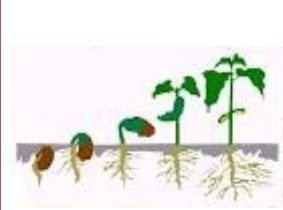




**Pastor's Corner**

This May will be 16 years since the Diocese of Agartala was erected and I was ordained Bishop on Pentecost Sunday in 1996! Each year at this time as I pause to reminisce our very humble beginnings, I'm amazed at so much has been achieved in spite of so little that we got...and I say THANK YOU LORD for it is nothing short of a miracle. It is like the miracle of the loaves and fish in the Gospels



transferred to Jesus who transforms them. Between transfer and transformation one may come across a number

of hurdles, like the large number of people to be fed, or the logistics of how this could be done, etc. These hurdles may be so overwhelming that they make us lose sight of the little that we actually possess. The point is clear. In May 1996 and the months that followed I could only think of the hurdles and they often seemed overwhelming: no money, no land, no place to live, no personnel, no infrastructures, insurgency at its height the list could go on. But like in the Gospel narrative, when the boy transferred the loaves and fish to Jesus, He transformed it; and the small quantity or the poor quality was no more the focus. Once transferred the miracle of transformation would happen!

Let us not forget, we can have little and it will remain little as long as we hold on to it. But if we transfer the little we have to

**Congratulations!**

**LINK congratulates newly elected Provincials:**

- Sr. Joy Monteiro, BS, NE Provincial
- Fr. V. M. Thomas, SDB, ING Provincial
- Fr. George Maliekal, SDB, INS Provincial

**Transfer to be Transformed**

God He will transform it and multiply it. My inadequacies and inexperience were all means for God to do His miracle of transformation and today 16 years later, I feel grateful and blessed. Today once again I entrust myself to your prayers. I end with this prayer of Archbishop Oscar Romero:  
"It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.

*The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision... We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction... We may never see the end results... We are workers, not masters, ministers, not Messiahs... We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen"*  
+Lumen, CSC

**Editorial**

**It ain't much! It's just a Name...or is it?**



The practice of calling 'fathers', 'sisters' and even the 'bishop', merely by their first name - 'John', 'Maria' or 'William', without prefixing their title, 'Father', 'Sister', or 'Bishop', is rapidly gaining ground in some quarters of the Diocese.



While I leave it to individuals to judge if it's a sign of declining respect for men of the cloth, I dare say it certainly signals a decline in the culture of our people. One of the earliest things I learned about this culture was its almost exceptional sense of respect when addressing people.

It was a pleasant surprise for me to see that even Boarding boys and girls prefixed names of their companions with 'brother', 'sister'. It was always 'Brother Subudh', or 'Sister Anjana'. It was never just 'Subudh' or 'Anjana'. Later on I also found, this was not the result of the training they got in the Boarding. Instead, it was something they internalized from their culture because back home in the villages it was always 'Da Subudh' or 'Bai Anjana'.

Therefore, when our people address their priest as merely, 'John', it is certainly not something prompted by their culture. It, instead, signals a degeneration of culture. Perhaps it also signals a muddled mind, which seems to think that calling their pastor, buddy, is a sign of having arrived at

some place of prominence in the Church. I dare say this because non-Christian brethren never seem to indulge in this. They, in fact, tend to go overboard heaping up respectful titles, one on the other. (A few of them even go to the extent of substituting the Kokborok 'Nwng'(you) with the borrowed Bangla *aapni* (you) because to them *Nwng* does not feel respectful enough, perhaps).

And if it is because our people hear priests themselves, while talking to batch-mate priests, call each other by name, well... how essential it is to learn to distinguish between the liberties that colleagues take when among themselves from the legitimate respect everyone on earth must give and is also entitled to.

I may be wrong about the muddled-mind bit; but the culture thing sounds very right to me.  
*J. Pulinthanath, sdb*

**LINK congratulates newly elected Office Bearers of NE Bishops' Council:**



Most Rev. Dominic Jala, President



Most Rev. Dominic Lumon, V. President



Most Rev. John Thomas Katrukudiyil, Secretary

## Bodhjungnagar Parish

### Easter with Pastor at St. Andre Parish

Alleluia, Jesus is risen, the faithful of Lefunga Village responded, loudly and joyfully, as our beloved Bishop Lumen led the Easter Liturgy on Easter Sunday morning. The Parish of St. Andre was blessed by the presence of Bishop Lumen during the Holy Week which he conducted in a few places. During the liturgy on Holy Thursday Bishop washed the feet of the faithful, symbolic of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, and instructed the faithful on the richness of the Liturgy of the Holy Triduum, in particular, the significance and relevance of Jesus the Master who bends down like a servant before each of his disciples. Bishop Lumen led the Good Friday services in Subolghar, and Easter Vigil service in the Parish Church.

Frs. Robert and Davis also helped the Parish Fathers in their Holy Week duties. It was a great help to the PP and a blessing for our people. At the end of the Easter Vigil services the village leader thanked Bishop for choosing St. Andre Parish for his Holy Week program and for his teaching, praying for and blessing the faithful of the Parish. The faithful of the Parish, commend their good shepherd to the protection and inspiration of the Divine Master.

*Regent Chandrakant, CSC*



## Don Bosco Quasi- Parish

### Don Bosco Quasi-Parish Inaugurated

The Quasi-parish of Nandannagar, Agartala was inaugurated by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro CSC, DD, on Palm Sunday 2012, making it the 18<sup>th</sup> Parish in the Diocese of

Agartala. Fr. Davis Aricatt sdb, the Rector of Don Bosco Agartala, was installed as the first Parochial Administrator at a simple ceremony during the Holy Mass. Present on the occasion were Fr. Joseph Almeida sdb, Provincial, Salesian province of Guwahati, Fr. Emmanuel Kallarackal csc, Provincial, North East Province of Holy Cross and others priests, religious and faithful.



Carved out of the three parishes of Agartala, Bodhjungnagar and Mariamnagar, Don Bosco Quasi-Parish caters to the pastoral needs of a variety of communities and tribes including Debbarma and Garo.

Bishop Lumen exhorted the faithful to continue nurturing the sense of a Parish community preserving unity and thus to grow in faith.

*Fr. Joseph Pulinthanath, SDB*

## Kathalcherra Parish

### Charismatic Retreat 2012

A two day 'Charismatic Retreat' was organized at Good Shepherd Parish on the 17 & 18 April 2012. The Team



'Crusaders for Jesus with Mary' headed by Levin, Robin and Dominic led the parishioners for a day of spiritual renewal with personal testimonies, invocations and moving hymns. The faithful numbering about 250 gathered at Parish Church from all the *mondolis*. Kodos to *Maria Sangha* who took the initiative to organize this spiritual renewal. The two day Retreat ended with a solemn Eucharist.

### YSM & Peace Club Seminar 2012

HCHS Kathalcherra organized 'Young Students Seminar' on 19 April. Fr. George Rodrigues the Diocesan Youth



Director was the Resource Person for the Seminar. Focusing on the opportunities a student has Fr. George called upon the young students to channelize their energy towards positive goals. THINK, JUDGE and ACT were the key words of the Seminar. Ruben Darlong a Class X student says 'The Seminar helped me to be positive, confident, and to think, see and act before I take every decision in my life'.

*Fr. Valerian Castelino, CSC*

## NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

### Moharpara Parish

#### Pastoral visitation

On 20th April more than 55 Reang people of an interior village in Kakracherra had lined up to receive his Lordship to their village. As their present Church is quite small the Holy Eucharist



was celebrated outside the Church. 50 people were administered Confirmation on that day with the help of candle light. They had very little to offer except their faith and joy in the risen Lord. They are enthusiastic about making a bigger Church and they also promised to cooperate with the little they have to make a Church. Next morning program was at Moharpara itself. Boarding boys and girls participated in a meaningful liturgy after which his Lordship was welcomed by them. After the lunch hosted by the Holy Spirit Sisters, we left for Gamagu, a village near Ampi. At Ampi we could not but accept the hospitality of Mr. Francis Darlong, the S.D.P.O. of the place. At Gamagu the people had already lined up to receive his Lordship as we reached there in the evening. The Church was full and 23 adults received Confirmation during the Eucharistic celebration. We halted for the night there and the next morning, we started for the next village that was Cechua.

Here also people were waiting to receive his Lordship. Even though it was a Sunday, the Church attendance was rather poor. 14 adults were administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. The President of the local church invited all the people present, for a community meal in his house. After the meal, Bishop had a pleasant exchange of views with some of the elders who were gathered there. I take this occasion to thank his Lordship for his kind visitation to this Parish.

*Hormis John, CSC*

*"The difference between 'involvement' and 'commitment' is like an eggs-and-ham breakfast: the chicken was 'involved' - the pig was 'committed'."*

- unknown



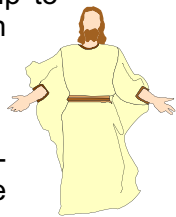
## Khumlwng Parish

### Easter Triduum at Khumlwng

One of the parishioners rightly commented, "Easter Triduum is the best occasion to prepare spiritually. One gets ample opportunity to introspect and transform oneself spiritually." The preparation began with Confession of the parishioners and all the hostellerC. The Palm Sunday Procession began at



Champaknagar Township to Montfort School Hall. On this great occasion, Rev. Fr. Augustine P.A. SVD (Regional Superior-India-Guwahati) preached the homily to the huge gathering. Maundy Thursday Service helped the parishioners to experience Christ's 'Love in Service' and many began crying during the washing of the feet. Good Friday Way of the Cross began at Debrakami Village to the church (2km.approx.), in which the Passion of Christ was re-lived by the live presentation of various scenes. Easter Vigil was another moment of faith deepening experience for all.

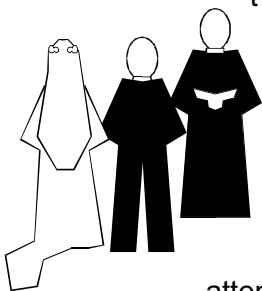


Thursdays Service helped the parishioners to experience Christ's 'Love in Service' and many began crying during the washing of the feet. Good Friday Way of the Cross began at Debrakami Village to the church (2km.approx.), in which the Passion of Christ was re-lived by the live presentation of various scenes. Easter Vigil was another moment of faith deepening experience for all.

### Couples Promise Commitment

It was one of the best opportunities for the married couples to reflect together about their family life and commitment. There were about 70 couples who attended the Retreat on 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> April. The lay preachers from Goa guided them professionally. There were many non-Christian couples who attended and contributed for the success of the Retreat. The main issues- disunity between couples, abortion and child care, etc. were touched upon. There was good participation from the couples.

Fr. Arun Minj, SVD



### The Church on the path of Unity: at Ambassa

An Ecumenical Meeting of the "All Tripura United Christian Forum for Human Rights" Dhalai District unit was held on March 27-2012 at Baptist Church, Kochucherra, Ambassa about hundred and twenty Kms. from Agartala. Nine Christian denominations including Baptist, Catholic, EFCL, Church of God and others represented by 22 church leaders participated in the Meeting. The Catholic Church was represented by SVD Frs. Joachim, Cyprian and Nabin. (Fr. Joachim Kullu is the founder member of the Forum) There are about twelve Christian denominations in the district having a membership of



about 10 thousand. The main concern of the meeting was how can we march a head on the path of unity?

The members expressed their deep concern and active solidarity to keep the wheel rolling towards church unity. They reminded one another the Lords prayer to his heavenly Father for unity, "May they all be one....."(Jn.17:21)A few concrete proposals were suggested to be discussed in the next meeting to be held in the month of April.  
*Cyprian, SVD*

## NEWS BRIEFS FROM JUST

### Distribution of Free Books and School Materials



JUST in collaboration with Smile Foundation, New Delhi has launched free coaching centre with three Teachers for the Bengali Medium School Children of Damdamia village. There are 100 children under class 5, who are given free coaching in major subjects and encouraged to attend daily regular classes in Government school. On 4<sup>th</sup> of April, Sr. Bastian D'Silva in a small function distributed books and

school materials to all the students.

*Mr. Bishwajith Debbarna*

## LINK MAIL BOX

Thank you for LINK. Interesting as usual. +*P.K. George, SDB, Miao*

Thank you for your news letter LINK. I was happy to read about all the good things that are happening there. *Fr. Tony, sfx, Kolkata*

Thank you for sending April LINK which surely connects Karachi with Agartala. It reflects also the great work you and your co-workers do in your part of the world. +*Evarist, Karachi*

Thanks for the LINK and Congrats again for being ON TIME. *Fr. Emmanuel, CSC, Agartala*

Congrats! Your link is full of news, thoughts and life. I am enjoying it. *Fr. Sebastian Perianan, Bangalore*

Just received Link that should inspire all of us to communicate more! *Conrad, CSC, Montreal*

Hats off to bring in the LINK to some excellent *light* but sensible reading. *Joseph, IGSSS, Delhi*

Thanks for sending me the precious LINK. *Fr. Parimal, CSC, Dhaka*

Thanks very much for the April LINK...with the nice piece of information on your email...!!!...*Jim, Goa*

Thank you for the newsletter Link, which I look forward to read every month. Although I was in Agartala only for a short time, I am interested in what is happening there and pray for you and the mission there. *Sr. M Fay A.C., Kolkata*

Thanks once again for the April Link - enjoyed reading all that is happening in your world and loved the Paraprosdokians! *Steve, Australia*

Thank you also for the monthly "LINK" always received with joy and happiness! *Fr. Marc Gagnon, c.s.c. Montreal*

.thanks fo rthe LINK:))as usual on time,like i told u sometmes i dont even keep track of the dates,and when i see the Link in my Inbox ,i realize the first of the month is here. *Lilian, Pune*

- ▲ Fr. Mareke, MC, from Kolkata
- ▲ Mr. Magno Menezes, Levin Rodrigues, John Dorjee, Robin D'Souza, Dominic Fernandes & Thadeo Valles all from Goa

### Many Earth Hours for Pakistan by Silent Thinker

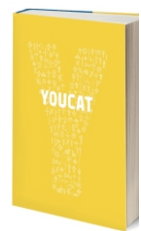
Some international events are just not meant for third world countries like Pakistan; Earth Hour is one of them. This does not mean I am against fighting for climate change, nor does it imply that I disrespect what is probably the world's largest environmental event. I loved Captain Planet and the Planeteers and my heart cries out when I see protesters polluting to try and win their demands, so I am definitely not an eco-villain. It is the chronic power cuts across the country. Why turn off lights when electricity comes and goes every hour? In



fact we are actually celebrating Earth Hour time and again, seven days a week. While ordinary citizens adjust their work routines according to the available hours of electricity, the event which gathered such a majestic assembly was only a sham gesture by politicians, the majority of them landlords and industrialists, who are responsible for plaguing the country with darkness. Sending out such messages to the world does not help improve the planet. Such events are for other parts of the world where power cuts are unheard off or are at least not that frequent. Silent Thinker is the pseudonym of a Catholic commentator based in Lahore (**UCAN-India**)

### YOUCAT Becomes World's Best-Selling Catholic Book 1.7M Sold Around the Globe

The young people's catechism of the Catholic Church, titled YOUCAT, has reached the rank of the best-selling Catholic book in the world. The catechism was launched at World Youth Day in Madrid. Ignatius Press published the English-language version.



Jesuit Father Joseph Fessio, editor of Ignatius, referred to YOUCAT's unique role: "Like its big brother, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, YOUCAT isn't a one-time publication. It's a point of reference for young people around the world and a cornerstone of the New Evangelization."

YOUCAT adapts the content of the Catechism of the Catholic Church to a format intended to engage young people and young adults. The format includes questions and answers, highly-readable commentary, margin photos and illustrations, summary definitions of key terms, Bible citations and quotes from the saints and other teachers. (**Zenit.org**)

### Pope Marks 85th Birthday with Reflection on 2 Saints by Luca Marcolivio.

Benedict XVI's 85th birthday was marked by a day rich in celebrations, visits and festivities. For the occasion, the Holy Father presided over Holy Mass in the Pauline Chapel of the Apostolic Palace, which was attended by some Bavarian authorities and bishops, who were later received in private audience.



In addressing his greeting, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Dean

of the College of Cardinals, thanked the Pontiff for the solicitude with which he exercises his service of love. It was no accident, added the cardinal, that his first encyclical (*Deus Caritas Est*) was altogether a hymn of Love that is God, as the love that should animate every Pastor, called to have the light of God enter the world and thus, also, the warmth of his love.

### Jesuit communication guru dies by C.M. Paul.



Jesuit Father Jacob Srampickal, head of the department of Communication Studies and professor at

Gregorian University Rome, yesterday passed away in Austria. He was 62.

He had become critically ill and was hospitalized in Vienna ten days ago while on a visit to Austria. Fr Srampickal had headed several media organizations and taught communications in India and abroad. In February, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India appointed the Patna Jesuit priest director of its media training institute NISCORT (national institute for social communication, research and training). He was expected to take charge in June 2012.



### BISHOP'S PROGRAM FOR MAY 2012

- 01: CDC Meet, JDC Agartala  
Clergy Meet & Recollection, JDC Agartala
- 05-06: Parish Feast, Kathalcherra Parish
- 07: Paul Course, Champaknagar
- 12-13: Potapara Chapel Blessing, Bodhjungnagar Parish
- 14-16: Site visits with Architect  
Hospital Foundation blessing at Amtali
- 17-22: CSC Provincial Chapter, Agartala
- 20: Parish Feast, Mandwi Parish
- 24: Sr. Korona MC, Silver Jubilee, Agartala
- 26-27: Parish Feast, Ambassa
- 31: Marian Procession

### Nonagenarian seventh grader dies

Kerala's Fathima Beevi personified the adage it is never too old to learn. At age 93, she was busy preparing for her grade VII examinations, when death came calling. Her goal of passing grade X remained unfulfilled but she has set an example for all to follow.

A mother of three, Beevi was unable to study in her childhood as her family went through difficult times.

She made us proud by becoming the oldest student to clear standard IV exams. We are very sad that her dream of passing standard X could not be fulfilled." (**UCAN-India**)

