grace, SD Superior General from Kerala
- Sr. Celine, SD, Superior from Meghalaya
- Fr. John Thomas, Asst. Director BSS-IAS from Bhopal
- Sr. Sunita Kujur SSPS, Provincial from Guwahati
- Fr. Mariusz, SVD, Bangladesh Mission Superior
- Fr. Jeevan Kennady, SVD, Regional Superior from Guwahati
- Mr. Radha Krishnan, Regional Manager SIB from Kolkata
- Mar Pauly Kannookadan, Bishop of Irinjalakuda
- Sr. Wansuk Lyngdoh (RYLA) and Mr. Jonah Huimingam (RYP), from NERYC Guwahati
- Fr. Andrews Thekkekandam from Thalassery Kerala
- SJA Sr. Pauline from Odisha, Sr. Lucy from Kerala & Sr. Vijaya Mary from AP
- Sr. Nanditha SRA and Fr. Harry Vaz from Mumbai

Bishop's Program for April 2025

- 01: Meet MSFS Provincial Superior
- 02: Meeting with Bru Catholic Association
- 05: New Catechists Certification @ Pastoral Centre
- 05-06: Parish Pastoral Program @ Gondatwisa
- 06-08: CSC Seniors Renewal Program, Agartala
- 09: Blessing of Loyola School, Kailashsahar
- 13: Palm Sunday, Mariamnagar
- 15: Pastoral Meet & Chrism Mass, SFX Cathedral Hall
- 17-20: Holy Week in the Parishes
- 21-28: Bishops Convivence @ Mater Ecclesia, Israel
- 29: Final Profession of Rozy SSPS @ Kamaranga Parish
- 30-04: To Guntur for Priestly Ordination of Dn. Bala Showry