

Mahipal



St. Francis Xavier
Patron of Ranchi Archdiocese

Monthly News Letter of Ranchi Archdiocese

March 2019

No. 7

Archbishop's Message

Message of the Catholic Bishops of India

Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ,

We, 133 bishops of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI), assembled at Chingleput, Tamil Nadu, during January 7-14 this year for our 31st Plenary Assembly. Herewith, I am presenting a summary of the Bishops' message to the Faithful :

Theme of the assembly is Pope Francis' Exhortation — "The Joy of the Gospel" or *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG). It urges us to reflect more deeply on the demands of Christian discipleship.

Our Joys and Hopes

Having witnessed the fidelity, fervour and enthusiasm of Christians, lay groups and associations in different parts of India, we are filled with joy, consolation and hope. All are striving to make Christ known, loved and followed. The heroic witness to the faith of our Christian brothers and sisters — even to the extent of laying down their life for Christ, as seen in places like Kandhamal and elsewhere — is a sublime testimony of courage and sacrifice. The silent witness of so many lay faithful, consecrated persons and priests who live their Christian commitment on the path of love, service and sacrifice is indeed the effect of outpouring of grace. We see the urgent need to further strengthen our faith, and we hope to continue extending our loving service to all people, especially the dalits, tribals, women, migrants and refugees, so as to remove all traces of injustice, exploitation and oppression in our society and in the Church.

Challenges to Sharing the Joy of the Gospel

Presently many challenges, both internal and external, confront us in our mission. Among the internal challenges is the need for:

- continuous spiritual renewal of bishops, priests, consecrated and lay faithful to inspire us to more joyfully proclaim the Good News;
- instilling in ourselves a confidence to overcome fear generated by incidents of opposition and violence;
- finding means to reveal more effectively the 'merciful face' of Jesus;
- going forth to the peripheries, instead of seeking security in institutions;
- taking more decisive measures for promoting the welfare of Christians who suffer from various forms of discrimination.

Some external challenges confronting the Church are:

- communal forces that threaten to deny some communities their religious identity and rights;
- economic policies that favour the rich and adversely affect the 'poor';
- media sensationalism and the spread of fake news.

Our Foundations: The Word of God and Church Teachings

God's Word moves us to preach the Good News. St Paul exhorts us: "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus I solemnly urge you:

proclaim the message; be persistent, whether the time is favourable or unfavourable" (2 Tim 4:1-2). Every baptized person is obliged to joyfully preach, practise and propagate the Gospel in all circumstances. The Church's call is to be the seed, servant and sacrament of the Kingdom of God, announcing through her words, works and witness the "fullness of life" offered by Christ (Jn 10:10). Pope Francis reminds us of the personal call for mission. Each of us not only has a mission but also is a mission. Being mindful of this call, we pledge to continue striving to be joyful and selfless shepherds according to the heart of Christ. All our ministries will be effective only if they spring out of a personal and loving relationship with Jesus Christ strengthened through a life of daily prayer and contemplation.

We therefore make an ardent appeal :

- **to all our Faithful** : You are "temples of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 6:19) called to be everyday "saints next door". Make the world a better place with your love for God, overflowing into selfless deeds for justice, peace, harmony and care of God's creation.
- **to Christian Families** : Your vocation is to be the "Domestic Church" — called to be holy and happy. Always bear the Good News at home, in the neighbourhood, in places of study and work, ever seeking to go forth and widen 'family circles' by loving and serving all.
- **to the Youth** : You are the hope of the Church and Society! Stay creative in mind, loving at heart, loyal to the Church and lively in your steps to joyfully follow the ways of Our Lord Jesus, so that the freshness and appeal of the Good News may shine forth brightly in your words and deeds.
- **to the Clergy and the Religious** : You represent the person of Christ in the Church and in the World! Strive to be selfless missionary disciples, shunning every form of clericalism and careerism so as to be faithful to your vocation — active in the Spirit, effectively revealing the merciful and joyful face of God to all people, especially the poorest of the poor.

Christ assures us, "I am with you till the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). Encouraged by this promise, we can say anew and aloud, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13). In her Magnificat, Mary, our blessed Mother, wonderfully expresses the joyful trust and unconditional surrender of a disciple of Christ, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour!" (Lk 1:46-47). May Mary, the Star of the New Evangelization, and Joseph, her chaste Spouse, guide us as we generously and joyfully bear and 'be' the Good News to all people.

Your servant and friend,

+ Felix Toppo, S.J.

CBCI National Consultation on Tribals held in Ranchi

Ranchi. 19 & 20 February. A two-day national consultation on the Tribal Policy, Theology and Philosophy was held at SDC, Ranchi, in response to a CBCI Standing Committee resolution of September 2018. In his opening address, Bishop Vincent Barwa, Chairman of the CBCI Office of Tribal Affairs, stated that such an exercise was considered necessary 'for motivating and creating interest' among the seminary students who would serve in the tribal areas. He hoped that the exercise will help "translate the Constitutional Provisions to realities for egalitarian and communitarian life of tribals", who are being "culturally harassed." The present

that for lack of political awareness, the Tribals routinely elect ineffective leaders. Bishop Telesphore Bilung observed that not only is the Christian community's contribution to nation building through education given scant regard, the reservation policy is also being progressively abandoned by the government. He strongly denounced the vested interests' design to enforce Sarna-Christian divide for narrow political gain. Unanimous agreement was noted regarding the need for redefining Tribal identity by the Tribals themselves. Some participants wondered as to why the Tribals' issues had not received due consideration of the Church as yet. (For



scenario is leading them to "individualism", he explained. The national policy will additionally help strengthen their ancestral "customs, traditions, standard of life, spirituality, socio-cultural, economic and community life", he concluded.

While presenting a nationwide overview of the Tribals, Fr. Nicholas Barla, SVD, Secretary of CBCI Tribal Affairs, informed the house that 705 Scheduled Tribes and over 1500 Notified/Denotified Tribes inhabit India. He added that unlike in the North, Tribal issues in the South have received less attention of the Catholic Church. In a critical appraisal following his presentation, the method of Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens and his contemporaries in Chhotanagpur was lauded. However, it was regretted that the method was not successively sustained with similar vigour. Archbishop Felix Toppo of Ranchi observed that even as the priests and religious personnel receive overemphasis, their leadership hardly matches the community's expectations. He warned that the Government's policies betray its designs to annihilate the Tribals. Bishop Vincent Barwa lamented

brevity's sake interjection of participants from other regions is omitted here.)

As for the theological and philosophical approach and content in priestly formation, Bishop Anand Jojo underlined the need for evolving appropriate methodology. Even as rediscovering Tribal ideas, concepts and expressions are essential, we need to evolve tribal theology and philosophy, he said. Critical appraisal of the works of non-Tribals on the Tribals should be undertaken, he added.

The consultation was attended by 26 Tribal priests and nuns, including 6 Bishops, from across the northern part of India. The house proposed 13 experts from across the nation to be requested for inputs on the Tribal Policy, while 10 experts were proposed for contributing Tribal philosophical and theological inputs. The material thus obtained will constitute the working material for expediting further deliberation. The CBCI Office for Tribal Affairs was officially constituted in February 2017 as distinct from the Dalit, Scheduled Caste (SC) and Backward Cast (BC) Office.

Archdiocesan Youth Commission Met at SDC

Ranchi. 24 Feb. Sunday. The Archdiocese Youth Commission meet was held at SDC today. Drawn from 20



parishes, 130 young representatives participated in the event to deliberate upon various pressing issues confronting the community. Inputs were given to them by Jesuit Fr. Peter Mahendra Tigga on the 5th Schedule of the Constitution. The Catholic Sabha President, Mr. Albinus Tigga spoke on the Tribal identity and our response to the coming election. Other speakers were Sr. Lalita Roshni Lakra, DSA, and Sr. Rekha, SCN, both of whom spoke on the motivational issues. The Archdiocesan Youth Director, Rev. Fr. Roshan Tiru and the Youth President, Mr. Kuldeep Tirkey provided practical guidelines and coordinated the group discussions. Kuldeep thanked the outgoing office bearers and encouraged the participants to consider enthusiastic leaders for the next team.

New Church Building inaugurated at Mudma

Mudma. 24 February, Sunday. Located at the Ranchi-Mandar road is the historic Mudma village where a new village chapel was inaugurated today. Before the solemn Holy Mass, Most Rev. Telesphore Bilung, SVD, Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi cut



the inaugural tape and dedicated the chapel by sprinkling holy water on it. In his homily he elaborated upon the divine call received by David, the great young man of the Old Testament. He underlined the fact that David did not allow any harm to his freshly captured predecessor, Saul. "Do not destroy him; for who can raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" (1 Samuel 26:9) David further said it is the Lord who will do justice to him. Bishop Telesphore likened David's brilliant consciousness of justice to similar notion of the ancient Tribal community. A genuine Tribal would not impulsively harm anyone. His conserving impulse extends beyond fellow human beings to embrace animals, birds and land-water-forest. A Tribal is not a selfish marauder, Bishop concluded.

Under the leadership of Rev. Fr. William Tirkey, the Parish Priest of Mandar, the chapel construction had begun in May 2017. Catechist Christopher Kerketta and Catholic Sabha President, Mathias Kerketta supervised the operation. Every family contributed in three installments a total of Rs. 9 thousand towards the chapel construction. In addition, every individual with employment was to bear the expense of one truck load of bricks. Incidentally, coordinated by Catechist Johan Kujur of Sursa Unit the previous chapel was constructed during 1989-1991. The then Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Xavier Kujur and Catechist Berchmans Kujur have sustained the community in one unit.

As per the information, the baptized ancestors in the region by Servant of God, Father Constant Lievens, are Champa Uraon (Baptismal name: Champa Patras Uraon), Stanislaus, Ram Uraon (John Karma), Jenga Uraon, Albert Pero, Parna Kujur and Chene Chonhas. The present believing community at Mudma consists of 25 families. As in the remote village Kawali, Mudma has a tale of oppressive witchcraft and spirit pacification. The aforesaid Champa Uraon's firm refusal to appease the malevolent spirits through traditional offerings for warding off sickness had incurred communal punishment. Having sensed the catastrophe, Father Lievens had shot off to Mudma on horseback and had rescued Champa Uraon in time.

According to public memory, having been vanquished by the Moghals at the ancient Rohtasgarh fort, a group of the Adivasi ancestors had meandered to the Mela Tann at Mudma.

Having reached there, they did a 'head count' of themselves. Hence the place's name, Mudma. It is said that the Adivasi ancestors halted here for quite some time. In commemoration of the same an annual cultural fair known as "Mudma Jatra" is routinely held here. The occasion is marked by a solemn demonstration of cultural dance and procession in order to celebrate ancestral spirit of freedom, communal unity and cultural identity. It is also believed that the Mundas preceded the Uraons (Kurux) on this track and, as per the mutual understanding, they headed towards the South-East, while the Uraons moved in the South-West. Folklores and other sources curiously indicate a total absence of clash among the two tribes. This significant feature unambiguously marks similarity of their life philosophy as well.

Foundation laid for new RIHAA Building at Mandar

Mandar. 7 February, Thursday. After 28 years since its inception, RIHAA (Rural Integrated Holistic Approach to Alcoholism) is to be relocated in a new building at Mandar. His Grace, Archbishop Felix Toppo, S.J., laid the foundation of the construction today on the Holy Family Hospital Society grounds in the CLHRC compound. Reminiscently, the Centre was founded by the Medical Mission Sisters at the inspiration and initiative of the former Archbishop (not a Cardinal till then) Telesphore P. Toppo in 1991. The initial catchment area of RIHAA was 30 villages around Mandar. The founder director, Sr. Anna Varkey, MMS, was granted just 30 beds in the then 150-bed Holy Family Hospital. The quota soon proved to be insufficient since Jharkhand as yet has no other dedicated



facility for providing counselling and therapy to alcoholics and drug addicts. The malady continues to be menacing in our region even now. According to a write up by Sister Anna Varkey, the beneficiaries are drawn from Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere. Just an 8-person staff assists her in this humanitarian effort.

According to available records spanning from 2002 to 2017, a total of 6609 patients have been treated at the Centre. In addition, 160 Alcoholic Anonymous meetings, 200 family seminars, 7000 family visits, 55 seminars and 11500 family counselling sessions have been conducted. With 6 training programmes, 15 exposure programmes for nurses, and numerous rehabilitation cases have been dealt with. Even as a detailed report may be more appropriately released when the new construction gets inaugurated, yet this write up may reasonably indicate what a relief this historic initiative of the Sisters has been rendering not only to the victims, but also to their distraught family members. Public confidence on the Sisters in this regard is firmly put on record.

Most Rev. Albert Hemrom Consecrated Bishop

Dibrugarh. 24 Feb. Sunday. Most Rev. Albert Hemrom was consecrated Bishop at the Cathedral's quadrangle here today. Assisted by Archbishop John Mulachira (of Guahati) and Bishop Thomas Aind of Dibrugarh, Archbishop Emeritus, Thomas Menampampil officiated at the Consecration ceremony. Presently a Coadjutor, Most Rev. Hemrom will succeed Bishop Thomas Aind



on the latter's retirement. Born on February 27, 1969 at Konapathar, Bishop Hemrom completed his priestly studies at Christ the King College and Oriens Theological College, Shillong. After his priestly ordination on April 25, 1999 he completed advanced studies in Canon Law at Bangalore and Rome. He holds a Doctoral degree in the same subject. Pope Francis appointed him as Coadjutor Bishop of Dibrugarh by a Decree dated December 2, 2018. Bishop Hemrom's Episcopal consecration was witnessed by 24 bishops (including Archbishop Felix Toppo), 390 priests and over 20 thousand Faithful. Hearty congratulations and prayerful supplications!

Archbishop's Two Pastoral Visits

1

Nawatanr. 3 February, Sunday. Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, made a pastoral visit to Mother Mary, the Mediatrix of All Graces Church today. With jaunty beating of drums and dance the Faithful welcomed him. As the chapel cannot accommodate a large congregation, the solemn Mass was celebrated in its quadrangle. In his homily the Archbishop said that in accomplishing His mission, Lord Jesus had to face unbelief and vehement opposition of the Pharisees. Today we must stay firm in our faith, because the communal forces are working day and night in opposition of the Church. At a felicitation following the Eucharist the Archbishop explained the political challenges to people and reiterated his call for vigilance. Significant feature of this visit was that he individually blessed every child present there. Colourful felicitation numbers later, a festive meal awaited them all. The Parish Priest, Fr. Deonis Kerketta, SFX, and his collaborators deserve heartfelt appreciation and gratitude.

2

Jaratoli. 17 February, Sunday. Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, was today accorded a warm welcome at the Queen of the Apostles Mission Centre, Jaratoli. Predominantly Kera Mundas, the Faithful also enthusiastically welcomed him. The youth mounted on motorbikes first escorted him for quite a distance. Upon arrival, he was welcomed with traditional gesture. Excellent singing and enthusiastic participation of the people at Mass betrayed their joy. A refreshment and felicitation followed the Mass. Archbishop met the Catholic Sabha members and the ladies of Mahila Sangh to get acquainted with the associated concerns. Among the topics discussed was an urgent need of a primary school. Rev. Fr. George Minj, the Priest in-Charge and his collaborator, Rev. Fr. Premdayal Xess deserve heartfelt thanks and appreciation for organizing the occasion well.

Conducted in Hindi by Ranchi Archdiocese Faith Formation Team

5-Day Marriage Preparation & Retreat Programme

6th March 9.00 AM to 10th March 4.30 PM

Venue : Catholic Charities' Building, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi

&

3rd April 9.00 AM to 7th April 4.30 PM

Venue: SDC, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi

Registration cum Total Fee — Rs. 1500/-

Contact : Fr. Praful Tigga, Phone: 9708547278

Please Note: Written recommendation of the local Parish Priest, participant's Baptism & Confirmation Certificates essential.

Please carry a copy of the Bible, a note book and pen.

Programme of Archbishop Felix Toppo March 2019

Dt	Events	Time	Place
02	To Rourkela	AM	
03	Thanksgiving Eucharistic Celebration for Bishops	AM	Gaibera
05	Mass for the Youth Seminar at SDC	07.00 pm	RAN
06	Ash Wednesday, Holy Eucharist at the Cathedral	06.30 am	RAN
10	Holy Eucharist, St. James the Apostle Church	06.30 am	Lalpur
12	CLHRC G.B. Meeting	10.00 am	Mandar
14	Senate Meeting	09.30 am	ABH
	Consultors' Meeting	02.00 pm	ABH
17	Mariadham Ashram	11.00 am	Kandri
19	Eucharistic Celebration and Minor Orders at St. Albert's College	06.00 am	RAN
25	Holy Eucharist, Feast of Bethany Sisters	09.00 am	Ulahatu
26	To Kolkata	PM	
27	Arrival Port Blair	11.00 am	
	Addressing the Priests and Religious	06.30 pm	Port Blair
28	Holy Chrism Mass	05.30 pm	Port Blair
29	Way of the Cross and Mass, Our Lady of Rosary Church at Oralkatcha	04.00 pm	Baratang
30	Holy Mass at St. Francis Xavier Church	06.00 pm	Rangat
31	Holy Mass at St Thomas Church	08.00 am	Mayabander
	Departure for Rangat		

Programme of Archbishop Felix Toppo – April, 2019

01	Return from Rangat to Port Blair		
02	Return to Ranchi via Kolkata		

Bishop Telephore Bilung's Programme, March 2019

2-4	Bishops' Gathering at Gaibira		Rourkela
10	CRI Meeting		Ranchi
12-16	Vocation Camp		Hulhundu
17	Lievens' Anniversary Mass	8.00 am	Jamgain
20	Clergy-CRI Dialogue	9.00 AM-1.30PM	Ulhatu
23	Dighia School Opening		Dighia