



## Pastor's Corner

### The great master and the little star

This is a wonderful story to remind us how God works in our lives. Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE." When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive stage.



In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't Quit. Keep Playing." Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

That's the way it is with God. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful. And that's the way it should be with Teachers. As we celebrate TEACHERS' DAY on 5<sup>th</sup> September, let this little example inspire all Teachers to help their students not to give up-- "Don't Quit. Keep Playing." Teachers Day is observed as a mark of tribute to the contribution made by teachers to our country. Socrates was an example of a good teacher. He considered himself a learner as well as a teacher. He felt it was not his teaching, but actually the power of the Divine which enabled the person he was talking with to improve himself.

God bless. +Lumen, CSC

## Congratulations...



"Fragrances from the North East" is being organized by the Directorate of Film Festivals at Siri Fort Auditorium complex Delhi from August 22-24. Salesian Fr Joseph Pulinthanath's feature film Yawng (Roots) in Kokborok is scheduled to be screened on the concluding day.



## Editorial

### Mariamnagar goes Platinum!

A trip to neighboring Bangladesh could turn out to be an intensely emotional journey down the memory lane for many in Tripura. Part of a single entity earlier, but separate nations now, such a trip is bound to bring up mixed feelings in one who has gone through the pain of partition in his personal and family life. There was a time when it all meant something dearer!

Memories of yesteryear's Clergy Meetings held monthly at Bishop's House Silchar and the three-day tedious trip from parishes in Tripura to attend the same, can make even a routine Silchar trip of today a nostalgic experience, pregnant with thoughts, recollections and fading memories. There was indeed a time when it all meant something dearer!



There was a time, we are told, when the Parish area of Mariamnagar was bigger than the very Diocese of which it is a tiny part now. Today it stands lowly and tired, shrunken in size and prominence, and bent double with the weight of history and traditions. And yet, the 'mother parish' tag it rightly and proudly flaunts is enough reason why the birth of every parish, and every act of separation from it, rather than impoverishing it, adds a feather in its cap. Every milestone that we as a Church arrive at here in Tripura, is a salute to that 5-acre crucible where it all began.

The Platinum Jubilee of Mariamnagar Parish is upon us. Just as we have allowed the events of past seventy-five years to shape our present-day attitudes and perceptions about Mariamnagar, we should let present-day happenings reshape and alter the past. It's not an attempt at make-believe, but recognizing that every new event and insight we stumble on today sheds new light and meaning on the past and helps us see it in hitherto unseen and refreshing ways.

Having arrived at this milestone, we owe it to ourselves and to history to take note, and perhaps to stand with bowed heads, in gratitude and contrition. It is an occasion to marvel how at times because of us, and at other times despite us, history unfolds, and the dance of time goes on reminding us that "there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will."

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

## Holy Cross Quasi Parish Bagbasa Our Shepherd & Pastor's Visit



Dear Bishop Lumen made his pastoral visit to Bagbasa Holy Cross Parish on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2014. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2014 evening he spent time at Panisagar Holy Cross Mission and he celebrated the Holy Eucharist for the Hostel Students and for the Co-Missionary Team of the Parish. He also attended the Co-Missionary Team Meeting on that evening. On 3<sup>rd</sup> August he made his visit to the Parish Centre and around 500 parishioners gave him a rousing welcome. He blessed and inaugurated the newly built Multipurpose Hall and the Hostel building. Bishop celebrated the first Sunday Parish Mass with the priests, religious and the faithful. After the Holy Eucharist there was a short welcome program and followed by Parish Council meeting in which Bishop gave an orientation for Parish Council members. During his visit, Bishop insisted on strengthening of faith practices and unity in the life journey of the faithful.

## Charismatic Healing Service at Bagbasa Holy Cross Parish

On 10<sup>th</sup> August 2014 as part of the Faith Renewal program in the Parish, Fr. Paul C. R., CSC, conducted for the second time, a Charismatic Healing Service at the centre, following the model of Sehion Retreat Centre at Attapadi Kerala. Around 200 people attended the one day healing service.

It was a great success. People could experience the Lord of the Sick. A similar program will be organized in the month of September from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> and all faithful in the Diocese are welcome to attend the Renewal Program.

*Fr. Paul Choorackal, CSC*

## Don Bosco Quasi Parish Nandanagar

### The Family that prays together stays together

On 17-08-14 the Women Commission of the Diocese organized a one day



Seminar for the Women of Nandanagar Parish with 24 participants. The theme of the Seminar was Faith Formation in Family. The main thrust of the Seminar was on family prayer as the source to deepen faith, with the logo 'the family that prays together stays together'. We made the

Women understand the need for family prayer and the need to insist on family prayer in the families. In the modern era where people find that they have no time and are busy in worldly affairs, we are confident that now in these 24 families there will be family prayer and they in turn will influence others to do the same. Only prayer can save the wayward youth and others!

*Sr. Punitha, SJA*

### Salesians begin Bicentennial Celebrations at Agartala



Don Bosco Family in Tripura ushered in the Bicentenary year of Don Bosco's birth through a joint celebration held at Don Bosco Nandan Nagar. Various programs were held at different levels school, parish and hostel on 16<sup>th</sup> August the 199<sup>th</sup> birthday of their father and founder saint.

The premises of Don Bosco School Agartala turned into a festive ground on 16<sup>th</sup> August morning when hundreds of students from all Schools run by the

Salesian Family in the State came together at Agartala to celebrate together the Birthday of their friend and father Don Bosco. Throughout the day groups of students and young people paid homage to the statue of Don Bosco that adorns the Don Bosco tri-junction on the Agartala-Khayerpur bypass road.

Don Bosco Parish celebrations in the evening also began with homage to the saint at this monument. Hundreds of parishioners and inmates of Salesian Family institutions, co-operators, past pupils, pre-novices and other faithful walked in procession to the Church where Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, hoisted the Bicentenary Flag before entering the Church for the Holy Mass. Over 500 people participated in what was surely the highpoint of the celebrations the concelebrated Holy Eucharist, which the Bishop presided over. In an inspiring homily, the Bishop highlighted the virtues of St. John Bosco and said "Not just the Salesians alone, but everyone who deals with youth in whatever settings must learn from St. John Bosco." Recalling their founder's extraordinary concern for youth, the Bishop called upon the Salesian Family to initiate activities for the welfare of the youth in Agartala Town.

After the Mass, everyone was treated to a variety program showcasing the rich cultural wealth of Tripura. Fr. Sunny, the Rector and Parish Priest of Don Bosco Nandan Nagar announced that as a bicentenary venture, coaching classes for the poor children of the neighborhood would be held at Don Bosco with the collaboration of the past pupils. The Salesian Co-operators and the two parishes of St. Joseph's and Don Bosco would jointly begin an initiative for the special care of the youth of Agartala Town, said the Parish priest. The day's program came to an end with a delicious meal for all sponsored by the Salesian Co-operators.

*Fr. Pulinthanath, SDB*

## St. Alphonsa Parish Khumwllong

### Truly a Celebration Faith

The Parish celebrated its 6<sup>th</sup> Parish Feast on 27<sup>th</sup> July. The preparation for feast began a month earlier. Novena was conducted by different groups of the Parish



### Our Readers Write

The beautiful news bulletin of Agartala Diocese really creates a link between the Diocese and the rest of the world's readers. I read through it quickly and was very happy to see so many good things happening in the Diocese of Agartala. *Fr. Jolly, Caritas India, Delhi*

Thank you very much for your LINK. We enjoy the delightful disarming humor. *Nap & Afra, California, USA*

Thank you for the on time Link. *Terrie, Mumbai*

Thanks for the link. *Sr. Louisa, FS, Meghalaya*

Thanks for the Link. I appreciate the effort to keep all of us in touch with the Diocese.

*Fr. Chacko, Nagaland*

Thank you for the mail. Your message was inspiring. Thanking you.

*Nideesh achan, Kerala*

I received your kind email with the attachment of "LINK". *+Andrew R. Marak, Tura*

I feel simply proud and happy that once I was part of this Diocese and now witnessing the fast growth; though in spirit still I belong to that place which constantly urges me to pray for the Diocese, support its growth in whatever possible way. May the Good lord Lead You Onward.

*Fr. Allwin K.M., Chennai*

Thanks for the Link that never de-links. *Sr Clara, BS, Silchar*



every evening consisting of Adoration, Reflection on St. Alphonsa's inspiring life, and intercessory prayers etc. Charismatic Retreat was another significant event of the Parish Feast. It was held for 6 days, two each days in three villages. People from 5 to 6 villages gathered at each charismatic retreat centers in spite of being the cultivation season. Fr. Bennet (Assistant Priest of Gandacherra) and Mr. Ashim Uchoi (from Depacherra) conducted the Retreat, strengthening the faith of the family and the youth. The theme of the Retreat was- 'forget Jesus, spoil the family'. Parishioners benefited spiritually a lot from the Retreat.

On the Feast Day the Holy Eucharist began at 9:30am with a devotional dance leading Bishop Lumen and the concelebrants to the Altar. People from different villages gathered in large numbers for the worship and celebration. There was offertory procession consisting of all sub-stations representing their own village community. 50 people received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Felicitations after the Mass lasted for two hours comprising different tribe items from different villages leading to the unity of the Parish. The Parish Feast was truly a celebration of faith for the parishioners. *Arun MinjSVD*

## Glimpses from the Diocese

### Holy Cross College celebrates Third Graduation Day

Holy Cross College celebrated the third Graduation Day on August 9, 2014 through a solemn ceremony at its Durjoynagar campus. The function began with a ceremonial procession of graduates, faculty and dignitaries with the accompaniment of the School Band. The Chief Guest of the occasion was Sri. G.K. Rao, the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Tripura. In his speech he invited the graduates "not to be constrained by their socio-economic backgrounds but to strive for excellence and success," quoting his own personal example. Fr. K.J. Abraham, CSC, Chairman of HCEF, presided over the function and gave the benediction. The Commencement Speaker was Dr. Bro. John Paige, CSC, President, Holy Cross College, Notre Dame, Indiana, USA. In his address he said that "Holy Cross educational tradition provides real and practical education and it aims to educate hearts and minds." He invited the graduates to serve the society with love and dedication and make a difference.

Prof. Arunodaya Saha, the first VC of Tripura University (A Central University) and Sri. Swapan Saha, Revenue Secretary Govt. of Tripura were Special Guests on the occasion. Several other dignitaries and Heads of Institutions also attended. Dr. Fr. Emmanuel Kallarackal, CSC Principal of Holy Cross College, in his welcome speech received the guests and dignitaries and invited the graduates "to go forth to serve and learn with love in their hearts". A total of 73 students graduated from the College with their BA and BBA degrees. *(College Staff Reporter)*

### Ferrando 'Special School' at 'Special Olympics'



Special Olympics Bharat, a National Sports Federation recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, organized the State level Special Olympics for the differently abled children from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> August at Bishalgarh Town Girls' High School. (The Special Olympics was started by Eunice Kennedy Shriver out of her experience of witnessing the social exclusion of people with disabilities who were routinely placed in custodial institutions.) 287 students with special needs from 4 different Schools of Tripura participated in 27 events. Students from Ferrando School for

Speech and Hearing jubilantly inform their most loved Bishop Lumen and all the Link Readers that they swept the Olympics with 24 Gold, 15 Silver and 5 Bronze medals. "If I cannot win let me be brave in the attempt" was their brainwave. Let this attitude of our students inspire many who are differently-abled. *Sr. Reena, MSMHC*

**International Year of Family Farming** - The United Nations (UN) has declared 2014 as the: International Year of Family Farming (IYFF 2014). It aims to stimulate policies for the sustainable development of farmer families, communal units, indigenous groups, cooperatives and fishing families. When the UN declared 2014 as the Year of Family Farming, it announced that family farming and smallholder farming were important for sustainable food production to achieve food security. There are an estimated 500 million family farms those that rely primarily on family members for labour and management across the developed and developing world, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). These farms produce the food that feeds billions of people, the agency noted in a news release, adding that in many developing countries, family farms represent up to 80 per cent of all farm holdings.

## Training on SRI and different Government Schemes

On 24th July JUST organized a training program assisted by Caritas India on System of Rice Intensification (SRI) at Tamakari Village under FARM Northeast Project. The objective of the training was to let the farmers know about the technique of SRI cultivation. Ms. Nirupama Debbarma (Sector Officer) Agriculture Department and Mr. Rathin Debbarma (In-charge) VLW, Barakathal, were the Resource Persons for the training. 50 farmers of different Farmers' Clubs took part in the training program. The training ended successfully with the Sector Officer saying she was thankful to JUST for organizing the training program and asked JUST Staff to keep in touch with the agriculture department.

## Distribution of Educational Materials

On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2014, Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST) organized a program on distribution of educational materials to the non-formal school students under Smile Foundation Project. The program was conducted at Damdamia and Napali Basti non-formal Schools. 150 educational materials were



distributed to the students of both the schools. Few children came forward and shared their happiness for the educational materials given to them. The educational materials were distributed according to the classes and the needs of the students. The Coordinator Mr. Deepan Gurung spoke to the children on the importance of education comparing rural and urban education. He told the students that the materials were given by Smile Foundation and that the children were not to misuse them. Mrs. Mithu Rani, Miss. Swapana Gurung, Mr. Tonick and Mr. Tej Bahadur Teachers of SMILE Foundation distributed the materials and encouraged the children to continue their education.

*Mr. Deepan Gurung*

## Pope: Young People Are Not Just the Future of the Church, but the Present

Pope Francis told young people in Haemi, Korea, that they must not figuratively be 'asleep' because, as a beloved part of today's Church, they have a duty and responsibility to bring



their joy and optimism to the world. Speaking to the more than 50,000 young people from 23 countries gathered in the Castle of Haemi for the concluding Mass of the 6th Asian Youth Day, the Pope asserted that the active witness of young people is vital to the Church. "No one who sleeps can sing, dance or rejoice," he said. Reflecting on the theme of the 6th Asian Youth Day "Asian Youth! Wake up! The Glory of the Martyrs Is Upon You!" the Holy Father told them that one part of the theme represents a duty and a responsibility, whereas the other, a consolation. "The glory of the martyrs' shines upon you!" he said, not only consoles, but also strengthens because the martyrs' witness is proof that "the light of Christ's truth dispels all darkness," that he is "the light of our lives." The Gospel has the power to "purify," "elevate" and "perfect" Asia's strong cultural heritage, the Pope said, allowing young Catholics to still enjoy the many positive values of diverse Asian cultures. But at the same time they will be able to discern what is incompatible with their Catholic faith. "As young Christians," Francis said, "you are not only a part of the future of the Church; you are also a necessary and beloved part of the Church's present. You are the present of the Church," whether at "work, study, have begun a career or have answered calls to marriage, religious life or the priesthood." "In your Christian lives, you will find many occasions that will tempt you," he cautioned, but urged them in these situations to say "Lord, help me!" "Lord, help me!" and he will respond to "every plea for his help, with love, mercy and compassion." He also said the same must be done for others because "we are to be like Christ."

"Wake up!" means being vigilant and requires young people not to allow "pressures, temptations and sins of ourselves or others to dull sensitivity to the beauty of holiness, to the joy of the Gospel." Rather, the Pope said, God constantly invites his children "to be glad and sing for joy." Pope Francis concluded by directing them to take up this path, and declared: "Young people, Wake Up!" *By Deborah Castellano Lubov*

## Next Asian Youth Day

Cardinal Gracias, the Archbishop of Bombay and President of the Federation of the Asian Bishops' Conference, told thousands of young pilgrims gathered at Mass in Haemi, Korea, that the next Asian Youth Day will be held in Indonesia in 2017. The Cardinal made the announcement in his closing address of the 6th Asian Youth Day, during which he reflected on the event and expressed his gratitude to the Holy Father for his presence.

"Most Holy Father, It is my privilege to convey to you the sentiments of the tens of thousands of our youth assembled here. How happy we felt as you led us in this concluding Eucharist of the 6th Asian Youth day here in Daejeon, Korea. How inspired we felt with your message to us: Asian Youth, Wake up! The glory of the martyrs shines on you! How thrilled we are on realizing that we are entrusted with the challenge of transforming society. How enthusiastic we feel as we carry the joy of the Gospel to the ends of Korea, to the ends of Asia and to the ends of the world... We have spent five days of excitement, joy and playfulness but also of deep prayer, serious reflection and earnest exchange. But now after these five days in Daejeon we have rekindled our passion for the Gospel, revitalized our youthful spirit, and understood more deeply our baptismal consecration and the meaning of true discipleship... And so 'No' to an economy of exclusion, 'No' to an economy of selfishness, without ethics, 'No' to the spirit of materialism. 'No', 'No', 'No'. And a 'yes' to a personal encounter with Jesus whom we want to carry always with us. 'Yes' to the cry of the poor, the needy and the lonely and 'yes' to the world that eagerly waits for us."

## BISHOP'S PROGRAMME FOR SEPTEMBER 2014

- 01: PSC Meet, Delhi
- 02: Clergy Meet & Reflection, Agartala
- 06: Pastoral visit, Chailengtha
- 07: Confirmations, Kathalcherra Parish
- 08: Girl Child Day, Agartala
- 08-13: NERPC Meet, Guwahati
- 13-14: Silver Jubilee, Tuikarmaw Parish
- 15: Holy Cross Feast  
Meet Capuchin Provincial
- 17-19: Caritas National Assembly, Bangalore
- 20-21: Pastoral Visit, Mandwi Parish
- 23: Meet SG Superior General  
Boarders Day, St. Mary's Champaknagar
- 24: Boarders Day, Ferrando Nandanagar
- 25-26: CSC Renewal Program, Agartala
- 27-29: DDC Valedictory, Delhi
- 30-03: NE Diocesan Fraternity Convention, Itanagar