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Lead Us Onward

DIOCESE OF AGARTALA



Agartala Diocesan Newsletter

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Pastor's Corner

Why your child doesn't need a Smartphone!



The dangers of entrusting a child with a device outweigh the practicalities that many adults struggle to use safely and appropriately. A parent writes in *Cross Walk* that parental guidance is at risk of being trumped by the Smartphone unless we put a foot down. I found this write-up very insightful for us pastors and leaders, written as it is by a parent with teenaged kids, many of whom are in vacations with an electronic device as their only companion! +*Lumen, CSC*

1. Our society is addicted to Smartphones

The hardest part of parenting is teaching our children things we have not yet mastered. The only healthy addiction we are hardwired to foster is our relationship with God, through our walk with Christ. "I am," present tense, is all we need. Yet a glance around a room full of people looking down at a screen instead of each other illustrates the search for happiness elsewhere. Scientific facts tell us the same chemical released when we partake in age-restricted activities like smoking, drinking alcohol, gambling, or drug use (not that I would advocate for any of those things) is also released when we use cell phones and social media. Equipping our kids to live outside the confines of their wireless network allows them to participate in reality, and depend on the One in whom we truly find joy.



2. Parental controls can't control everything online

Kids are obsessed with bodily functions (at least mine are). Given access to Google, it's not hard to guess what their curiosity will lead them to type into that blank box, and there's little worse than fielding questions from a youngster about something their little eyes witnessed before ours. "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." (Mark 10:14) Jesus gave us a living example of how to treat children, and each other, when He welcomed all of us to be close to Him. How can we guide our children through conversations and shield them from adult ones when we aren't close enough to whisper in their ear? Remember, it's impossible to go back and block something that's already been seen.

3. Your child may be in danger

Technology can be used for evil. In fact, it is used for evil all the time. As parents, we must face a hard reality that the person on the other end of a message might be another innocent 12-year-old... or it could be a child predator. When you give your child a smartphone (or any other device that can download apps), you are putting your child at risk. In a technology-driven world, it is unrealistic to think that your child will never use a smartphone. So start teaching your child how to use technology safely before the cell phone is in her hands.

4. You might not be aware of what they are posting

Did you know there is an app that allows users to post their darkest secrets online anonymously? (It's called Whisper.) What about an app that sends texts and photos without being seen in the phone history? (That is the Kik app.) Finally, have you heard of Poof? That app can hide the icons for other apps that your child might not want you to see.

Editorial

Result-time Blues!



Numerous schools and their thousands of students and parents are anxiously awaiting examination results these days. By the time this gets published, chances are, most results would have been declared already.

At such waiting times as these, someone or other is likely to remind us that good results alone don't add up. And that education is a lot about producing good and honest human beings...On our part, we fully endorse the idea. But frankly, we had always known that.



But say what you may, results are results! After all, at stake is the school's image, pride, identity and status determiner. It's also about years of struggle and hard work of students, their parents and teachers. What can there be more important than this! Schools might say.

This piece is not to say that academic excellence is unimportant. Instead this is to reiterate that true education cannot ignore formation of one's character, social sensitivity, beliefs, hard work and honesty.

We see around us parents who go to any length to ensure 'good education' for their wards, but pay scant attention to forming their character. The alarming manner in which the parents abdicate their duties signals nothing less than a 'crisis' in the family one that has untold implications on the future of the society. While excelling in academics is a top priority, acquisition of simple human values like the capacity to think about others and their needs, respect for parents, teachers and elders, ability to honor words and keep promises even when inconvenient, hard work, sacrifice and growth in faith seem relatively low priorities.

To overcome this crisis, it is necessary for the school, the parish and most importantly the family to join hands in a focused manner. Even if the school decides to make amends and change tracks, the no-holds-barred approach at home renders all that ineffective. Hence, the need to adopt a united approach.

As an entity engaged in a major way in education, the Church has the obligation to move away from mere competition-based mark-oriented approaches and ensure healthier attitudes to education. We also have an equal obligation to be at the service of families in their struggles to remain 'sane' while bringing up their children.

J Pulinthanath, sdb

AGARTALA PARISH

Installation of new Parish Priest at Cathedral Parish

At the Cathedral Parish of Saint Francis Xavier Durjoynagar, on May 7, Bishop Lumen Monteiro installed Fr. Sahaya Lourdu Raj, CSC as the new Parish Priest.

Bishop Lumen presided over the Mass and was joined by Frs. Harry, Emmanuel, Kannikai,



Shaiju, Arun, Jeevan and Valerian, the Administrator of the NE Province of Holy Cross who represented the Provincial Superior. Fr. Robert Mathias, CSC. Fr. Valerian read the appointment letter of the Bishop. The Installation ceremony became an occasion for the new Parish Priest to be formally presented to the Parish. The "ceremony is so arranged to remind priest and people of their responsibility together before God to serve Christ in his Church, and by their holiness and the example of their lives, individually and as a local community, to promote the mission of their Lord." After the Holy Mass the outgoing Parish Priest Fr. Harry D'Silva, CSC, was gratefully and prayerfully remembered by the Priests and the Parishioners. A short Felicitation program was organized by PPC leaders Mr. Vinod and Manojin which the new Parish Priest was welcomed and the outgoing Parish Priest Fr. Harry was thanked with speeches and gifts. **Fr. Sahaya Lourdu Raj, CSC, Cathedral Parish Priest**

KATHALCHERRA PARISH

Renewal of the Family through SCC



Good Shepherd Parish Kathalcherra joyfully celebrated the SCC Festival from 5th -7th May, 2017. The delegates more than 220 from all the seven parishes of North zone Tripura came to participate. Festival was based on the theme renewal of family through SCC. The presence of

Bishops of Aizawl and Agartala made the festival more dignified. This was a first time being organized at the Zonal level. The SCC celebration was concluded with the feast day mass by Bishop Stephen Rotluanga, C.S.C. Thanks to Fr Lancy, CSC the parish priest and Fr Arul, CSC the Zonal coordinator the Bethany sisters for cooperation and support as well as all the parish priest, secretary, president of north Zone Tripura parishes for their hard work and cooperation. May God bless them.

Another Religious from Kathalcherra Parish

My soul glorifies the Lord- We also thanked God for the gift of vocation to church through Sr. Chandita BS from Joseph Nagar who recently, on 1st May, made her perpetual commitment. We had a Thanksgiving Mass on 14th May in the Parish.



Vocation Camp

Come follow me- A day of vocation camp was organised in the parish and students from different villages responded to participate in the camp. They were taught and introduced to



various religious lives through the sessions given by different congregation's members.

Fr. Ishwar, CSC

BAGBASA PARISH

Installation cum Farewell Program

On 14 May 2017 at the Eucharist at 10 a.m. at Bagbassa Parish centre there was the Installation of Fr. Harry D'Silva CSC as the new Parish Priest by the Vicar General of the Diocese Fr. Hormis, CSC. It was attended by the Confreres, viz., Frs. P.V. Joseph, Tarun, Valerian, Shaji M.L. and the Asst. Parish Priest Francis Xavier. There was a cultural program during

which the outgoing Parish Priest Fr. Shaji CSC was thanked and praised for his wonderful work for the past two years. Around 500 parishioners enjoyed a sumptuous meal prepared by one of the villages of this parish. In gratitude Fr. Shaji also praised the parishioners for their excellent cooperation and contribution at all levels and wished that they would continue to do the same with the new Parish Priest Fr. Harry CSC. This parish was initiated by the efforts of Fr. C.R. Paul CSC



five years ago (2012). After him Fr. Shaji CSC took charge. Am the third PP here. We have under our Parish a Holy Cross community with a well-built School at Panisagar. The Charity Sisters (Bambina) help out in the school and visit the nearby families, pastorally. Another community is of the Bethany Sisters at Dharmanagar. They too are spirited and helpful being the part of the co-missionary team. We have 13 villages, and the parish register in the making, says that we have 305 families.

Fr. Harry D'Silva, CSC

KUMARGHAT PARISH



Bible Camp for Children

Children's Bible Camp was held from May 15-17 with the theme "You are Precious to Me". In the Inaugural function Fr. Jilson CSC, reminded the children of how precious they are to God. The program was an initiative of the Missionaries of Charity, Shantipally and sponsored by them. There was a team of Resource Persons involved in running the camp. Sr. Pushpa MC, Frs. Lancy and Jilson, Sr. Himani, Candidates from SAMS,

Catechists, and youth group of the parish were the Resource Team. The camp was a mix of input sessions, activities and competitions. There were 83 children who attended the camp. The camp provided a platform for the children to perform their cultural dance and hidden talents, as well as to enjoy themselves. The camp was concluded with prize distribution and by a thanksgiving prayer on May 17. **Rahul R.J**

Youth Fellowship at the Parish

The Program was held from 12th to 14th May. There were 83 Youth who participated in this annual event. The three-day Camp was filled with a lot of activities and fun. The activities



included Holy Eucharist, Rosary processions, input sessions, fun-activities and competitions, football & throw ball matches, Bible Quiz, cultural and Biblical competitions and the like. Competitions were conducted group-wise as well as Zone-wise. The central theme of this Youth Meet was 'The Joy of Coming Together'. The Resource Team for the program included Frs. Arul J, Jilson Tom, Catechists Subia and Santosh, Three candidates from St. Andre Minor Seminary, and Mr. Asan Halam and Abraham Reang. The program was successful and every individual is touched by 'The Joy of Coming Together'. I, personally, feel encouraged to be a part of Youth Meet every year, because of the positive experience and response from the Youth.

Francis Gayang

Youth Commission of the Diocese

Catholic Youth Connect Tournament (CYCC 2017)

The Youth Commission of the Diocese organized an Inter Parish



Tournament of Throwball for Girls and Football for Boys. The Tournament's opening ceremony was hosted by KCYM (Kathalcherra Parish Youth Movement) on the 13th May. All the 6 Parishes of North Zone (Kathalcherra, Kumarghat, Bagbassa, Kamranga, Ambassa and Gachirampara) scheduled to play on the opening ceremony day participated. Mr. Shubanker D/B the O/C of Kathalcherra Police Station was the Chief Guest. He was appreciative of the Tournament and encouraged the Youth to play fairly. Fr. Ishwar the PYA of Kathalcherra Parish gladly welcomed the Organizing Committee and all the Youth. In his address Fr. Lawrence reminded the Youth about the Tournament's objective i.e., 'competing joyfully for strengthening our unity'. After the short opening ceremony the matches were conducted. Sr. Prema, BS, was there with her Team for the medical assistance during the whole day. The Youth of Kathalcherra showed great hospitality to the visiting Teams by providing them with snacks. At the end of every match the Player of the Match was awarded to the player of Throw-ball and Football. A positive response from all the Parishes is hoped for.

Fr. Lawrence Darlong

West Zone Catholic Youth Convention May 19-21, 2017

Faith is a gift from God... It unites heart and mind. It is a force that helps people of different personalities to join together one heart and mind. This same love united 315 young and energetic



hearts and minds hailing from eight Parishes of our Zone for one common purpose to share faith and life together at the Youth Convention held at St. Andre Parish, Bodhjungnagar from May 19-21. The Youth Convention had a creatively active timetable highlighting the theme for the event, 'Rise in Faith and Unity'. Creative and interactive sessions on 'Building Faith among the Youth of Tripura' were held in the morning. In the evening, the youth displayed their talents of music and singing through the choir competition. The 2nd day was on the theme, 'Rise in Faith and Unity'. The Youth Convention had its share of fun and dance with action songs and fun games. There was a session on 'The Values of Cultures'. On Sunday all the Youth along with the parishioners joined for the solemn Eucharistic celebration presided by Rev. Fr. Lawrence DYD along with the other priests. The Convention was concluded by the lowering of the Convention Flag by Rev. Fr. Lawrence DYD.

Sr. Mercy Nongsiej (Zonal Youth Animator-West)

Our Readers Write

Thanks for sending us regularly LINK through which we know the happenings of the Diocese. **Sr. Regis & community, Yercaud**

Thank you very much for LINK with a lot of news! Hearty Congratulations for the new Cathedral. **Fr. Zachary, SDB, Guwahati**

I thank you for the LINK. I also enjoyed your

closing message for laughter. **Sr. Marcella, AC, Kolkata**
Thank you very much for May Link. Well presented, informative and inspiring. **Fr. Varghese, NEDSSS Guwahati**
Thank you very much for your On-Time Link. You are highly appreciated for your regularity and punctuality. Was pleasantly surprised to get the May issue on time, in spite of those busy days over there! **Fr. Mariaraj, CSC, Shillong**

Health Camp

A Medical Health Camp was organized by JUST at Dharmanipara under Ganganagar PHC on 4th April. Dr. Philip Reang, Medical Officer, Ganganagar PHC examined the patients during the Health Camp. About 132 patients (63 Male and 69 Female) were diagnosed and given

free medicines through the health camp. The patients were mostly women and children. Most of the patients had complaints of Fever, Headache, Cough, stomachache, skin diseases, etc. But the maximum number of patients were suffering from fever, cough & Mal-nourished. The doctor also sensitized the people saying that fever is common during this season due to rise in temperature. So he warned the patients to stay indoors during extreme heat and not to consume water without treatment.

Capacity Building for the Disabled

In the month of April, JUST under CBR project, organized trainings on Capacity Building and Strengthening of the Village Disabled Peoples Organization in all the target villages under CBR project. About 97 people (Male-32, Female-65) took part in the training programs. The training program was to capacitate the VDPO Members and also strengthening them on

their rights by developing action plan for their entitlements at the Panchayat level. Inputs were given on maintaining account books and minutes book for improvement of the Groups. It was also learning for all the Groups on the importance of conducting their monthly meetings regularly. They were also told about all the rules and regulations that can be applicable for the improvement of their groups. The Training was conducted successfully at all the target villages.

Mr. Vincent Debbarma

Migrant communities find pastoral care in Bangalore

The participants included Khasis, Tangkhuls, Mizo, Nepalis, Garos, Bodos, Jaintias, Wanchos, Arunachallis and other ethnic groups. The Commission for the migrants in the Archdiocese of Bangalore organized a one day orientation programme for the migrant Christian community from the North Eastern States of India and Nepal, mostly comprising of students and working youth. Around 600 participants along with the priests and



religious sisters who care for them under various ministries for the migrants, took part in the programme at St. Joseph's Boys' High School,

Bangalore. Archbishop Bernard Moras assured support to the Northeast and Nepali Catholics working and studying in Bengaluru, "We organized this programme to welcome you and make you feel at home during your stay in Bengaluru." ucanindia.in

It's about Forgiveness



It was an incredible presentation about the horrific consequences of abortion. It affects not only the unborn child and the birth mother but also many other people as well. The

movie spells that out so clearly. The movie is October Baby, a story about a college girl who learns she was the product of a failed abortion and goes in search of her birth-mother and her life. Depressed beyond relief, Hannah walks into a catholic church and is confronted with the priest to whom she tells her story. But he tells her that the greatest need is forgiveness and that because Christ forgave her, she has the power to forgive others and that put a new perspective on her life. I'll stop there as to not give away the story's incredible ending.

I hope you will go see it, as we need to support Christian movies. Don't miss it, but Kleenex is recommended. I believe forgiveness is a choice we make through a decision of our will, motivated by obedience to God and his command to forgive. The Bible instructs us to forgive as the Lord forgave us.

Mattersindia.com

Bishop's Program for June 2017

- 27: Return & Meeting
- 29: Inauguration: Holy Cross Sisters School, Bodokathal
- Final Profession of Holy Cross Sister

Our Distinguished Visitors

- Fr. Jerome CSC from Mizoram
- Frs. Robin Peter, Albert Michael, and Christudas Philip from Kerala and
- Fr. Dominic Savio from Tamil Nadu
- Fr. George, MSFS Provincial from Guwahati