



## Tears will bring Hope

There is widespread violence around us, locally and globally. In this situation it is difficult not to be despairing. Yet as Christians we are people of hope and we must bring hope. But maybe we also need to cry and mourn and grieve, as **Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI**, says in a recent article. He quotes Henri Nouwen, *Life Calls for Mourning* (New Oxford Review, June 1992) and counsels us to grieve: “Mourn, my people, mourn. Let your pain rise up in your heart and burst forth in you with sobs and cries. Mourn for the silence that exists between you and your spouse. Mourn for the way you were robbed of your innocence. Mourn for the absence of a soft embrace, an intimate friendship, a life-giving sexuality.”



“Mourn for the abuse of your body, your mind, your heart. Mourn for the bitterness of your children, the indifference of your friends, your colleagues' hardness of heart. Mourn for those whose hunger for love brought them AIDS, whose desire for freedom brought them to refugee camps,

*whose hunger for justice brought them to prisons. Cry for the millions who die from lack of food, lack of care, lack of love...*

*“Don't think of this as normal, something to be taken for granted, something to accept... Think of it as the dark force of Evil that has penetrated every human heart, every family, every community, every nation, and keeps you imprisoned.”*

*“Cry for freedom, for salvation, for redemption. Cry loudly and deeply, and trust that your tears will make your eyes see that the Kingdom is close at hand, yes, at your fingertips!”*

Tears will bring hope. God Bless. **+Lumen, CSC**

**TRIBUTE:** Fr. Desmond DeSousa, CSsR, had this to say on *Amoris Laetitia (AL)* and a few days later he died of a massive heart attack on May 18, 2016 within three hours of leaving the community for a

routine “check up”. I share his Quote and pay my respects to a towering personality whom I had known well: *AL may not be the beginning of the biggest reform in 1,700 years in the Catholic Church, as predicted by Cardinal Walter Kasper before its release, but perhaps in 35 years, since 1978 or so...After 27 years of a heavyweight philosopher Pope John Paul II (1978-2005) and an iconic theologian Pope Benedict XVI (2005-2013), we have a down-to-earth, peoples' Pope Francis (2013 -?) whose revolutionary transformation of the Church into a merciful and compassionate, Christ-like institution, is gathering steam.*



Pastor's Corner

### CONGRATS

**School Board Examinations: LINK extends hearty CONGRATULATIONS to all Schools in the Diocese for the excellent results in the recently announced Board Exams.**

## Our task, therefore...



Time and again, we reiterate the need for better catechesis in the Diocese. This earnest desire often gets

**Editorial** translated into concrete steps too. Recently there was yet another Catechists Training program held at Pastoral Centre, in which the Bishop himself was seen 'training' the catechists come from all parishes.

It is thought that 'Catechists' have played a pivotal role in the history and growth of the Church in this part of the country, much more than elsewhere. Tripura is no exception. Names of stalwart catechists figure prominently in the annals of Tripura's fledgling early Church. At present, like much else, the catechists' scenario seems to have changed. With all deference to the generous souls who serve as catechists now, it must be said we often hear people lamenting the poor knowledge level of the catechists. Thankfully, its

effects do not percolate dangerously enough into communities for sheer lack of extended engagement with communities.

Time has become scarce for pastors, catechists, and people. Parish priests know that people don't find it easy to spare time and come for instruction or catechesis, even in rural area parishes. Our task, therefore, consists not only in equipping catechists with knowledge but also thinking up ingenious ways that warrant time together for catechists and communities.

The 'Jingiaseng' (prayer meeting) that has become part and parcel of the practice of faith in the Khasi and Jaintia hills is unique in many respects. One of them is the extended period of time it offers well-informed catechists to instruct the

faithful in the form of preaching. That jingiaseng continues to thrive despite huge changes in lifestyle is a proof that people make utmost efforts to accommodate what they find beneficial.



In Tripura, jingiaseng-like event may be too ambitious a dream at the moment; but one can mention a thing or two that seem fairly achievable. Although not

altogether new things, they seem good starters: making a catechism manual in one's own language, finding suitable time for imparting faith instruction to children and adults; composing hymns that give greater insight into the mysteries of faith and scripture; and making sure that every encounter of the designated church personnel with the faithful, in whatever setting, becomes a faith-deepening occasion.

**J. Pulinthanath, SDB**

## Pilgrimages at the Door of Mercy

Don Bosco Church Nandannagar has continued to attract pilgrims



during the Jubilee Year of Mercy. On 8<sup>th</sup> May, we had the beautiful experience of the Catholics from the Parish of Baijalbari coming together for a day of Pilgrimage. Over 230 people, the biggest group to date reached Don Bosco Nandannagar by 10am in three buses and other smaller vehicles. An hour long Animation, Confessions and Holy Eucharist was part of the pilgrimage.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May the leaders of AICU (Agartala Diocese) made a pilgrimage to the Door of Mercy. Taking advantage of the Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting, 40 leaders from our Parishes of the Diocese came to Don Bosco Church for a pilgrimage. Fr. Thomas Pereira CSC, Advisor of AICU, gave a Talk followed by Confessions and the Holy Eucharist which was presided by Bishop Lumen.

Though it was a terribly rainy day, over 50 Women from the Maria Sangha of Katalchera Parish led by the Parish Priest, Fr. Lancy and the Sisters made a very prayerful pilgrimage to the Shrine on 21<sup>st</sup> May. They travelled a long distance in the pouring rain on a bad road, both to the Shrine and back. But the devout Adoration led by Fr. Lancy and the Confessions where Frs. Harry and Cyprian were present, and the Holy Eucharist made the Women truly happy. Bad weather or the blinding rain did not deter them but increased their faith and love.

The daily Mass specifically for the year has continued without fail from the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2015. During the month of May, the Holy Eucharist is preceded by the praying of the Rosary. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is availed of more often.

*Fr. Sunny, SDB*

## AMBASSA PARISH

### Pentecost our Parish Feast

Indeed it was a great and joyful moment for the faithful of Holy Spirit Parish as they celebrated the Parish feast on 15<sup>th</sup> May. It was culmination of nine days of novena starting from 6<sup>th</sup> May. On Pentecost Sunday Bishop Lumen and other priests were led to the Altar by a group of dancers with devotional dance. 45 first communicants dressed in white solemnly walked in front. It was spirit filled feast not only for the people of Ambassa Parish but also for the Diocese and more so for Bishop Lumen. It was on Pentecost day on May 26, 1996 that the Diocese of Agartala was born and Bishop Lumen was ordained as its first Bishop. Today was the occasion to pray for the Bishop and the Diocese. People congratulated him for completing 20 years and in this span of time he could erect 20 Parishes. The feast was more colourful because of meaningful liturgy, melodious choir, inspiring homily and cultural programmes after the Mass. The great day came to an end with a fellowship meal organized by the leaders of the Parish. *Fr. Ivan, SVD*



## KUMARGHAT PARISH

### SCCs of North Tripura: 3-day Leadership Seminar

The SCC Zonal level of North Tripura, Conducted three days of SCC Leadership Seminar from 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2016 at St.

Paul's Parish Kumarghat. There were 36 participants from Ambassa, Kathalcherra, Bagbassa, Gondacherra, Gachiramparra, Kamranga and Kumarghat parishes who attended the Seminar. The Resource Persons for the Seminar were Fr. Lancy CSC, Fr. Jilson CSC, Mr. Tarun and Mr. Raju. Each day began with the Holy Eucharist and Enthronement of the Holy Bible. The topics covered during this days were Leadership style and pattern in the SCC way, importance and role of leadership, problem solving technique through problem tree and through SCC Word sharing. The participants were happy and expressed their desire to have more training program of this sort for developing Church lay leadership. The presence and inputs by Mr. Tarun Kanti and Mr. Raju Debbarma was inspiring. Many of them expressed that it was the first time that lay leaders from Tripura trained them. We are grateful to Fr. Lancy for his enthusiastic, inspiring, entertaining and informative sessions.

*Bro. Lawrence, CSC*



## MOHARPARA PARISH

### New Classroom Block at Moharpara School Inaugurated and Blessed

Amidst showers of blessings, the newly built class rooms of Moharpara Holy Cross School was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. K.J.Abraham, csc, Provincial Superior of N-E Holy Cross Fathers and blessed by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, on 13<sup>th</sup> May in the presence of a large gathering of guardians and well wishers. The blessing ceremony



was followed by a cultural program. Fr. Agi Paul csc, Principal of the School welcomed the guests and Fr. Hormis John, csc, the Secretary of the School presented the Report. Fr. Thomas Pereira, csc, the Secretary of Holy Cross Educational Foundation, Bishop Lumen, and Provincial Fr. Abraham appreciated the performance of the students and the hard work of Fr. Agi. In spite of heavy showers, the function went on well without any delay. *Fr. Hormis John, CSC*



## A new Home - Carmel at Gokulnagar



5th May 2016 was a special day for the Sisters of the Apostolic Carmel as they blessed Carmel Convent along with the Silver Jubilee of Sr. Surekha, AC. A long cherished dream had come to its fulfillment as the AC Sisters were here since 2012 residing in St. Joseph's School. The presence of Sr. Mirabelle, our outgoing Provincial and Sr. Agnelita doubled our joy.

The inauguration was done with the cutting of the ribbon by Sr. Mirabelle and the blessing was led by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, in the presence of a number of Priests, Religious and invited guests. The Holy Eucharist was the climax of the day which began with an introduction, followed by crowning of the silver Jubilarian. Bishop Lumen presided over the Eucharist and Fr. Shaiju, CSC, preached the homily. The Eucharist was followed by a short felicitation program for the Jubilarian and gifts to the construction workers under SBR Contractors, who completed the work in record time. We are grateful to all and pray that our Lady of Mount Carmel and our Venerable Foundress Mother Veronica bless us



and help us to be the channels of grace and peace in Tripura.

*Sr. Casilda, AC*

## AICU elects new Executive Body for 2016-18

The Catholic laity of Tripura elected its new leaders in the General Body Meeting held on 13-14 May 2016 at JUST Hall, Agartala. The Association recalled its humble beginning in 2006 with the motto "Ambassador for Christ", and is now playing a key role in the growth of the Church in this Diocese. The AICU Leaders went on pilgrimage to Don Bosco Parish Nandannagar and entered the Holy Door of the Year of Mercy. Fr. Thomas Pereira CSC, Advisor of AICU gave a talk on Merciful Father. Holy Mass was offered by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC. The newly elected AICU leaders are Mr. Adi Jamatia as President, Mr. Ranbindra Debbarma as Vice President, Mr. Paul Darlong as General Secretary, Mr. Muana Darlong as Joint Secretary & Treasurer, Mrs. Gita Debbarma & Mr. Samuel Reang as Asst. Secretary and Mr. Vinod Debbarma as Asst. Treasurer.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Agartala Diocesan Pastoral Council (ADPC) Meeting

The 5<sup>th</sup> ADPC Meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at Bishop's House, Agartala. 70 Members participated. Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC gave an excellent Power Point presentation on "Participatory Church". Then there was discussion in groups which was followed by reporting and prioritizing the need of the hour to become a participatory church. The ADPC Members were requested to encourage the faithful to be generous in contributing towards the Cathedral Building Fund. The Meeting ended with the vote of thanks by Mrs. Gita Debbarma, Assistant Secretary, ADPC, followed by a sumptuous lunch.



*Paul S. Darlong, Secretary, ADPC*

## Mazzarello Day celebrated at Agartala

'LOVE CHANGES EVERYTHING' was indeed the life of Mother Mazzarello the Co-Foundress of the Salesian Sisters whose day was celebrated on 13<sup>th</sup> of May. The Students, Staff, non-staff and Sisters of Auxilium Girls' School, honored Mother Mazzarello's heroic life with a short cultural program by the School. This program ended with a note of joy as the whole school resounded with one voice we clap our hands and shout aloud to praise God for the gift of our Co-foundress. The climax of the celebration was the Holy Mass by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, who was joined by seven priests. We were happy that our Salesian Co-operators, teachers, friends and all the religious from the nearby communities joined us for this celebration. Sr. Celine D'Cunha in the name of the community thanked everyone who spent their precious time with us this evening. We also greeted Bishop Lumen on his 20<sup>th</sup> Episcopal Ordination Anniversary. The day concluded with a fraternal meal. *Sr. Margreth, FMA*



## \Rosary Rally a Laity initiative

The second stage of the Rosary Rally began on 21st May and ended on 21st May, covering six parishes--Baijalbari, Kamranga, Kathalcherra, Kumarghat, Bagbassa and Gachirampara. 35 AICU members from different parishes visited these six Parishes along with the AICU Advisor, Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC.



It may be noted that this initiative by the Laity started earlier in the year when a group of Laity, accompanied by their Advisor, visited 13 Parishes in West and South of the State. Thanks to all the Parish Priests for welcoming and supporting our humble endeavour.

*Mr. Adi Sadan Jamatia*

**Nutrition support to Students**

JUST with the support of SMILE Education has introduced a Nutrition Support Project from the month of April 2016 at all the 10 Coaching Centers under Ganganagar R.D. Block and 2 centres at Damdamia, Lembucherra. Altogether 550 students from all the 12 Coaching Centers of Ganganagar and Damdamia are provided nutritional food like Egg, Biscuits and Bananas every day



after the Coaching class. The introduction of this nutrition project has made the students more enthusiastic and now they attend the classes regularly.

**Free Health Camp**

In April 2016 JUST organized a Health Camp at Dhanuram Para under Ganganagar R.D Block. Altogether 106 patients benefited from the Health Camp. JUST Ganganagar Project Staff lead by the Project Coordinator Mr. Lilmohan Reang along with Dr. Philip Reang Medical Officer from Ganganagar PHC,



examined the patients and distributed free medicines to them. The patients were

mostly women and children. Most of them had complaints of fever, headache, cough, stomachache, skin diseases, gastric and other water-borne diseases. During the Health Camp it was observed that the maximum number of patients were malnourished. **Mr. Vincent Debbarma**

**News Roundup**

**Missionaries of Charity Sr. Prema conferred German honor**

Sister Mary Prema, Superior General of the Kolkata-headquartered Missionaries of Charity (MoC) was conferred the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit on May 18, 2016. "On behalf of the German Federal President Joachim Gauck, Ambassador Ney handed over the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit to Sister Prema," said a statement by the German Embassy on its official Twitter handle. "With this honour, Germany acknowledges Sister Prema's personal commitment and the outstanding contribution towards humanity and the Indo-German relations over the past decades." **UCAN-India**

**Prime Minister Modi asked to lead Mother Teresa Canonization delegation**

Indian Catholic Church officials have asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to personally lead a delegation to the September canonization ceremony of Mother Teresa at the Vatican. The group also asked the Prime Minister to formally invite Pope Francis to visit India. Cardinal Cleemis asked Modi to personally lead India's official delegation for the Canonization of Mother Teresa scheduled for Sept. 4 at the Vatican. The Prime Minister "appreciated the sentiments of the Bishops and assured that he would favorably consider the proposal," Father Chinnayyan said.

The Malayala Manorama newspaper reported on May 22, that West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also confirmed that she would attend the canonization ceremony. **CBCI Spokesperson**

**Pope Francis receives International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, Germany**

"A Europe capable of giving birth to a new humanism based on three capacities: the capacity to integrate, the capacity for dialogue and the capacity to generate" is what Pope Francis says upon receiving the Charlemagne Prize, awarded by the foundation to those who distinguish themselves for their work in favour of integration and union in Europe. *The Prize is named for Charles the Great (Charlemagne), the Franconian King revered by his contemporaries as the "Father of Europe."* The ceremony on May 6, which was attended by major European figures such as King Felipe VI of Spain; the Grand-duke of Luxembourg, Henri of Orange-Nassau; the German chancellor Angela Merkel; the Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi; and the President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, began with the "laudatio" pronounced by Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament; Donald Tusk, President of the European Council and Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission. **en.radiovaticana.va**

**What they said**

I'm most grateful for that wonderful LINK to you in Agartala and all the great news of all your doings over the 20 years and more.... It is most inspiring and informative. **Sr. Visitation, RGS**

Happy 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Giving thanks to God for your faithful service. **Tony Krisak, Washington DC, USA**

Thank you for LINK coming in on time every month... Congratulations for your 20 years at the helm of the Diocese! **Conrad, CSC, Montreal, Canada**

Thank you for the LINK and updating us with your works over there. **Fr. Varghese, NEDSSS, Guwahati**

Thank you for LINK. The Diocese of Agartala has made steady strides in building God's Kingdom in and through your visionary leadership over the last twenty years. **Theo, CSC, Manila, Philippines**

Great Bishop Lumen for the precision, punctuality and the way things move from your end... The LINK is here... linking all the events of the month that has just closed.... - as you do so punctually on the 1st of every month... even if you are extremely busy. **Sr. Celine, FMA, Agartala**

Thanks indeed for your May Day gift of LINK which in all truths, links the Diocese of Agartala and Your Excellency with the rest of the world. My hearty congratulations to You the Good Shepherd of the young Diocese of Agartala for these past 20 beautiful years of Pastoral vibrancy of the Diocese. May the Good Lord continue to Bless Your Excellency the Shepherd and the Diocese of Agartala to be "light to the Nations" in the upcoming years of your young Mission Diocese. **Fr. Jolly of Caritas India, Delhi**

Thank you for latest Link. **Peadar O'laughlin, Ireland**

Thank you for sending link regularly. I enjoy every bit of it. Very creative and innovative. Congratulations, you have completed 20 years on May 26th. I remember the day that you have taken responsibility to be a shepherd to the people of Tripura. **Sr. Simon Therese, BS, from Kolkata**

**Bishop's Program for June 2016**

- 02: Return from Delhi
- 03: Feast of the Sacred Heart
- 05: Parish Program, Mariamnagar
- 07: Clergy Meet & Recollection, Agartala
- 12: Parish Program, Kathalcherra
- 13-15: NEDSSS AGBM, Guwahati Inaugural Philosophy College, Nagaon, Assam
- 16-21: Personal Retreat
- 25-26: Parish Feast, Kumarghat
- 27-30: Caritas DDC Valedictory, Hyderabad

**Our Distinguished Visitors**

- Sr. Concepta Dkar, MSMHC Provincial from Shillong
- Ø Sr. Bridget Lyngdoh, MSMHC Councillor from Shillong
- Ø Sr. Mirabelle, AC, Provincial from Kolkata
- Ø Sr. Agnelita, AC, Provincial Treasurer from Kolkata
- Ø Mr. Ramakant Tulaskar, Stephen Dias, Edmund Fernandes and
- Ø Francis Godinho of Crusaders for Jesus with Mary from Goa
- Ø SDB Fathers : George Maliekal, (Provincial), Paul O'Lyngkot(Vice Provincial) Gervasis, M.C. Thomas, LB Anthony and Br. Colombi from Shillong
- Ø