



DIOCESE OF AGARTALA

Lead Us Onward

Link

Agartala Diocesan Newsletter

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PASTOR'S CORNER

When we hurt our Planet, we hurt Ourselves



I am here in Rome for the triennial General Assembly of Caritas Internationalis with the theme: One human family One common home. 450

delegates from 140 country Caritases listened to Pope Francis at the opening Mass and are listening to one another deliberating on our role to save the planet. I came across this write-up by Father Shay Cullen, SSC, and want to share a few excerpts which I find thought-provoking for our reflection and action. Fr. Cullen points out that we have forfeited our role as the planet's stewards. I for one believe that it is still not too late to stake claim and do our part to save the planet! Fr. Cullen established the Preda Foundation in Olongapo City, Philippines, in 1974 to promote human rights and the rights of children.

+Lumen, CSC

Fr. Cullen writes: "Many students have taken to the streets, waving banners, banging drums, singing, chanting, and calling for an end to the factors behind climate change, which is wrecking the planet. They are experiencing global warming on an unprecedented scale as huge amounts of CO2 and methane gases heat up the environment and cause the ice caps to melt at an alarming

rate. They want to shutter coal-fired power plants and have governments install renewable wind and solar power farms and geothermal generators to provide the electricity we need. They are the voice of the planet; they are its feelings and its cry for help.

The planet is, in many ways, dying, and the human species, a magnificent creation, is a vengeful child killing its parent through savage greed. The warmer atmosphere is evaporating more water from the oceans, causing more frequent and more powerful rainstorms than ever before. They, the children, the teenagers, the youth, want and demand a clean planet that is free from poisonous chemicals, pollution, and the burning of fossil fuels. They say enough is enough. Give us a clean planet that we can bequeath to our children one day. They want to stop the acid rain. It is poisoning the fish, the land, and the people who eat the fish. They demand reluctant and skeptical politicians take action to cut CO2 gases and stop all of this damage to the planet.

Nature feels the pain of neglect and convulses in agony with the death of plants and forest animals driven to extinction. Landslides scar the hills, rivers are polluted, chickens die, children cry and sickness is more frequent. We are destroying our own habitat and eliminating



our role as the planet's stewards. When we are at war with the earth, we are at war with ourselves. When we hurt our planet, we hurt ourselves, for we are one with it. We humans have evolved from its soil, its chemistry, and its life forms. The earth is our mother that gave us life, and we are its consciousness. Through us, the planet and the universe reflect and contemplate its own self, because we are its brain, the thinking being, and the planet is conscious and self-aware through us. Every one of us has to redeem the failures of the human race that are destroying us as well as the planet. We must cry out and take to the streets in peaceful protest to claim our right to live in a clean and healthy planet of which we are an intimate part."

Post Result Problems



The months of May and June see feverish activity among students who sat for Board Exams in March. It is their parents who are even more anxious most of the times. And rightly so because there is no denying it is a crucial juncture of a person's life, one that can make all the difference to one's future. Their anxiety revolves round the seemingly never ending wait for results, the result itself and then the Herculean task of getting him or her admitted to an institution and discipline of their choice.

It is also the time when many go outside the State for studies. For some of them, going far away for studies is a long cherished dream come true; for others, it's their parents' desire to give what they think is 'class education' to their wards that takes them outside. Yet another category of youth is forced to go elsewhere because they do not get admission in their home State.

contd.on page 2

EDITORIAL

LINK CONGRATULATES the new Superiors General & Teams

The Sisters of the Holy Cross (CSC):

Sr. Veronique CSC is re-elected the President of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. The other Members of the General Administration are: Sr. Suzanne; Sr. Esther from Ghana, Sr. Mary Tiernan from USA and Sr. Pushpa from Bangladesh.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Annecy (SJA):

Superior General: Sr. Breda Gainey (English Province); Assistant General: Sr. Vianney Thanniath (Visakhapatnam Province); General Councilors: Sr. Margaret Gallagher (English Province); Sr. Jacqueline Bianquinch (SeneGambia/Congo Region); & Sr. Elizabeth Puthiyedath (Bhubanewar Province)

contd. from page 1

These few lines are not about how we can solve the annual admission agony, but about the need and possibility of providing meaningful assistance to young people at this critical juncture of their life. We see mushrooming these days many career guidance and counseling programs. The young flock to them in the hope they will find assistance but often are disappointed.

Practically speaking it is not possible to provide succor to everyone that seeks help. However, you and I, as members of the Church might do well to find out cases that truly deserve to get help and assistance. It means identifying those who due to lack of means are unable to pursue and excel in higher studies. As years pass by, the relevance of such a service is bound to increase and we would perhaps do well to foresee this coming as a crying need of the times. If some trouble is taken it could be a meaningful service rendered to those who are on the periphery of the society.

Related to this is the care of those who live in far away cities for purposes of study. While parents are generally keen to ensure they lack nothing material, provision is seldom made for their spiritual and psychological wellness. It is especially distressing to see young people considered 'good' and God-fearing back home, become a wreck morally and spiritually just because study brought him to a distant place. At a time when distance and time are no longer considered insurmountable obstacles, we seem to lack ideas about including their faith life requirements into the ambit of social media experience which one can be sure, they do not lack today. Education, especially higher education, to an extent, is the forte of the more privileged and wealthy. This alone makes it mandatory that we carefully focus our attention on the less privileged, poor, and those who lack options, and yet have the wherewithal needed to excel in life even academically.

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

SINDUKPATHAR PARISH

FCC Convent Blessing at East Harina Village

FC Convent at East Harina was blessed on 17th May 2019 by Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC and inaugurated by Fr. George Panthenmackal MSFS Provincial Superior of North East Province. Many Priests and Sisters from nearby communities and from Agartala as well as village representatives were present for the Blessing which was followed by the



Holy Eucharist and Lunch. The Construction work was started with the initiative of the MSFS Provincial and the foundation was blessed by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, on 14th February

2018. MSFS North East Province has financed the Project and the work was monitored by Fr. James MSFS. Sr. Lucy Maria, Sr. Shanti Maria FCC Provincial Councilors from Kerala and Fr. Santosh MSFS Provincial Bursar from Guwahati were present for the programme. *Fr. James, MSFS*

Village Chapel at Vagurupara Blessed



On 24th March Bishop Lumen blessed the new Chapel at Vagurupara under S.F.S Parish Sindukpathar. Our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, was warmly welcomed at the Parish centre as he arrived there on the previous evening. The Parish Priest and several of the faithful and Sisters who were gathered for the one day Prayer and Adoration on 23rd March that was conducted by Fr. Pratap MSFS and Sr. Anna Grace FCC, welcomed the Bishop with song,

flowers and risha.

On 24th March the day began with the welcoming ceremony of our dear Bishop at the Village gate by our Parish Priest Fr. Varghese C.V. MSFS and a large number of faithful and Sisters who had come for the program. This was followed by the Blessing of newly built St. Joseph Village Chapel at Vagurupara and the Holy Eucharist during which 26 children received the Sacrament of Confirmation. The importance and meaning of Confirmation was stressed during the Bishop's homily. He also asked the people to work for peace and unity in the village. Later there was a short felicitation program in honor of Most Rev. Bishop Lumen followed by a fellowship meal. *Fr. Varghese, MSFS*

BODHJUNGNAGAR PARISH

Inauguration & Blessing of Village Chapel



19th May 2019 was a joyful day for the faithful of St. Andre Parish, Bodhjungnagar, as a new Chapel dedicated to the Holy Family was blessed at Dugrai, a sub centre of the Parish. Fr. Hormis John CSC the pioneer priest inaugurated the Chapel and it was blessed by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC. 30 persons from the *motha* and from around the Parish received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Around 300 faithful participated in the faith filled Sunday Liturgy. After Mass, there was a short felicitation program thanking all those who worked for the construction. Fr. Binoy CSC the Parish Priest thanked all the benefactors who helped generously to realize the dream

at Dugrai. After the felicitation programme, Bishop Lumen Monteiro inaugurated the Silver Jubilee preparations by hoisting the flag for St. Andre Parish. We had a sumptuous meal served to all those who participated in the function.

West Zone SCC gathering at Bodhjunnagar



On 27th April the West Zone SCC Zonal Leaders gathered at Bodhjunnagar for a Meeting cum Seminar. There were 36 Leaders who were present. The Meeting began with the SCC prayer conducted by Anando Debbarma. It was followed by an Input Session by Fr. Lancy D'Souza CSC, the diocesan Secretary of the SCC Commission who explained the leadership principles for the Small Christian church which begins with oneself and extended to one's own family and to the local church. Through different charts and some magic acts, the resource person exposed to the membership the need of taking responsibility by the faithful and change the attitude from 'we are the church' to 'I am the church' attitude. After two hours of Talk, there was a discussion and drawing up of an Action Plan for the coming three months in the different Parishes of the West Zone. The meeting ended with a family meal. *Fr. Amalraj*

KATHALCHERRA PARISH Prayer for Sri Lanka



To show our solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka who experienced pain and sorrow on Easter Sunday we at Kathalcherra organized a Peace March followed by Holy Mass. KCYM took the lead under the guidance of Fr. Abraham CSC, the Parish Priest and Fr Ishwar CSC. It was heartening to behold a sea of people gathered to pray for Sri Lanka holding posters, praying rosary and singing as we marched towards the Parish church from Nepaltilla Government School Grounds. During the Eucharist that followed the march, celebrated by Fr Ishwar CSC, we offered special prayers for Sri Lanka, especially for the victims, their bereaved family members and for peace in the world.

Parish Feast – Jesus the Good Shepherd



The Fourth Sunday of Easter where we honor the Jesus as the Good Shepherd is dear to the Kathalcherra Parishioners as we celebrate our Parish Feast. This year we had the privilege of preparing for this Feast through 9 days of Novena through the initiative of Fr Abraham CSC, the new Parish Priest. Each day marked the beautiful theme derived from the Bible on the Good Shepherd, guest Priests from different parts of the Diocese celebrated the Holy Mass for us. On the Feast day we were privileged to have the Shepherd of our Diocese, Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, along with 8 other Priests. On this occasion 44 children received first Holy Communion. After the Holy Mass there was a short program to felicitate Bishop and other Guests. A brief history of the Parish was read by Mr. Paul Sangma. It was also an occasion to felicitate Sr. Soren Sangma who made her Perpetual Profession in the Bethany Congregation early in the month.

One more Religious Sister from the Parish

Bethany Sisters count the blessings of the Lord and thank God for His



marvels done through Kathalcherra Parish. This year it was our privilege to witness the 6th Bethany Sister- Sr. Soren BS from this Parish. She made her Perpetual Profession on 1st of May 2019, in the Congregation of the Sisters of the Little Flower of Bethany. To mark the event the Parishioners gathered for a Thanksgiving Mass on 15th May 2019. Fr. Abraham CSC, the Parish Priest along with Fr. Francis CSC from Challengta officiated at the Eucharist. After the holy Mass Sr. Soren was given a warm welcome. Fr. Abraham CSC, the Parish Priest, and Sr. Suman, the Superior of Bethany Convent thanked God for her vocation and her family members for their sacrifice. Mr. Paul Sangma compeered the program. *Sr. Prema, BS*

GANDACHERRA PARISH Send Off and Installation



A grand **Sendoff** for Fr. Bosco Lathees was organized on 28th April. Fr. Bosco worked for 6 years as the Priest and Principal of St. Arnold Parish, Gandacherra. The farewell program began with the Holy Eucharist presided by Fr. Bosco. It was a memorable day for the people of Gandacherra as he was given a loving send off. People from all *mondolis* were present and expressed their love towards Fr. Bosco. After the holy Mass the people felicitated him with a few cultural programs and gifts. The program ended with a family meal. Likewise on 30th April St.

Arnold School students and staff gave a loving sendoff with colorful cultural programs to show their gratitude for Fr. Bosco's contribution for the past 6 years.

The **Installation** ceremony and **Welcome** of new parish priest Fr. Prasad Rao was held on 12th May, 2019. The day began with the Holy Eucharist presided by Fr. Hormis John, CSC, the Judicial Vicar of the Diocese. During the Holy Eucharist there was a Installation ceremony of the new parish priest conducted by Fr. Hormis John. The faithful from 14 different *mondolis* were present to welcome the new Parish Priest Fr. Prasad Rao and pray for him. After the Holy Mass a short facilitation program was presented by the parishioners to welcome the new Parish Priest and thank Fr. Hormis John for installing Fr. Prasad Rao as a new Parish Priest. The program ended with a fellowship meal. *Fr. George S.*

KHUMULWNG PARISH

Blessing and Inauguration of Chapel at Lungkham

28 April 2019 was a memorable day for the faithful of Lungkham Village as they have now a new 'House of God' to pray and to worship as a community. This great historical day began by welcoming our



Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, Fr. Jeevan SVD, and Fr. Arun Minj SVD. Our beloved Bishop Lumen inaugurated and blessed the newly built Village Chapel followed by a concelebrated Holy Eucharist. The Bishop appreciated the Parish Priest Fr. Valentine SVD and the people for taking this great initiative to build a house of God and sharing their resources to achieve the target. The local *mondoli* felicitated our dear Bishop, the Parish Fathers, Montfort Brothers, Sisters, Catechists and senior members of the village. Parishioners from all *mothas* were also present for this great event and rendered their helping hands. Later, Fr. Parish Priest also thanked the benefactors from Germany for their generous contribution towards this village chapel. The celebration ended with a sumptuous community meal. *Bro. Anvesh*

Our Readers Write:

The story of Brenda and the ant is a real thriller. So insightful! *M. K. George S J, Kerala*
Thank you Bishop for the LINK...You are always on the dot... so precise and punctual. *Celine FMA*
How true is the story of Brenda in LINK! It is now

Bishop's Program for June 2019

01-07: Meet European Caritas with ED Fr. Moonjely
08-30: Mission Appeals, USA

Emergency Relief Work



Tripura faced nature's fury on 31st March 2019. JUST extended its helping hand to support the affected families right in time, with the help of financial assistance from Caritas India. Nearly 650 families have been supported by JUST under Hezamara R.D. Block, West Tripura. We did the Situation Report and on the spot Assessment and we found out that people were in need of sleeping mats, towels, bed sheets, mosquito nets, etc. Accordingly, JUST distributed some kits as per the needs and requirements of the affected families who are living in the Hezamara R.D. Block of West Tripura.

Mushroom Training

JUST organized Mushroom Training Programme in the month of April 2019 in 7 SHG Federations under 4 Districts of



Tripura. The Resource persons were Mr. Prasanta Deb (MBA) and Mr. Gohur Das (Mushroom Technician). During the training the Resource Persons demonstrated how the mushroom packing is done and explained the three methods of Mushroom Cultivation: (1) Boiling Method (2) Chemical Method (3) and Steam Method. There were 136 SHG Members who attended the training. *Mr. Cyril Darlong*

40 years, since my husband and Papi of my children died. How often I prayed: God show me my way...! What shall I do now...? What do you want from me...? And HE gave me the strength, the courage, and HIS peace to do what was the best for my family and me!
Inge, Liechtenstein

Thanks for LINK. Will remember the ant story when we are inclined to give up... And Congratulations for your 23 years carrying the «lens» of the Diocese... The way you do it you make us feel it is a very light load... you carry it with such a cheerfulness. Conrad CSC, Canada

Thanks indeed for the LINK of May. I was happy to glance through the varied news items in the LINK of this month. My good wishes and prayers to the Diocese of Agartala as you begin the preparations of the Diocesan Silver Jubilee and your Episcopacy. *Fr. Jolly, AED, CARITAS INDIA, Delhi*

I always look forward to reading LINK and all the good things going on in your Diocese. *Peggy, USA*

Our Distinguished Visitors

- ✍ Mr. Emmanuel & Family, brother of Fr. Jeevan SVD
- ✍ Sr. Lincy Maria FCC, Vice Provincial from Aluva, Kerala
- ✍ Sr. Shanthi Maria FCC, Councilor from Aluva, Kerala