



DIOCESE OF AGARTALA



Link

Lead Us Onward

Agartala Diocesan Newsletter

Vol. XXII - No. 06 - June 2018

Pastor's Corner Stronger, Better, Humble, and Positive



Fr. George Stephen, SJ, tells this story about frogs. A farmer came into town and asked the owner of a restaurant if he could use a million frog legs. The restaurant owner was shocked and asked the man where he could get so many frog legs! The farmer replied, 'There is a pond near my house that is full of frogs - millions of them. They all croak all night long and they are about to make me crazy!' So the restaurant owner and the farmer made an agreement that the farmer would deliver frogs to the restaurant, five hundred at a time for the next several weeks. The first week the

farmer returned to the restaurant looking rather sheepish with two scrawny little frogs. The restaurant owner said, 'Well.... where are all the frogs?' The farmer said, 'I was mistaken. There were only these two frogs in the pond. But they sure were making a lot of noise!'

REFLECTION: Next time you hear somebody criticizing you, remember, it's probably just a couple of noisy frogs. Also remember that problems always seem bigger in the dark and almost overwhelming, like a million frogs croaking!

When we take the road less travelled it will place us in a situation that calls for our ability to take risks. There will be many telling us about the difficulties involved in taking it. But if one has the mental determination and grit to withstand challenges, success is bound to come. The big danger is the voices, the public opinion that sometimes pulls us back, like the

deafening noises of the two scrimpy frogs.

Though you are a single person you can do something meaningful in society. This needs confidence to think that I can bring about some change! The adage 'If you can dream it you can do it' fits best here. So let us:

Learn to be stronger in difficult situations.

Learn to be better in worst circumstances.

Learn to be humble when successful.

Learn to be positive in negative surroundings, and,

Learn to let go things because we cannot take in the next breath until we let go the existing one....!!

+Lumen, CSC



Editorial

LINK Like a Song!



Unfailingly on the very first day of the month, for the past twenty-two years, we have had a new issue of 'LINK' reaching us. The simple newsletter of the Diocese, by its relentless, almost frightening regularity alone, if not anything else, can be considered something symbolic of the inexorable march of time. It should perhaps jolt us out of slumber that the chariot of time keeps moving forward with scant regard for our glorious achievements, utter failures, and everything between.

Milestones, even important ones, come and go! On the 26th of last month, the Diocese completed 22 eventful years. And after twenty-five years, we in Tripura now have a Government by a new political party. At least three religious Congregations working in the Diocese have just got new Provincial Superiors to guide their destiny.

New structures, new patterns and new approaches unfold before our eyes with amazing frequency and hope. It may be that, at times, each new day brings fresh disappointments but they also bring new opportunities.

As a Diocese too, having come past another milestone, the thought could be an emphatic invitation to see how we figure in all this. Are we only in search of mechanisms that merely help us cope, or give a semblance of being in touch, of moving with the times? No doubt, just like the rest of the race we too show remarkable flair to get into the groove, and with the aid of newer gadgets, newer appearances, newer facades claim a measure of comfort, however edgy.

Or do we dare to disturb the universe, ask that all-important question and take on the challenge by its horns?

There's very little credit we can claim in the interminable passing of days into months and months into years. We seek the grace to be able to fill those days and months and years with unalloyed joy, unquestionable relevance and 'life in its fullness' for others



and ourselves. Right under our nose we see happening the Victorian poet's musing, 'the old order changeth, yielding place to new and God fulfils himself in many ways'.

We congratulate and thank our Bishop Lumen whose grit and determination to get LINK delivered uninterruptedly on the first day of every month; it was that helped us make this reflection.

J. Pulinthanath, sdb



Link congratulates Fr. Simon Fernandez, CSC, the newly elected Provincial Superior of the Holy Cross Fathers, NE Province and Councilors, Frs. Roy Thalackan and Kanikai Jeyaraj, CSC, who were administered the Oath by the Vicar and first General Assistant from Rome, Bro. Paul Bednarczyk, CSC, on 24th May at Agartala.

KHUMULWNG PARISH

Village Chapel Strengthens Faith of Twisikam Para



It was like a dream come true for the Rupinis of Twisikam para close to Champaknagar having constructed a beautiful village Chapel. They never thought that they could construct a Chapel one day. Even though the faith of the people was shaky the construction of a village Chapel strengthened their faith. There was unity and harmony in all the works they did as if it were their own Church. The joy and happiness of the villagers was tremendous when Bishop Lumen Monteiro inaugurated and blessed the new village Chapel on April 28, 2018. Remarkably the village Chapel was completed in a record three months time. All appreciated the beautiful village Chapel. A large number of Parishioners from St. Alphonsa Parish participated in the holy Mass and joined in the celebrations.

Maria Songo takes strong Steps...



The Women of Khumulwng Parish organized a one day Seminar and Meeting on 4th May 2018. Fr. Binoy CSC and Sr. Renuka, CSC animated the Seminar. The topics that were dealt with were holy family, responsible parenting, and faithfulness to the Church. The Resource Persons made the Seminar interesting and participative. Later, the Maria Sangh Members elected a new Committee for the Parish and made an Action Plan for the coming year. Some of the areas are: cleaning the church and taking up the Sunday liturgy once a

week, strengthening the family prayers, bringing their own children to the church regularly, raising funds, and strengthening women in every village-unit. The Women are happy that they have benefitted from the Maria Sangh Seminar and Meeting.

Fr. Arun Minj, SVD

KUMARGHAT PARISH

Annual Parish Youth Meet



The annual Parish Youth Meet was held at St. Paul's Parish Kumarghat from 11-13 May 2018. The participation was very encouraging as the Youth gathered in large number, 231 of them for the three days. Fr. Ishwar Happa CSC was the main Resource Person who conducted Seminar, games and other spiritual activities. Fr. Ivan SVD gave the Session on Leadership and the influence on media on youth. Three cultural competitions were conducted in the evenings namely, Group Singing, Group Dance and Skit on Family. The Meet came to an end on the 13th with Mass presided by Fr. Aneesh Mathew CSC, PYA of Kumarghat. The participated were encouraged by the presence of Sisters and Catechists throughout the programme.

Leadership Training Program for Leaders of Maria Songo

The two days leadership training programme for the leaders of Maria Songo was held on the 29th and 30th of April 2018. Fr. Ishwar CSC motivated the Leaders with his Talk on leadership. Sr. Mary David FS gave Sessions on the 30th. The Leaders went back home motivated to strengthen the activities of Maria Songo in their own villages. The sharing Session of the various activities taking place in the village was enriching to the Leaders.

Fr. Aneesh Mathew, CSC

KATHALCHERRA PARISH

Small Christian Community



Good Shepherd Parish had one day SCC training on 13 May 2018. Fr. Lancy D'Souza,

CSC, gave the valuable inputs to the 270 participants of Kathalcherra Parish and Bagbasa Parish. It started at 9.30am with Bible enthronement. All the participants took part very actively. The group activities and the planning session made the day very lively. After lunch the participants drew up an Action Plan. Good Shepherd Parish itself has 50 SCC active Units. During the program the Reports from each group were presented. All the Groups are doing wonderfully well and the training made them more inspired to do more actively. The program ended with the Holy Eucharist. *Fr. Ajith Philip, CSC*

MANDWI PARISH

Youth Leadership Training



On 5th and 6th May the Youth of Mandwi Parish gathered at the Parish centre for two days program. Fr. Lawrence the DYD of the Diocese of Agartala along with his Team came to animate. David Debbarma spoke about the importance of the Word of God. Fr. Lawrence Darlong emphasized the importance of Team work in order to strengthen our faith as well as the society. The Youth Leaders Peter Debbarma, Biswajit, Vicky, Gaurav and Lison shared their personal experiences which were inspirational and enriched all the other Youth too. Sujoy Uchoi, the Diocesan Youth President gave a Talk on Leadership, and enlightened the Youth about the various responsibilities of the leaders. Soon after, we had the elections: President Sanjay Debbarma, Vice President Jasmine Debbarma, Secretary Ratan Rupini and Asst. Sec. Jacinta Debbarma. On 6th we had the Holy Eucharist along with the faithful of the Parish. Fr. Lawrence Darlong presided over the Holy Eucharist. After the Holy Mass we had some more Sessions. Though it was a short program, the young people enjoyed and gained a lot.

Sr. Felisita Rynshon, FMA

West Zone SCC Animation Team Opens Eye to Reality



The eleventh West Zone SCC Animators' Meeting, Evaluation and Planning began with 18 participants, with Bible enthronement, veneration and sharing at Mariamnagar on 1st May 2018. There was active participation of the SCC

Animators. Evaluation and Action Plan were followed by Bible sharing.

It was regretted that most of the SCC Units have grown weaker and non-functional; participation of men, youth and children at SCC is very discouraging. The root cause of the lack of Youth participation in the Church is lack of Catechism and faith formation at the initial stages. Strengthening of SCC Units or Family Prayer Group is a real challenge. Women's participation is praiseworthy; but men, youth and children are very few. It is high time that we strengthen the existing Units and form new SCC Units (family prayer groups) in every Village and Zone; conduct regular Bible sharing; encourage Bible veneration and reading in every family, and train Animation Team/Coordinators. The West Zone SCC Meet ended with the concluding prayer at 1:15pm. Thanks to the host Parish, Shantir Rani Mariamnagar. *Fr. Arun Minj SVD*

Catechists Ongoing Formation

Ten days of ongoing formation from 16th to 26th April 2018 organized by Fr. Jomon, SVD, Secretary, Political Commission, at the Diocese of Agartala. The Resource Persons were Mr. Praburbo Halder and Prerona Majumdar, Agartala. Isaiah and Kerygma Commission their commitment to the great commission of proclamation in their own areas. Bishop Lumen reminded the Catechists in his talk that the church exists to proclaim. There were 32 catechists and all were very positive and happy with the course.

Fr. Jomon, SVD

Spanish Cyclist on World Tour reaches Agartala with a Message of 'Live Your Dream'



Agartala, May 08 (ANI): Elias Escribano, a cyclist from Spain is currently on a world tour with the message, "live your dreams." The Spanish adventurer said he wanted to motivate young people

and urge them to follow their dream. He started his journey on July 10, 2016 and after crossing 27 countries, it is halfway for Elias, who has a target to cover some 40 nations in total in another one-and-a-half years time.

During his long tour, Elias passed through Croatia, Greece, Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan. He entered Bangladesh on May 6 and is on his way to the capital Dhaka, from where he would visit Myanmar, Thailand, China and other South-East Asian countries. He made a brief stopover at Holy Cross School Panisgar and was welcomed by Fr. Davis, CSC Principal of Holy Cross School Panisagar. Elias shared his agonies and ecstasies with the enthusiastic children, as man on wheels.

Peace & Media Education

Kumarghat: 12 May, 2018. A one day Seminar was organized for the Youth Leaders of Kumarghat Parish of Agartala Diocese by the Parish Youth Animators. There were over 128 Youth from different Villages of the Parish. Many of the Youth



are in summer holidays from the Schools and the Parish took this opportunity to unite them and impart some education. Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD, the Diocesan Coordinator for Social Communication, was the Resource Person to talk on 'Peace and Media Education'. Through a power point presentation and apt video clips he convinced the Youth of the importance of Peace and Dialogue. He spoke on "how the communal forces are trying to polarize the nation and anti-Christian movements are rising". In another Session he dealt on the importance of Media Education and Mobile usage. He showed the Youth on why young people today get addicted to Mobile. Through a game he taught the Youth not to be hedonistic but more of sharing and interacting. He called on the Youth to be responsible in their Family, Village and in the Church. The Organizers have done well to get the Youth together to appreciate and recognize them. *News Desk, Agartala*

Thank You and Welcome

The School Management takes this opportunity to thank Sr. Casilda, AC, for her six years of service as



Headmistress of St. Joseph School Gokulnagar. Thank you dear Sr. Casilda and thank you Sr. Nilanjana, AC, for serving the School so dutifully as you move away from here and to your

new ministry areas.

A warm welcome the new Headmistress Sr. Kumudini, AC, and wish her the very best.

Teachers Training



JUST is running 10 non formal Coaching Centers in the border villages under Ganganagar R.D Block Dhalai. In order to build the capacity of the

Teachers a Training Program was organized for them from 20th to 21st April 2018 at JUST Hall, Agartala. Mrs. Jeena Hrangkhawl and Mrs. Shrabani Chatterjee from Monfort School, Ranirkhamar (Dukli), were the Trainers for the training. The Training was very effective as all the trainees have gained lots of experience through this program. They were taught what is Primary Education; the Aims of Primary Education; meaning of *Balwadi* and key issues in organizing *Balwadi* Schools. They were also taught how to motivate and care for a child and the all round development of children. They were also made to play some Games & Sports which would help them to put into practice in their respective Schools.

Kissan Mela

JUST organized *Kissan Mela* on 16th April 2018 with Famer's Clubs at Borkathal Boys Hostel ground under Hezamara R.D Block.



There were 162 Farmers who participated and showcased the organic products produced by them. Shri. **Brisuketu**

Debbarma, MLA of Simna Constituency, was the Chief Guest and Most Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro DD. Chairman of JUST and Caritas India was the Guest of Honour. The Special Guest was Dr. Pawan K. Kaushik Regional Manager, CFLE. The program began with words of welcome by Fr. Jeevan Kennady, SVD, Director of JUST Agartala. There were more than 500 people who visited the *Mela* and made their purchases. The Farmers had put up 20 Stalls where they displayed and showcased their organic agriculture products which were for sale.

Mr. Cyril Darlong

World News Nuggets

Pope Francis names 14 to be Cardinals

Pope Francis on May 20, 2018, announced the names of 14 new Cardinals to be created at a consistory on June 29, 2018. He made the announcement when speaking to the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square for the Regina Coeli.

The new Cardinals are:

His Beatitude Louis Raphaël I Sako Chaldean Catholic Patriarch of Babylon
His Excellency Luis Ladaria Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

His Excellency Angelo De Donatis Vicar General of Rome

His Excellency Giovanni Angelo Becciu Substitute of the Secretary of State and Special Delegate for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta

His Excellency Konrad Krajewski Almoner of the Office of Papal Charities

His Excellency Joseph Coutts Archbishop of Karachi

His Excellency António dos Santos Marto Bishop of Leiria-Fátima

His Excellency Pedro Barreto Archbishop of Huancayo

His Excellency Desiré Tsarahazana Archbishop of Toamasina

His Excellency Giuseppe Petrocchi Archbishop of L'Aquila

His Excellency Thomas Aquinas Manyo Archbishop of Osaka

His Excellency Sergio Obeso Rivera Emeritus Archbishop of Xalapa.

His Excellency Toribio Ticona Porco Emeritus Bishop of Corocoro.

Reverend Father Aquilino Bocos Merino member of the Claretian order (*zenit news*)

Our Distinguished Visitors

- Srs. Elizabeth Suja & Phylis Bamon, FMA Provincials from Shillong
- Fr. Jomon, CSC, from Montreal, Canada
- Fr. Thomas John, CSC, from Aizawl, Mizoram
- Bro. Paul Bednarczyk, CSC, Vicar and 1st Assistant from Rome
- Fr. Leopold Temba, CSC, Asst. General from Nairobi
- Fr. Jinto, CSC, from Toronto, Canada
- Fr. Justin, CSC, Vicariate Superior from Tiruchi TN
- Fr. Gordon Didier Serre, CSC, from Mumbai

Our Readers Write

Many blessings and much gratitude for your 22 years as the Good Shepherd of the Diocese. With prayers for what lies ahead! **David Schlaver, CSC, Maine USA**

Happy Anniversary, Lumen. I give thanks to God for your faithful and loving service. **Tony Krisak, DC, USA**

Thanks for the Link Bishop, I appreciate it not just for the content, but it comes very tidy in its display of the news too. **Sr. Clara, BS, Guwahati**

I read your words in LINK and cannot believe how time flies in your role as Bishop of the Diocese. You have been a great source of blessing for thousands. Thank you for your devoted service to the people of God. Know of my deep admiration and know too of my prayers. **Rev. Tom Ohara, CSC, Provincial Superior, USA**

Thank you for the LINK. 22 years have gone by very fast. I wish you in advance a very happy 22nd Anniversary of your Episcopal Ordination. May God continue to bless the Diocese of Agartala through you, its shepherd. **Fr. Emmanuel, CSC, Agartala**

Sincere congratulations for your anniversary of Episcopal Ordination. May the Lord bless you with graces so that you can continue to shepherd the flock of Agartala with love and success as it has been for all those years. **Conrad Auger, CSC, Montreal, Canada**

Bishop's Program for June 2018

- 03: Pastoral Program, Moharpara Parish
- 05: Clergy Meet, Agartala
- 08: Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Agartala
- 10: Sacred Heart Parish Feast, Bishramganj Parish
- 10-15: Caritas Asia Regional Conference, Bangkok
- 16-17: Installation and Farewell, Khumulwng Parish
- 18-23: Caritas India Field Visit, Andamans
- 24: Parish Mass, Cathedral Parish
- 30-01: Parish Feast, Kumarghat Parish