



DIOCESE OF AGARTALA

Lead Us Onward



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Pastor's Corner

Satellites of Hope

Pope Francis has spoken of hope so often during his pontificate that we could call him a Pontiff of Hope. And

mercy of the storm."

A press release stated that the satellite is equipped with a radio transmitter as well as onboard instruments to be maneuvered from the ground. While in orbit, the satellite will broadcast decipherable statements from Pope Francis on the theme of hope and peace in English, Italian, and Spanish. The President of the Italian Space Agency, Giorgio Saccoccia, said the Holy See asked the agency



to identify a way for Pope Francis' words of hope "to cross the earth's borders and reach from space the greatest possible number of women and men on our troubled planet."

On 5 June, we celebrate World Environment Day. In our Diocese we celebrate the day as Green Sunday, a small initiative of planting trees, which I started six years ago, to promote a greener environment. This year we will celebrate the Green Sunday on 11th June in all our Parishes across the Diocese, with the slogan **PLANT A TREE.**

+Lumen, CSC

now, the Holy See has found a great way to share Pope Francis' words of hope to the world. *Catholic News Agency* reported that on March 29, Pope Francis blessed a satellite that will launch his words into space on June 10. The "Spes Satelles," Latin for "Satellites of Hope," will be launched on a rocket taking off from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. According to the Vatican, the miniaturized satellite will hold a copy of a book documenting the Pope's *urbi et orbi* blessing of March 27, 2020, when, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, he blessed the world from St. Peter's Square with the words "Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies, and comfort our hearts." "You ask us not to be afraid," the Pope had prayed. "Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the



Editorial

Pentecost Reminiscences

The Episcopal Ordination of Fr Joachim Walder in Silchar on the day of Pentecost might have reminded at least some of us of the other

Bishop Lumen, long life and many more years of shepherding the Diocese. Within the period of the past 27 years, life has changed unimaginably. That is a truth evident in all areas of life. As time went on, the Diocese too continued to change, not only in imperceptible ways, but in very tangible, palpable ways. Numbers swelled, infrastructure multiplied, lifestyles altered, attitudes and outlooks changed. Without acquiescing that all changes are necessarily progress, it may safely be surmised that there has been much progress in the Diocese because of the changes and at times, despite the changes.

Episcopal Ordination that took place also on Pentecost, exactly 27 years ago, at our very place – Agartala. The anniversary, modestly celebrated a few days ago was another occasion to congratulate and thank our Bishop Lumen for the leadership he continues to provide for the Diocese. At times by dint of habit one tends to refer to the diocese as 'young diocese' and to the bishop as 'our young Bishop'; but then the realization dawns that we have come a long way from such idyllic circumstances and times. By his own admission, 90% of the Bishops in the CBCI are junior to Bishop Lumen! That even as 'age' slowly begins to make demands, the prelate continues to remain 'young at heart' is a wonderful thing, no doubt. In this time of anniversary, we wish our



Bishop Walder's elevation to the episcopal rank augurs well for the Region. The Aizawl Diocese, particularly its area comprising the Barak Valley begins a new chapter. One hopes and prays that the years ahead will open up opportunities for greater witness, better configurations, fresh insights, and newer thoughts. As faithful belonging to the neighbouring Diocese, and one that has 27 years of variegated legacy in its kitty, we are not indifferent onlookers, but stakeholders and

collaborators in our common mission. For us Catholics the beautiful month of May that honours our Blessed Mother is followed by an even more beautiful month: that of June dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is a devotion, one might assume, that would be easy to promote in our Diocese. The assumption is based on the astonishing repertoire of terms related to 'kha' (heart) that one finds in the Kokborok language. As

language is surely a window to the values that the culture upholds, 'heart' seems to enjoy a pride of place in the world-view of the Kokborok-speaking community. In the month of June, we have Feasts of the two best hearts the world has ever known: the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May these Hearts, these fountains of blessings, make our hearts more loving, more compassionate, and more human.

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

Parish News Briefs

AMARPUR PARISH

Bishop's Pastoral Visit and Sacrament of Confirmation



St. Joseph Vaz parish Amarpur witnessed the visitation of our beloved Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, on 30th of April 2023. The day began with the grand welcome to our Bishop by the parishioners and then proceeded with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist presided by our Bishop and concelebrated by Fr. Lijeesh Mathew MSFS and Fr. Athikho Isaac MSFS partaken by SD Sisters and with over 300 parishioners from 14 of its substations. 51 of the parishioners received the Sacrament of Confirmation and 13 of the children received the first Holy Communion. After the Holy Mass there was a short felicitation program conducted and ended with a delicious common meal prepared for all. It was a great and a memorable day for all the parishioners of Amarpur Parish. We do thank our beloved Bishop for his Pastoral visit to our Parish.

Fr. Lijeesh Mathew, MSFS

AMBASSA DEANERY

Deanery level Youth Meeting

Ambassa (Tripura) May 07, 2023: Ambassa Deanery organized a one day meeting for the Youth of Deanery parishes, consisting of Ambassa, Kamaranga, Gandachara, Chailengta. 31 Youth from 4 parishes and Fr. Friny Peter CSC from Chailengta Parish. Fr. Ivan DSilva, SVD the Dean and the parish priest of Ambassa welcomed the Youth and briefed them about the reason behind the gathering. The first intention is to have a Youth decision-making body at the Deanery level, and secondly to plan a Youth Convention. A 7-member Committee was



formed. The elected members for the Deanery youth office-bearers are: Lalengmoy Halam, Francis Halam, Kashmirjoy Reang, Christina Debbarma, Subrai Debbarma, Alex Boncher, Sefali Reang and Dr. Asok Debbarma is the advisor. After the elections were over they discussed the Youth Seminar at the Deanery level. Thus it was decided unanimously to have it in Ambassa in October 2023. Then Dr. Asok Debbarma gave the input session on the importance of youth activities and life. The Meeting ended with lunch for all the participants. *Ivan DSilva, SVD*

KATHALCHERRA PARISH

Parish Feast and first Holy Communion



The faithful of Good Shepherd parish, Kathalcherra, took great joy in celebrating the annual parish feast on 7th May. The annual feast of the "Good Shepherd" was celebrated with 9 days of Novena and the holy Eucharist animated by different *modolis* each day. The day began with the blessing of the renovated parish church which was blessed our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC. The Bishop spoke on the need for each of us to love and care as the Good Shepherd does for

us. On this the Parish Feast Day first Holy Communion was given to 90 children of the Parish who had come from different *mondolis* of the Parish. After the thanksgiving Holy Eucharist, there was a Eucharistic procession from the Parish to Joseph Nagar village. Several people had decorated the entrances of their homes as a sign of welcoming the Eucharistic Lord. We appreciate the involvement of the lay faithful of the parish in all the activities in preparation for the feast and in thanking God for his manifold blessings throughout the year, and for the renovated parish church. There was fellowship meal to end the celebration. *Mr. J. Darlong*

DEPACHERRA PARISH

Installation of new Parish Priest



On 7th May 2023, Fr. Thomas Pereira, C.S.C., the Dean of Depacherra Deanery was delegated by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, C.S.C. to install Fr. P. Amalraj as the new Parish Priest of Christ the King Parish, Depacherra. The Installation of the new PP was an occasion for Fr. Amalraj to be formally presented to the parish in a liturgical context. The Rite of Installation began as the Letters of appointment were read out by Fr. Antony Balan. Fr. Amalraj then made his profession of faith, ready to observe all the laws to be exercised by the mandate and in the name of the Church. The Rite concluded with the symbolic handing over of the keys of the Tabernacle by Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC, to the new PP Fr. Amalraj.

St. Arnold School, Ambassa Drawing & Essay Competition on Conservation of Water & Environment

Oisho Bani Society (NGO) in collaboration with St. Arnold School Ambassa, organized Drawing and Essay Competition for the students of Class VI, VII, and VIII. There were more than 200 volunteers for the contest. The theme of the contest was "Conservation of Water and Environment". Oisho Bani Society takes keen interest towards the Environment by undertaking many activities such as: awareness program for the farmers and youth,

The Parish Community thanks God for the laborious service of Fr. Lawrence Darlong who shepherded the Parish for the past two years and wishes Fr. Amalraj all the best, as he begins to shepherd the parish.

Brother Derrick

CATHEDRAL PARISH

Installation of new PP and farewell to outgoing PP

Fr. Bosco Lathees was installed as the new Pro Vicar



and Fr. S. George as the Assistant Parish Priest of the Cathedral Parish on 14th May by Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC. The Installation ceremony of the two new Priests and the Farewell to Fr. Bhuban was held during the Kokborok Mass at 10.00am. The installation of the new PP Fr. Lathees was an occasion for him to be formally presented to the people. After his Letter of appointment was read, he made the profession of faith and with the handing of the keys the Bishop introduced him to the possession of the Parish.

After the Holy Mass, the faithful felicitated the Bishop, the Priests, and the newly vested Brother Chinnaiah. Fr. Bhuban Sarkar who rendered his services for past 10 years in this Diocese, including 2 years as Pro Vicar of the Cathedral, was given a grand farewell by the Parish Council. He has gone back to his home Diocese of Krishnanagar, WB. In his speech Fr. Bhuban shared his ten years of experience of working among the different tribal communities and villages in this mission Diocese of Agartala. He was filled with emotions and choked with tears as he gave his thanksgiving speech. The faithful also showed their gratitude and love towards Fr. Bhuban with their valuable words, gifts and flowers.

Brother Chinnaiah

News Briefs from the Diocese



planting saplings, encouraging people to use home grown vegetables, plastic free zone, water

harvesting, etc. St. Arnold School students were eager to draw on the environment. Not only did they study in the classroom but are aware of global warming. They are aware of the day-to-day situation when it is becoming warmer and hotter, when the hills have gone barren, when they see mountains are levelled in the name of developmental works, etc. They were very creative in their drawing and were awarded with good prizes. The School authority has decided to display their drawings for all the school students and guardians to see.

Ivan D Silva, SVD

Bishop Lumen's Episcopal Ordination Anniversary celebrated

The priests and religious of the Diocese gathered with great joy and reverence to celebrate the 27th Episcopal Ordination Anniversary of Bishop Lumen with a thanksgiving Mass. Fr. Lawrence gave an awe-inspiring introduction highlighting the numerous exceptional qualities and contributions of our dear Bishop. He said that Bishop Lumen's unwavering dedication to the teachings of Christ has been a guiding light for both clergy and laity, leading them closer to God and fostering a deep sense of unity and community. The thanksgiving Mass marked a momentous milestone in Bishop Lumen's spiritual journey and his dedicated



service to the faithful of the Diocese. As the celebratory Mass reached its crescendo, Bishop Lumen, with humility and gratitude, expressed his deep appreciation for the support and love he has received throughout his spiritual journey. He thanked the priests, religious, and the entire diocese for their unwavering faith, cooperation and companionship. As Bishop Lumen embarks on another year of spiritual leadership, the Diocese looks forward to witnessing the continued blessings and guidance he will bring to their lives.

Fr. Praveen Kumar

JUST News

Training on Promotion of Farmer to Farmer's Knowledge Exchange Program on Agriculture



JUST conducted one day training program on Promotion of Farmer to Farmer's Knowledge Exchange on agriculture, traditional foods, indigenous health system and documentation at Nabinpara on 27th April 2023. 42 Farmers from different villages attended the program. The purpose of the program was to promote knowledge sharing, preserve indigenous knowledge, document traditional knowledge, build capacity, and foster networking and collaboration among Farmers in the

region, which can help to enhance their understanding of sustainable agricultural practices, traditional food systems, and indigenous health systems. The program has also helped the farmers to become aware to protect local biodiversity, promote cultural identity, and improve the resilience of local communities to climate change. The program also includes documentation which can help to ensure that this knowledge is preserved for future generations and can be used to inform policy and research in these areas. Farmers thanked the JUST for conducting the training program and enhancing their knowledge.

Networking Meeting for Peace



Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST) organized a networking Meeting with different NGOs, FBOs, CSOs and like-minded people on 29th April for promoting Peace in Tripura. Fr. Lathees Director of JUST, explained the objectives by saying that "NGOs, FBOs, CSOs and like-minded people play the role of peace

mediators in the disturbance and violence hit areas". In his keynote speech, the Resource Person Dr. Vincent Darlong Director of Centre for Sustainable Development Studies, MLCU, spoke on various points of peace-building and conflict resolution. Mr. Darlong stressed on Global Values of Peace, Sustain/end Peace, Peace and conflict studies, and three approaches of Peace 1. Peacekeeping 2. Peacemaking 3. Peacebuilding. Mr. Darlong also talked on networking and the

elements involved in networking in peacebuilding, and its contribution towards peace building. During the group discussion the participants shared their experiences and ideas, and came out with suggestions to promote Peace in Tripura. JUST is working as an umbrella organization for all the NGOs in nurturing peace in the State and trying to promote peace and harmony through various programs.

Brother Anvesh

News Briefs from Caritas Internationalis

Caritas Internationalis elects a new President



The 22nd General Assembly of Caritas Internationalis elected Archbishop Tarcisio Isao Kikuchi as its new President. Archbishop Tarcisius Isao Kikuchi, SVD, the Archbishop of Tokyo, in Japan, was elected as the 13th President of Caritas Internationalis. He will serve a four-year term at the

head of the Confederation of 162 Catholic relief, development and social service organizations. Caritas operates in over 200 countries and territories around the world, and seeks to build a better world, especially for the poor and oppressed. Archbishop Kikuchi also serves as President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan and Secretary General of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC). He served as the President of Caritas Japan from 2007 to 2022. He was also the President of Caritas Asia from 2011 to 2019, a member of the Caritas Internationalis Executive Committee from 1999 to 2004, and a member of the Representative Council from 2011 to 2019. In his address to Caritas members, Archbishop Kikuchi said, "*Caritas must be in the front line to receive, accompany, serve and defend the poor and vulnerable...*" He has served as Archbishop of Tokyo since his appointment in 2017, prior to which he had served as the Bishop of Niigata since 2004.

Courtesy, Devin Watkins

Bishop's Program for June 2023

- 03-04: Parish Sabha, Moharpara Parish
- 06: Clergy Meet, Agartala
Education Board Meeting
- 07: Kasiabari Chapel Blessing, Kailashahar Parish
- 10: Youth Football Finals, Holy Cross School Ground
- 11: Green Sunday, Sindukpathar Parish
- 17: Sontang Chapel blessing, Moharpara Parish
- 18: Parish Feast, Bishramganj
- 21: SFS School Blessing, Amarpur
- 22: To USA

Our Distinguished Guests

- Fr. Arokiasamy, MSFS, from Bangalore
- Fr. Joseph, SJ, from Madurai Province
- Fr. Amalraj, from Trichy Diocese
- Sr. Esther Adjoa Entsiwah, CSC General Councillor from USA
- Frs. Wilson, OCD & Jojo, MOC from Bangalore

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