



Diocese of Agartala

September 2013 Vol.17 No.09



Pastor's Corner

Teachers, We Salute You

Very early in school I remember my teacher telling me "your life will always be filled with challenges. Face them squarely." With hindsight and experience I know how right he was! There is no victory without struggle. Struggle is the food from which change is made. Those who accomplish change are willing to engage in the struggle.

We all know the story of the teacher who was showing her class how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly. She told them that in the next few hours the butterfly would come out of the cocoon, and went away. The students waited and watched what happened. The butterfly struggled at which time one of the students felt pity and tried to help so that the butterfly did not have to struggle. But shortly afterwards the butterfly died. When the teacher returned and heard what had happened she explained to the student that by 'helping' the butterfly he had actually killed it, because it is a law of nature that the struggle to come out of the cocoon actually helps it to develop and strengthen



its wings.

Nothing worthwhile in life comes without struggle. Hard and painful times in life are inevitable. In the Gospel Jesus tells us plainly, "unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it produces many seeds." The phrases 'no pain no gain'; 'no pruning no grapes'; 'no grinding mill no flour'; 'no battle no victory'; 'no cross no crown', reiterate this idea, even though the modern-day generation tends to pooh-pooh it.

Teacher's Day is celebrated on 5th September to honor the valuable contribution made by teachers to the society by imparting knowledge and enlightenment and shaping the career of students. All of us have been students at some stage of our life and have benefited from our teachers. Today we join our voices in saying Happy Teachers Day and show our gratitude and appreciation to our Teachers.

Bringing fun and creativity to learning has made teachers earn more respect than just bookish knowledge. The task of the excellent teacher is to stimulate "apparently ordinary" students to great heights. The tough problem is not in identifying winners; it is in making winners out of ordinary students. Albert Einstein said, "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

TEACHERS WE SALUTE YOU!

+Lumen, CSC



Editorial

The Arrival of the Train

1940s, Tripura: In what is perhaps an invaluable piece of writing, Tripura's celebrated catechist of yore Lala Master recounts the ordeal he had to undergo in order to make a trip from Old Kathalcherra to the Parish centre at Mariamnagar. In those days the arduous journey from North Tripura to Agartala meant going through Champrai Bagan, Banukanj and Akhaura (all in present day Bangladesh) and would take a couple of days.

(70 years later) 2010+, Tripura: The Annual Eucharistic Procession of the Diocese is held in Kumarghat. The faithful from Agartala catch the morning train, reach Kumarghat at about 11.00 am, take part in the Procession and return to Agartala by the evening train the same day.



The arrival of the train signaled a watershed for Tripura, just like its arrival on the silver screen became cinema's founding myth. Louis Lumiere's 50 seconds long film became the icon of the origins of the medium. It is as if between us and Lala Master stands the train redefining the concept of distance and time.

Today, with a Diocese of our own, having many more Parishes and projects and plans, there's no doubt, we have increased in numbers and come a long way.

And yet, when we recall to mind the heroic challenges of yesteryears and the brave people that have stood up to those, we cannot but consider if, with the passing of years, there has been a 'corresponding' increase in our output or not.

With our vehicles and gadgets, mobile phones and internet, one would think it's become a lot easier. But the unsettling truth is that we find ourselves worrying about village visits impinging on our other important assignments. In the same way, some of our people find the distance to the parish 'unmanageable' even if it's no farther than a stone's throw.

The question, certainly, is not if we have progressed or not. We certainly have. Rather, the question is, in the given conditions, if we have progressed to the maximum extent that was possible or not. During those years of insurgency and violence, we, perhaps rightly, cited them as causing a setback to our work. For almost a decade, Tripura has been largely peaceful. If we still feel hindered, the reasons must be different. Some weeks ago a Sunday Gospel concluded saying, "More will be asked of those who have been given more." Perhaps, there's some thinking matter in all this, for all of us.

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

St. Raphael Parish, Kamaranga Mothers' Day

As the saying goes, "There is only one person who is capable of loving you till the end of your life and she is our dear Mother". We at Kamaranga



celebrated Mothers' Day on 28th of July. It was indeed a great day for all of us in appreciating the role played by the mothers. Almost 70 mothers were present for the occasion. The Holy Eucharist began at 10am with a procession. The main Celebrant was Fr. Cyprian SVD. During his homily he spoke of the role of mothers in the family and in each once lives.

After the Eucharist all mothers had 2 hours of Input Session given by Fr. Cyprian wherein he encouraged and boosted them saying "A good mother is like a candle, which consumes itself to give light to others. She is the one who loves and guides the family and children." After the Session few games and cultural programs were conducted by Sr. Suchita the Women's Animator. All participated actively and winners were given prizes by the Parish Priest Fr. Joachim Kullu, SVD. Vote of thanks was given by Sr. Suchita, followed by a fellowship meal for all the mothers.

Sr. Suchita SJA

St. Paul Parish, Kumarghat Village Leaders Seminar

Three days of Seminar for lay leaders of the Parish was held on 2nd, 3rd and 4th of August 2013 at Kumarghat. Leaders from all *mondolis* attended the



Seminar. The Seminar began with lighting of the lamp and welcome address by the Parish Priest Fr. Arul, CSC. The Resource Persons were Frs. Thomas and Lancy. The interactive sessions were on Sacraments and Teaching of the Church and SCC a new way of looking at church. Lay persons Mr. Vandinga, Ruitha and Lala Darlong also spoke on different topic to the people. The three days Seminar ended with the Parish Mass and fellowship meal on 4th August.

Cultural Day at School

Holy Cross School Kumarghat conducted "Cultural Day" on 29th July 2013. Many children took part in different stage events. The function

was inaugurated by Fr. Arul. All day long the children performed different events on the stage.

Fr. Agi Paul csc

St. Alphonsa Parish, Khumlung Charisma of Charismatic on St. Alphonsa's Feast



It was a long awaited Charismatic Retreat at St. Aphonsa Church Khumlung, organized at two different places to avail benefit for larger participation. The retreat began at 9am and ended 5pm every day. It was well conceived idea and

planning to deepen faith of the parishioners in the year of faith. Feasts and celebrations leave deep impression when it is geared to enhance our faith. The celebration of St. Alphonsa Feast began a week ago by conducting Charismatic Retreat at two locations. In one of the places people gathered from seven villages and five villages at another. Fr. Jomon SVD and Team preached the retreat and strengthened their faith. People experienced a sacred moment throughout the retreat. Lots of people turned up for sacrament of reconciliation. It was really an experience of deepening faith in the year faith. The celebration of faith culminated by celebrating the Holy Eucharist by Most Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC with six concelebrant priests with a huge gathering on 28th July. The mass began with an entrance and aarti dance by hostel children. There was long queue of offertory as a mark of gratitude and thanks to the Almighty. About 52 parishioners received sacrament of confirmation. Colourful tribal dances with typical dresses cheered up the gatherings.

Youth attraction towards Charismatic Retreat

Charismatic Retreat is next to orchestra for the youth--lots of singing and dancing with devotional tunes. It was a beautiful opportunity to offer Charismatic Retreat to the children and the youth in the Year of Faith. The Retreat was conducted in two different groups- class I to V and Class VI to XII simultaneously. The children and the youth were deeply engrossed in the Retreat beyond the preacher's expectations. The religious atmosphere enveloped the minds and hearts of the youth. Thanks to Fr. Jomon SVD and Team for influencing young minds.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

Holy Cross Parish, Bagbasa SCC Seminar

On 4th August after the Vianney Sunday Eucharistic celebration Holy Cross Parish, Bagbasa, organized a Seminar on SCC for the Parishioners. The Seminar was coordinated by Diocesan Secretary for SCC, Fr. Lancy D'souza, csc. During the Sessions the importance of SCC and the New Way of being Church was explained. In his talk, he asked the people to make 'daily

Gospel reading' a habit and said that it should become our daily bread. He also said 'The Gospel is the love letter of God'. 60 people participated in the Seminar. The participants were



astonished to hear the connection between the Sacraments and SCC and expressed their satisfaction regarding the Seminar. At the end the 7 steps of SCC were explained. The participants were assisted to form the SCC Units in their *mondoli*.

Fr. Arokiasamy, csc

News from JUST (Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura)

Awareness Program on Health, Hygiene and Herbal Remedies

An awareness program on Health, Hygiene and Herbal Remedies was conducted on 14th July 2013 at Dhoncherra village under IDEA Project. Altogether there were 27 participants present in the program. The Resource Person was Mr. Biswa Molsom.



The Resource Person advised the participants to take regular bath and also to wash their hands with soap thoroughly before food, after food and after latrine. He also explained that they should keep their homes and surroundings clean so that they can enjoy good health and be able to keep themselves free from different types of diseases.

FARM Northeast

On 22nd July 2013, Mr. Vincent Debbarma along with the Animators, Subhas Debbarma, Sunil Debbarma and Ranjan Debbarma went to Twisakolok para and conducted an Awareness Program on the overall Project of FARM Northeast under JUST, assisted by Caritas



India. There were about 23 farmers who attended the Program. The animator Mr. Subhas Debbarma first gave an introduction of all our staff and explained about our purpose of being there. The next Session was then taken by the Coordinator Mr. Vincent Debbarma. The Coordinator gave a brief introduction of the Project to the people. There were points discussed regarding the activities of the Project. Many points like formation of farmers club, importance of farmers club and the purpose and aim of the project were discussed. The people also shared their problems of water for which they are not able to cultivate. The program ended at 12:30pm. *Fr. Jeevan Kennady, SVD*

AICU General Body Meet-2013

The Meeting was chaired by Bishop Lumen Monteiro. He referred to the motto of AICU "Ambassadors for Christ" from 2 Cor. 5:20 and urged the Church leaders to be ambassadors for Christ by living an exemplary life.

It has been decided that the 5th State level Holy Holy Eucharistic Procession will be held on 13 October 2013 at St. Andre Parish, Budjungnagar and the laity has agreed to take up the leadership. The far away parishioners can come to the venue on the previous day i.e. 12th October from 4pm onwards. We thanked Fr. Jilson CSC, Parish Priest of St. Andre Parish and the Parishioners for accepting to host the great event.

Under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Jeevan Kenedy, SVD the newly appointed AICU Advisor, a new Central AICU Executive has been formed. **Paul S. Darlong**

FMM Sisters in our Diocese

Bishramganj Parish was blessed with the arrival of the first group of FMM (Franciscan Missionaries of Mary) Sisters on June 13th. It is a unique experiment as six sisters from five FMM Provinces reached to help in the Parish, especially to look after the various schools and do other pastoral work in the villages. Led by Sr. Taurina Vaz, the Provincial Superior of Delhi Province, who had earlier come to study the possibilities, these six pioneers from Bombay, Bangalore, Chennai, Ooty and Delhi Provinces reached with lots of expectations. Now they are placed in groups of two each in Bishramganj, Herma and Naba Sardar. The Superior in-charge is Sr. Mary Joe. They are learning the language and getting settled in the respective village communities. This is their first presence in the North East.

Fr. Joseph Palamthattel SDB,
Parish Priest

Global Schoolroom

The Global Schoolroom programme with Teachers from Ireland which seeks to promote the sharing of educational experience between communities worldwide was conducted for the third consecutive year in three centers of Tripura, namely, Holy Cross School Panisagar, Bodhjungnagar and Tuikarmaw. The goal was to work directly with teachers and communities to build a strong framework for high standards of teacher education. This has enabled in sharing of good



educational practices which would widen the cultural horizons of everyone involved and expand each individual's scope for opportunity. Children in the communities involved receive a better quality education which ultimately leads to greater economic development and higher standards of living.

Fr. Sojan csc

Evangelization Commission

Invited by the Commission for Evangelization, the 'Crusaders for Jesus with Mary' held a campaign in the schools and parishes of our Diocese from 29th July to 3rd August. Four of them, in two groups had beautiful programmes for the growth of the faith in Ambassa, Moharpara, Mandwi, Bishramganj, Udaipur, Depacherra, Bodhjungnagar, Montfort and Nandannagar. With the Word of God, music and personal witnesses, these moments helped young people to understand and grow in the faith. Thank you to the Crusaders!



Fr. Joseph Palamthattel SDB, Secretary

Second Graduation Day

Holy Cross College celebrated its second Graduation Day on August 8 with all fervor and élat. 56 students were awarded with Graduation Certificates by the Chief Minister Manik Sarkar and other dignitaries in a colorful function. Dr. Fr.



Emmanuel, CSC, the Founder Principal welcomed the Guests, Parents and Graduates while thanking the Chief Minister for his keen interest in this premier educational institution for Higher Education in the State. Other Guests of Honour were Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Costa, Hon. Vice Chancellor of Notre Dame University, Dhaka, Rev. Fr. Abraham, KJ, CSC, Provincial Superior, Province of Northeast India, Brigadier DAB Udaya Kumar, Army base, Agartala, Shri V. P. Mahawar, Asset Manager, GGM, Tripura and Shri Rajesh Bhattacharjee, Joint Director, Higher Education, Govt. of Tripura. Many other dignitaries, parents, students, faculty, well wishers and friends were also present. The Third book/publication of the College titled, "Emerging trends in English Literary world" and the College Yearbook, Jyotirgamaya, were released on the occasion.

College News Reporter

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, Celebrates the Past to Sustain the Future

Holy Cross School students today celebrated the 67th Independence Day of our country. The morning hour was filled with cultural activities, drills, flag hoisting and distribution of certificates for the competitions conducted on the theme 'Great India' and other skit presentations. Even

after 66 years of independence the students celebrated the day with utmost serenity and commitment because they know the



struggle and sacrifices our forefathers did to gain independence for our mother India. It is our nationalistic pride to celebrate the birth of the

world's biggest democracy.

Shri. Rabindro Sarkar, the member of Tripura Legislative Assembly Agartala was the Chief Guest and in his address invited the student community to be partners in building a great India. The Principal Fr. Kanikkai Jeyraj said that the message of our tricolour is to use our freedom for building friendly neighbourhood, providing care and comfort to the needy, using the national resource for the upliftment of the down trodden and above all to hold the values of our country at the highest peak of global tower. A group of students from the Holy Cross School participated in the block level Independence Day celebration in Mohanpur.

To be in solidarity with the poor and the freedom fighters of the past, some members of Apnar Ghar' (*Home for the aged*) were invited for the program and the members of the teaching faculty distributed saris to the fifty inmates in their ashram at Bhorjala.

Our Readers Write



Thank you for sending the August LINK. Very interesting. **Nelson, ED of IGSSS, Delhi**

I want to thank you for without fail every month you email to me the LINK. I thank you and congratulate you and the Editor.

Chacko, Canada

Thanks for the August issue of the Link. It is a pleasure to go through it. **Fr. Vincent Furtado OFM Cap**

Thanks for the August LINK, done as usual in a highly professional way. **+Evarist Pinto**

Thanks a lot for continuously sending me the Link. I have been going through every issue of Link with much interest. May you continue your great work in Tripura. **Bro. James, SG, Aizawl**

Thank you for emailing me the LINK every month without fail. I sincerely thank you and congratulate you, the Editor and your Team for providing in a nutshell immense good work that you all are doing. Although I am out of the Northeast, your LINK keeps the flame of desire of being part of your good work alive. **Tony, SFX, Goa**

Thanks for the Link! I am in the group with time...and (money?) but not so much energy! **Alan, CSC, Nairobi Africa**

I received your kind email in which you attached the LINK. Thank you very much for your kind email. **+Andrew R. Marak, Meghalaya**

"Hello Michele, its Pope Francis"

On the hot midday of Wednesday, August 7, the mobile phone of Michele Ferri, 40, brother of Andrea, an owner of several gas stations, who was killed two months ago by an employee and his accomplice, began to vibrate. The display read that the caller was "Unknown." Curious, Michele answered "Pronto?" "Hello Michele, it's Pope Francis," he heard in reply. His heart began to beat rapidly. First the surprise, then the panic of "and now what should I say?" and then doubt, "perhaps it's a joke." However, a small light lit in Michele's head: a short time ago, torn by grief over the loss of his brother, he had written a very private letter to the Pontiff. And, totally unexpectedly, the Pope answered him courteously. Pope Francis "spoke to me immediately about the letter I had written him and no one knew that I addressed it to him," recalled Michele, speaking to "Il Messaggero." On his Facebook profile he then posted: "Today an unexpected phone call arrived ... on my phone. Pronto?" A voice answered saying 'Hello Michele, it's Pope Francis.' A unique emotion!" The Holy Father "told me that he wept when he read the letter I'd written," said Ferri -- confined for years to a wheelchair -- to his social network friends, without revealing, however, other details of the contents of this special phone call. "The Pope was most kind, and this is also a gift of his, together with a great humanity. "I would have liked to ask him so many other things, but my mind was completely blank, I couldn't even articulate a thought." "I felt something different, and he demonstrated this to me.

India's Poorest Chief Minister: Mr. Manik Sarkar of Tripura

First some facts about this great person by Gridonia Sequeira:

1. He is the poorest but also the purest Chief Minister in India.
2. He has been elected as chief minister consecutively for fourth term, one more than Narendra Modi's three terms, but zero publicity in our media.
3. He does not own a home.
4. His bank balance is Rs. 6,500/-



5. He donates all his salary to CPI (M), and party gives him sustenance allowance of Rs 5000/- per month.

6. His wife never uses official vehicle and is often seen on cycle rickshaw in Agartala.

7. Even his worst opponents admit that Manik Sarkar is an impeccably honest man, certainly a rare variety among politicians today.

Apart from honesty, Mr Manik Sarkar has been impetuous for the development of the State which includes better connectivity and development of IT sector. He was also responsible for bringing the concept of public-private partnership and invigorated private intervention, particularly in the IT sector.

I think he demands nothing from us but some respect and a little bit recognition. So, please share this with others.

Janet D'souza appointed Vice-Chairperson of Maharashtra Minorities Commission

The Congress seems to have reacted in a better-late-than-never move by appointing Janet D'souza, Mumbai's Mahila (Women's) Congress wing chief as a new Vice-Chairperson of the Maharashtra Minorities Commission. She has also been a Director of the State's Maulana Azad Finance Corporation and is principal of Little Flower English High School, Ghatkopar in the central suburbs. Janet D'souza is daughter of the late Mrs. Celine D'silva, who was the last Christian Minister in Government of Maharashtra, way back in 1985.

**St John's Medical College, Bangalore,**

which has emerged as one the best Medical Colleges in the country, celebrated its Golden Jubilee in August. Infosys Technologies



Executive Chairman N R Narayana Murthy was the Guest of Honour at the public function on August 9, which had Most Rev Salvatore Pennacchio, Apostolic Nuncio in India, as the Chief Guest and His Eminence Basileos Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos, CBCI Vice President I, who presided. The Apostolic Nuncio was the main celebrant at the solemn Eucharistic celebration prior to the public function.

St John's is one of the few leading Medical Colleges in the country to have academic and scientific collaborations with institutions like National Institutes of Health, International Atomic Energy Agency, Wellcome Foundation, WHO, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology and Indian Institute of Science, said Dr Prem Pais. The College recently received the Singh-Obama Award and got itself connected with the Harvard School of Public Health under the Harvard-India Nutrition Initiative. The College's 1,250-bed teaching hospital has nearly 2,500 patients who receive treatment daily

Congratulations:

Dr. Fr. Emmanuel Kallarackal, CSC, Principal of Holy Cross College who is elected Regional President of Xavier Board for Higher Education for East and Northeast region.



Bishop Aloysius Paul D'Souza has been chosen as the Outstanding Community Leader of Mangalore for the year 2012-2013 by the International Institute for Public Policy, a family sponsored non-profit organization.

Visitors at Bishop's House

- Sr. Sibia Provincial Superior SABS from Dimapur
- Sr. Jessica Vice Provincial SABS from Dimapur
- Mrs. Rosily & Ancy SABS from Dimapur
- Mr. Marlon, Levin, Robin and Magneo Crusaders for Jesus with Mary from Goa
- Mr. Nanda Kumar DGM of SIB from Kolkata
- Mr. Biswas, Auditor from Kolkata
- Fr. Thomas SJ from Patna St. Xavier's
- Sr. Doris, AC from Patna Women College
- Sr. Jyoti, SCJM from Ranchi Women College
- Fr. Benny, SDB from Manipur Don Bosco College
- Dr. Fr. Benjamin Costa, CS,C from Notre Dame, Dhaka

BISHOP'S PROGRAMME FOR SEPTEMBER 2013

- 01: Tholibari Chapel Blessing, Bishramganj Parish
- 03: CDC Meeting, Agartala Clergy Meeting & Recollection, Agartala
- 05: Teachers Day, Agartala
- 07: Sr. Shalini Silver Jubilee, Nandanagar
- 08: Parish Feast, Tuikarmaw
- 09-15: NERPC & NERCC Meet, Shillong
- 16-17: ARC Meet, Pune
- 18-19: Caritas Regional Chairmen & Directors Meet, Pune
- 21: Grotto blessing, Capitanio Home Panisagar
- 22: Parish Feast, Gachirampara Parish
- 24-28: CBCI Standing Committee, Bangalore
- 29-30: Caritas DDC Program & Valedictory, Mumbai