



# DIOCESE OF AGARTALA



## Link

## Lead Us Onward

Agartala Diocesan Newsletter

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### Pastor's Corner

#### The Unhealthy Cycle of Competition



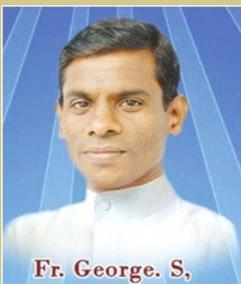
A story that Ravi Kumar shares helps understand the unhealthy cycle of competition: One day as I was jogging in the morning I noticed a person about half a km ahead. I could guess he was running a little slower than me and that made me feel good, I said to myself I will try catch up with him. So I started running faster and faster. Every block, I was gaining on him a little bit. After just a few minutes I was only about 100 feet behind him, so I really picked up the pace and pushed myself. I was determined to catch up with him. Finally, I did! I caught up and passed him. Inwardly I felt very good. "I beat him". Of course, he didn't even know

we were racing. After I passed him, I realized I had been so focused on competing against him that 'I had missed my turn to my house'. In fact I realized that I had missed so many other things-- I had missed the focus on my inner peace, I missed to see the beauty of greenery around, I missed to do my inner namasmaran, and in the needless hurry stumbled and slipped twice or thrice and might have hit the footpath and broken a limb. It then dawned on me, isn't that what happens in life when we focus on competing with co-workers, neighbors, friends, family, trying to outdo them or trying to prove that we are more successful or more important and in the bargain miss on our happiness within our own surroundings? We spend our time and energy running after them and we miss out on our own paths to our given destination. The problem with unhealthy competition is that it's a never ending cycle. There will always be somebody

ahead of you, someone with a better job, nicer car, more money in the bank, more education, a prettier wife, a more handsome husband, better behaved children, better circumstances, and so on. But one important realization is that you can be the best that you can be, when you are not competing with anyone. Some people are insecure because they pay too much attention to what others are, where others are going, wearing, driving, and so on. Take whatever you have, like your height, your weight or your personality. Accept it and realize that you are blessed. Comparison and Competition is the thief of JOY. It kills the Joy of living your own life. So, run your own race that leads to a peaceful, happy, and steady life. +Lumen, CSC



### Two new Priests for the Diocese



Fr. George. S.

The Diocese of Agartala is blessed with two new priests in the persons of Fr. S. George and Fr. Antony Balan, who were ordained by Bishop Lumen Monteiro. Fr. George was ordained on 30<sup>th</sup> January in his home Parish of K. Udyapatty T.N., while Fr. Antony Balan was ordained on 31<sup>st</sup> January in his home Parish of Anaiyeri T.N. The two are incardinated in the Diocese of Agartala and will be serving the Lord and his people in this Diocese. We congratulate them and welcome them in our midst.



### Editorial

#### Elections and Exams... And the Season of Lent



Millions wait with bated breath for the results of the Tripura Assembly elections

held about ten days ago. A couple of days more to go before we shall know the extent of change or the lack of it that the high decibel, bitterly fought contest was able to bring about. Until then, we deem it best to stay silent. Perhaps consider something else... How does Lent come across to young people of other faiths? I had an opportunity to find out when the young boys and girls of our Boarding undergoing the Madhyamik coaching program insisted on knowing more about this season that begins with ash on people's forehead. Keenly aware

that these young minds were schooled in a dispensation different from mine, I judiciously dwelt on notions presumably universal: sin, repentance, penance, and atonement. It seemed to work at first. But soon, I knew I was sounding pathetic. Despite their keen and



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generous rejoinders I knew I was failing to touch them. Something, something very big was rendering my words ineffectual. Was it my over eagerness to sound intelligible that caused words to lose their meaning and rendered them simplistic, almost facile?

I soon realized Lent is not about some universal tendency or other of humankind to do penance, rejuvenate or rediscover itself. It is simply, all about Jesus of Nazareth. I saw that in the eyes of my listeners. When we tried to understand Lent in the context of the Jesus events we celebrate in Holy Week, it all began to make sense. It even took us beyond the solitary desert of random penance to those crowded areas of human pain and suffering that ache for love and compassion.

While talking with those uninitiated young boys and girls about Jesus who washed the feet of his friends, let himself be beaten and spat on, and killed, we realized Lent is all about Jesus. It occurred to us that if all our abstentions and penances are not held together by intense love; the kind we see at work in those last events of Jesus' life, it won't add up to anything much. May we all have a blessed season of Lent!

It's March, the month in which hundreds of thousands of students will sweat it out in examination halls across the State. LINK wishes them all God's blessings and success.

*J. Pulinthanath, SDB*

### **KATHALCHERRA PARISH** **Maria Sangha Sabha**



204 vibrant and energetic women of Kathalcherra gathered for the 3-day Maria Sangha Sabha on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at Nutunbari sub centre. Enunciating the theme 'Family and the Eucharist' Fr Lancy CSC, the Parish Priest, highlighted the importance of the holy Eucharist in the lives of individuals and family. He said the holy Eucharist should be the guiding principle and source of their lives. Under the guidance of Cyril Darlong (Peace project), Mr. Chandro Joy Reang spoke on peace and on antihuman trafficking. There was a Health talk on early detection of cancer by Sr. Prema. They were enthused and filled with energy as

they listened to each other's success stories back in their respective villages as they shared their years activities. it was a thrilling experience to know their zeal and enthusiasm . They also staged their creativity through various competitions and cultural items. Thanks to Sr. Suman and Mr. Zonunthara Darlong who continuously guide them.

### **Sr. Prema Masquith, BS** **27th Annual Parish Sabah**



February 9-11 Good Shepherd Parish celebrated the 27th Annual Parish Sabha at Parish Centre with the theme "Renewal of Family". St. Joseph Nagar took the lead in organizing it, and it was well organized and the response was highly appreciated. The Sabha started on 9th evening. Rev Fr. Arul CSC gave the inaugural Talk on "Kingdom Based Family." The next day Fr. Bosco gave Sessions on "Family renewal". Over 550 faithful attended and ended the day with Confessions and Adoration. On the same day all the Village mondolis presented their annual village report. Our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro celebrated the Holy Eucharist and blessed the occasion. More than 750 parishioners turned up to receive God's blessing. After the holy Mass Fr. Lancy D'Souza CSC presented the Annual Report of the Parish and Fr. C.V. Jose CSC presented the Financial Report of the parish. The program ended with a fellowship meal organized by the St. Joseph village.

*Fr. Ajit CSC*

### **KUMARGHAT PARISH** **Annual Parish Sabah at Masli Garo Village**



On January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> we had the Annual Parish Sabha at Masli Garo. The theme of the Sabha was "Participatory

Church". The Sabha began with the hoisting of the parish flag by Fr. Arul CSC, the Parish Priest. The Seminar was conducted by Fr. Ivan D Silva, SVD, who enunciated the theme. Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, was warmly welcomed in the afternoon. Fr Arul CSC, presented the Annual Report of the Parish, which was followed by mondoli leaders Annual Report. Fr Aneesh CSC, gave the Financial Report of the Parish. Finally Bishop Lumen gave his observations and appreciations for the many programs conducted during the year 2017. This was followed by Adoration and Confession led by Fr. Bennett, Secretary of the Charismatic Commission. The presence of Fathers from Chailengta, Kathalcherra, Panisagar and Bagbasa along with Bishop Lumen was a blessing. On 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday morning, before the holy Mass, Bishop Lumen inaugurated the fifth year leading to the Golden Jubilee of the Parish. The Sacrament of Confirmation was administered and 33 children received first Holy Communion. After the holy Mass, the yearly planner of the Parish was released. It was a joyful occasion for the parishioners to celebrate the anticipated Birthday of our dear Bishop Lumen by wishing song and cake cutting. Fr. Aneesh Mathew thanked everyone--Bishop, fathers, Sisters, and the lay faithful. The parish Sabha was a rich experience in praying, learning and living together for three days in Masli Garo village. It created a strong family spirit among the participants. The village was highly appreciated for their meticulous planning and beautifully organizing the Parish Sabha which came to an end with the fellowship meal.

*Fr. Arul J., CSC*

### **NANDANNAGAR PARISH** **Parish Day Celebrations**

Enthusiasm and anticipation were evidently visible as the Parishioners of Don Bosco Parish Nandannagar gathered for the Parish Day, which celebrated the feast of Don Bosco, the patron of the Parish. The high point of the celebrations was the Holy Mass which Fr. Sunny, the parish priest presided over, and the entire Parish participated in with soulful singing and heartfelt devotion. Fr. Lawrence Darlong who concelebrated touched the hearts of all with an inspiring



homily based on the life of Don Bosco. The Mass was followed by numerous activities and competitions, all of which were meticulously planned and got ready in advance. The attractive fun games brought smiles to all faces: children and the young people of yesteryears. Prizes made the activities more competitive. The common meal was a great witness of sharing. The Day turned out to be a wonderful occasion for everyone to get to know fellow parishioners better and to work with them as members of a family.

**Fr. Sunny, SDB**

**BODHJUNG NAGAR PARISH**  
Holy Childhood Day celebrated



Parish and the Youth choir were busy with the Sacrament of marriage in different villages in the month of February under the leadership of Mr. Anando D/B, the Catechist.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February the Parish children gathered at St. Luke Church, Dugrai, on the universal day of Holy Childhood. There were around 250 catholic children and their parents, a total number of over 400 persons gathered from 20 villages of St. Andre Parish in order to transfer the faith and support the children. The day began with the Holy Eucharist presided by Fr. Robert Mathias CSC, the Provincial Superior along with the Parish Priest. The liturgy was animated by the children and the choir was by the youth of the parish. It was really a happy moment for all specially to the parish priest to see the large number of catholic children and the faithful gathering in a remote village. After lunch, different cultural dance competitions and Bible stories were enacted by the children. It was followed by different sports competitions. At the end, the Parish Priest, Fr. Binoy John CSC, thanked the organizers, Dugrai *motha* faithful, catechists, parish council representatives, Maria sango representatives, youth, children, Fathers and Sisters. Prizes were distributed to the winners. The children enjoyed and cherished this day.

**Fr. Binoy John, CSC**

**Hallowed Fr. Francis Xavier Kroot, MHM Founder of Fatima Sisters**

8<sup>th</sup> February 2018, was a great festive day for Fatima Sisters at Kumarghat, being the 126<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day of our Congregation. This year the Sisters had an added reason to give thanks to God for raising their Founder Msgr. Francis Xavier Kroot, MHM, to the status of "Servant of God". Fr. Lancy D'Souza the new Vicar General of the Diocese of Agartala in his homily hailed Francis Xavier Kroot encouraging the Sisters to continue his charism of working for the upliftment of Women and children. Fr. Lancy urged the



Parishioners, Catholic Teachers, Hostel Boys and Girls to give the utmost importance to family Prayers and cited many examples of the young men who by the prayers of their mothers changed their former lives and devoted themselves to preach God's word. Thereafter, a short program was held with a prayer dance, a short documentary on the Servant of God Francis Xavier Kroot, felicitations to Fr. Lancy, CSC, the newly appointed Vicar General, Fr. Arul, CSC, and all the Fathers and Sisters and Sr. Amali Arasi the Superior Fatima Convent it being her Birthday. The celebration came to an end by an agape meal. **Sr. Ventura Fernandes, FS**

**Education Commission of the Diocese - 23rd January**

The Education Commission organized an all Diocese Catholic Teachers Faith Animation Program on 23<sup>rd</sup> January at Mariamnagar Parish. The Seminar began with a short prayer service by Sr. Sini MSHSC. 132 Teachers participated. Bro. Peter Veda SG, the Education Commission Secretary, welcomed the gathering and introduced the main Speakers Rev. Fr. Dr. Emmanuel, CSC, Principal of Holy Cross College and Rev. Fr. Dr. Shaji CSC, the Vice Principal of Holy Cross College. The Speakers spoke on the effective teaching

method in our Institutions. Both Resource Persons were speaking about the effective ways of handling the students in the classroom environment and keeping value based Christian education. This can be nurtured to help students discover the very best in them, which enables to be good citizens and prepare them for life. The positive learning environment is achieved through the positive values modeled by staff throughout the school... The use of modern electronic gadgets gives them more confidence. The session was followed by lunch, followed by Confession and holy Eucharist by Fr. Suresh, CSC. The participants felt that this Seminar was really educative and inspirational. Fr. Presad, the Commission Treasurer proposed the vote of thanks, especially mentioning VC Frs. Abraham and Xavier for their constant support and arrangement of place. **Bro. Peter Veda, SG, Secretary**

**Blessing and Inauguration of new Bethany House**

February 13, 2018 holds a special and unique memory for the Bethany Sisters of Holy Cross Convent, Agartala, as we had the inauguration of our new home. Fr. Robert, Provincial Superior of NE Holy Cross and Sr. Joy the Provincial Superior of NE Bethany Sisters Province jointly inaugurated the new Convent. Bishop



Lumen Monteiro of Agartala blessed the building and presided over the Holy Eucharist concelebrated with 20 priests from the Diocese. In his homily Bishop appreciated the Bethany Sisters for their long standing service to the church being the first women religious to step into Tripura.

To mark this memorable day we had a short felicitation program after the holy Mass. The special guests of the day, Bishop

Lumen Monteiro, Fr. Robert CSC, Sr. Joy BS, Fr. Valerian CSC and Sr. Sandhya BS were honored with a shawl and bouquet of flowers. Fr. Robert in his message acknowledged the presence and service of the Bethany Sisters in collaborating with the Holy Cross Fathers in the past and present. A token of love and gratitude for the services of Bethany Sisters was presented by Fr. Robert to Sr. Joy the Provincial Superior. In her address, Sr. Joy thanked the Holy Cross Fathers for their magnanimity and generosity in providing the best house for the Sisters. Sr. Alice BS, thanked all the fathers, sisters, friends, well wishers and hostel students for their support and encouragement. **Sr. Sajana, BS**

### Certification Camp for the Disabled

JUST in collaboration with District Disability Rehabilitation Center



(DDRC) and Vocational Rehabilitation Center (VRC) West Tripura organized a certification camp for the disabled on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at Teliamura town hall. The programs started at 10.00 a.m at Teliamura town hall. 57 Persons with Disability (PwDs) and Children with Disability (CwDs) were registered for Disability certificates and 24 from PwDs/CwDs got certificates. 22 PwDs registered their name for Vocational

training with VRC. During the camp 4 Doctors from department of hearing, mental, orthopedic and eye attended the camp and examined PwDs/CwDs disability percentage. After that VRC officer registered their names and gave them certificates and also discussed about the new rule of training for PwDs. Now PwDs will get training at their local area and they will get Rs. 2500/- per month as stipend after completing the vocational training. The Doctors suggested to the PwDs/CwDs that to visit their DDRC office Agartala if more aids needed with their income certificates.

### Nutrition to Children

JUST, with the help of Kindermissionswerk, is running 10 coaching centers for 300 children under Ganganagar R.D Block. The children at Ganganagar area are malnourished. Hence JUST besides the coaching classes provides nutrition to the children. Twice a week the children are provided egg, biscuits and bananas during the class hours. This nutrition program has made the children regular in the class and also has enabled the poor children get some protein for their health. The children are happy to receive the nutrition along with coaching classes.



*Mr. Cyril Darlong*

### JUST NewsNuggets

### Billy Graham is no more

Billy Graham, the well-known evangelist, died February 21, 2018, at the age of 99.



An ordained Southern Baptist Minister, Graham was popular among Christians

of all denominations as well as those of other religions. During a public ministry spanning more than half a century, he reached more than 180 countries and preached before more than 200 million people. He was a spiritual advisor to several American presidents and numerous civic and political leaders.

Graham met several times with Saint Pope John Paul II and the two were frequent correspondents.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York released the following statement on Graham's passing:

"As anyone growing up in the 1950's and 1960's can tell you, it was hard not to notice and be impressed by the Reverend Billy Graham. There was no question that the Dolans were a Catholic family, firm in our faith, but in our household there was always respect and admiration for Billy Graham and the work he was doing to bring people to God. Whether it was one of his famous Crusades, radio programs, television specials, or meeting and counseling the presidents, Billy Graham seemed to be everywhere, always with the same message: Jesus is your Savior, and wants you to be happy with Him forever. As an historian, my admiration for him only grew as I studied our nation's religious past, and came to appreciate even more the tremendous role he played in the American evangelical movement. May the Lord that Billy Graham loved so passionately now grant him eternal

### Our Readers Write

>>When people can't keep a date of promise, you are ever punctual and prompt with "Link" - an amazing thing in today's world. TK, Bangalore

>>Thank you for the LINK. Hats off to you for your punctuality and posting it on the first day of every month, no matter what! May God continue to bless you all the sincere pastoral efforts in the Diocese of Agartala. Emma, CSC, Agartala

### Bishop's Program for March 2018

- 02-19: Joint Lenten Campaign, Germany
- 20: Caritas India Meeting, Delhi
- 24-25: Parish Pastoral Program
- 27: Pastoral Meet at Agartala  
Chrism Mass at Cathedral Agartala
- 29-31: Triduum & Easter Vigil, Tuikarmaw
- 01: Easter Sunday, Don Bosco Nandanagar

### Our Distinguished Visitors

- Sr. Angela, FSM Provincial and Sr. Nambikkai, FSM, from Bangalore
- Sr. Helen, SAC Provincial and Sr. Sharmila, SAC, from Bangalore
- Sr. Joy BS Provincial from Guwahati
- Fr. Rimiki Niangti, from Shillong
- Mr. Regeonstar, Mr. Rodrigue and Mr. Saving from Shillong
- Fr. Jacob Palamattam, from Agra Archdiocese