



Swachh Bharat Abhiyan should cleanse humanity of Prejudices, Hatred and Violence



Mahatma Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar. He was shot and killed on January 30, 1948 when he was 78

years old by Hindu extremist Nathuram Godse. On his birth anniversary in 2014, the Swachh Bharat campaign was launched by Prime Minister Modi with much fanfare. The PM said his Govt. aims to eradicate open defecation by 2 October 2019, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, by constructing 90 million toilets in rural India at a projected cost of ₹1.96 lakh crore (US\$28 billion). Mahatma Gandhi, whom the nation had relegated to archives, came alive on his birthday that year.

The Swachh Bharat scheme is launched with Mahatma Gandhi as its inspiration. There are many stories about his cleanliness drives; but I mention just one. In 1901 while on his second visit to India, Gandhiji attended the Congress session in Calcutta. There were only a few latrines and the rush was big. He records, "I pointed it out to the volunteers. They said point-blank: 'That is not our work; it is the scavenger's work.' I asked for a broom. The man stared at me in wonder. I procured one and cleaned the latrine." He however could not persuade others to do the same. The sad experience of Calcutta Congress session burnt into him. Later when he had taken control of the Congress, he organized a party of two

thousand volunteers for doing scavenging work in Haripura Congress session, which



had men and women from all castes, including the upper caste. He had finally torpedoed the caste barrier at least in one area; other bastions of age old evil practices were to fall one by one in the years to come. (Reference: Bahuroopee Gandhi by Anu Bandopadhyay page 24 edition 1964)

The Swachh Bharat scheme is a cleanliness drive across the country. But as Mr. S.C. Jaini, retired Former Member of the Central Board of Direct Taxes New Delhi says, "Gandhiji was not only cleaning latrines in South Africa and in India, he was cleansing humanity of prejudices, hatred and violence. His mission was spiritual cleansing of not only India but of the world. His was a message of peace, nonviolence, love and brotherhood. When he spoke for the meek and the poor, he embraced the world... His presence was hailed by some as the second coming of Jesus. His fight for the oppressed was without bitterness, unlike the class war. In his war, the adversary was

Pastor's Corner

disarmed without a duel." Gandhiji being chosen as an inspiration to Swachh Bharat, we have once again reaffirmed our faith in the legacy of the Father of the Nation. But do we have to invoke him for simple acts of cleanliness only?

Rome ad limina visit

The ad limina visit to Rome of Group #3 from September 18 to 27 comprising of 44 Bishops from the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Gandhinagar, Goa and Daman, Guwahati, Imphal, Nagpur and Shillong is just over. (No photo available as yet). As I had mentioned in my Circular Letter the Quinquennial visit as a canonical discipline requires a diocesan Bishop to observe the ancient tradition of the ad limina visit every five years, by venerating the tombs of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul and by meeting the Successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome. The current visit however was after a gap of seven years and this time we did not have a one-to-one meeting with Pope Francis. However, he did address the whole group of Bishops and spoke at length to us. I must say that the meeting with the Holy Father was the high point of the ad limina visit.

+Lumen, CSC

That 'World Elsewhere' of the Young



A cursory glance at an issue of this publication, 'Link', or at the WhatsApp posts that do the rounds in our groups, is enough indication that our

Parishes are alive and active. (More so, when we know that there are many Parishes that quietly go on with their 'works' and do not think it very important to 'post' about them). A variety of programs Seminars, Retreats, Youth gatherings, SCC meetings, and the like are held sometimes at various levels

Village, Zonal, Parish, District, etc. There is no doubt, behind each such initiative there is much hard work and sacrifice. They also give much satisfaction and strength to those who organize and participate.

Given the constraints within which we operate, one might say these programs are well conducted and well attended, mostly by young people. These also seem to signal emergence of something new in our parishes and villages. A new dissatisfaction with just being mediocre, a resolve and determination that is both

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new and contagious, and a hunger that is imperceptible but real. It is a



spiritual hunger that we could paraphrase as a longing to enter into a relationship with God. This is, it

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seems, particularly true of today's young people who even as they are getting more entrenched in secularity day by day are also, paradoxically, longing for deeper connection and deeper meaning. It then follows that until those many programs which fill up our parish calendar, both the routine ones and special ones, are able to answer that deeply felt need of our faithful, particularly youth, sooner or later, their enthusiasm in them is likely to wane.

Today's young people who form the major chunk of the Church in Tripura, like their counterparts elsewhere, seem to put the highest value on 'personal experience'. They relegate everything else to the margins, even those things considered central to the tribe's culture and traditions. In other words, our Youth are inhabitants of a secret and dazzling 'world elsewhere'. Are our programs able to make inroads into that 'world elsewhere' and encounter the young person in a way that touches his/her utmost preoccupations and preferences?

That our Youth still actively attend our Church and its many programs is an overwhelming sign that the numerous escapades they are busy with today - 'being online' or 'coming live on Youtube' hasn't satisfied their hunger. Their search for a profounder sense of 'being alive' goes on.

This offers us a challenge and an opportunity to make our programs platforms for them to have a personal experience of the One who gives life, life in its fullness (Jn 10:10).

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

BAGBASA PARISH

A 3-Tier Festal Celebration



THE FIRST TIER: After a 3 month preparation for nearly 90 candidates for the sacrament of Confirmation we had the first leg of our parish feast celebration on the 14th at West Dolubari. Our dear Bishop Lumen was welcomed from the bottom of the Church hill with the blast of the Panisagar Holy Cross School BRASS BAND. The Parish Maria Sangha sang a melodious welcome song. The Bishop during his homily brought out the fact

of this day being the Exultation of Holy Cross, the titular feast of our Bagbasa Parish. Our Parish Youth organized a short cultural program. The parishioners hosted a tasty meal for our Bishop, priests, religious women and the altar servers.

In the evening the Panisagar Holy Cross community hosted a full length cultural extravaganza for both the Boys' and Girls' Hostels to mark the Feast with our Bishop as the Chief Guest. In his speech the bishop brought out the meaning of the Feast and a brief history of the Congregation and our founder Blessed Basil Moreau. He crowned his sharing by singing: "This little guiding light of mine..." A multi-course meal brought the day to a fitting closure.

THE SECOND LEG: THE PARISH LEVEL feast of our Congregation was at the centre at Bagbasa. At the Holy Mass, concelebrated by Rev. Frs. P.V. Joseph, Arokiasamy, Ajith, and *yours truly* as the main celebrant, brought out the 7 sorrows endured by Mother Mary, our Patroness. For the 550 strong parishioners at the Church a call was given to suffer like our heavenly Mother. The Parish Youth put together a short entertainment program which was followed a sumptuous meal for all the Parishioners.

THE THIRD DAY (16.09.2019): Bagbasa Holy Cross High School took over the festival celebrations with all our Students and Teachers. A short cultural program and the full course meal for the School Staff and all the helpers brought the 3-tier feast to a close. We thank our Lord for His support, our Bishop for the Confirmations, and all those who helped in making these days a great success.

Fr. Harry D'Silva, CSC

AMBASSA PARISH

Bible Sunday



Holy Spirit Parish celebrated Bible Sunday on 25th August with a procession and a Bible class. Parishioners from different sub-centres/villages came together near the Lalchari Panchayat Office for a procession to the Church. A decorated vehicle carrying the Bible and a flex depicted the importance of the day. Children, young and old, proceeded with the choir that chanted hymns on the Word of God and Bible. After the holy Eucharist one hour Bible class was conducted by Fr. Ivan the Parish Priest. He raised some important points like, having a Bible and reading the Word of God daily. He also conducted a practical class on how to

proclaim the Word of God during the Holy Mass. At the end of the class some refreshment was distributed to all.

News Bureau, Ambassa

MOHARPARA PARISH

Evangelization Team:



Mohorpara Parish Evangelization Team is gaining momentum particularly at the Zonal level. Through the hard work and commitment of Twithampui Zonal Team one village of 14 families is making a home coming after six years of being away from the Church. After constant visits by the Team three other new families also followed Jesus and will join the fold. On the 25th of August, Confession and renewal of faith took place where they were welcomed back to the sheep fold.

Family Commission

Mohorpara Parish organized one day training for all the SCC and Family Commission Coordinators on 10th of September. 80 participants from different *mondolis* took part in the training. After the training a Zonal Family Commission was officially formed. Fr. Arul the Parish Priest administered the oath-taking ceremony of the Commission Members where he blessed and empowered them. The Members of the Commission promised to pray Rosary daily and to have daily family prayer as well as to help other families to pray.

Marriage Rectification



14th of September will be a historic day in the chronicles of Mohorpara Parish where 23 Couples got their marriage rectified and blessed. This is one of the events conducted as part of preparation of the Jubilee of the Diocese. Fr. Arul the Parish Priest rectified and blessed their marriages with the assistance of Fr. Arbok, Catechists and Sisters. During the homily Fr. Arul explained the importance of the Sacrament of Marriage and the demands of marriage commitment. The marriage ceremony came to an end with

the lunch shared among the couples.

Fr. Arbok, CSC

KHUMULWNG PARISH **Word Became Flesh**



The faithful of Kumpuilwng were eagerly waiting to hear the Word of God and experience the healing touch by the power of the Word of God. And the day arrived on 18 August when all the *motha* leaders and the faithful of St. Alphonsa Parish had gathered at Kumpuilwng village for one-day Retreat. Fr. Abraham VC the Parish Priest of Mariamnagar was the preacher on the Word of God. The preaching and the healing Sessions conducted by Fr. Abraham helped the faithful to have a stronger and deeper faith in the true living God. The preaching and faith sharing by some *motha* Leaders like Mr. Subash Debbarma and Mr. Gautam Debbarma was very touching and helped everyone to make a strong decision to pray every day. Many faithful shared their healing experiences. The day ended with the Holy Eucharist and a community meal.

Fr. Stany Pereira, SVD

BISHRAMGANJ PARISH **One day Retreat for 3 Zones in the Parish**



Looking forward to the celebrations of the Jubilee of the Diocese and as a part of

preparation for it a one day Retreat was organized for three different Zones in the Parish on 14th of September 2019 in order to facilitate the faithful for the renewal of their personal and family life and transforming their ordinary faith to a living faith. This Retreat was animated by Fr. Abraham VC the Director of Mariam Nagar Retreat Centre in Barkubari motha; Fr. P.J. Joseph SDB Director of Peace Centre in Golirai motha, while Sr. Teresa Kerketa MSMHC with the Catechists, at Nabasardarpara respectively, on the same day. Each Zone comprises of 5/6 *mothas*. It started at 9 a.m. with prayer and adoration followed by preaching and reflections from the Bible. Majority of the *motha* people participated actively and shared their experiences of the renewal of faith and inner healings of wounded hearts. It was concluded with the Holy Eucharist followed by a fellowship meal.

Fr. Remol Marak, SDB

KATHALCHERRA PARISH Good Shepherd Parish, Kaathlacherra had been full of events and celebrations: **Bible Sunday**

On 25th August we organized Bible Sunday for the Youth, Students, and Leaders of the *mothas* and Parish as well. It was a learning day for the faithful with biblical stories and faith related talk.

Nativity of Mother Mary

On 8th September *Maria Songho* organized Holy Eucharist for the nativity of Mary. Nine days of preparations were held through Novenas at Puranbari, Kukicherra and Parish Centre itself. These were faith enhancing days. On the same day KCYM felicitated all the Catholic Teachers as we celebrate Teachers Day.

Zonal Youth Meeting Bible

On 9th September we had Meeting for the North Zone Youth Convention at Kathalcherra. The Meeting was headed by



DEXCO under the leadership Fr. Lawrence Darlong the DYD. The Zonal Level Youth

Convention for North Zone will held from 8th to 10th October at Kathalcherra.

Congregational Feast Day

On 15th September we celebrated our Holy Cross Congregational Patroness feast "Our Lady of Seven Sorrows". On this same day we also inaugurated a new Family Rosary Unit as part of Family Rosary ministry. All the Office Bearers and Leaders took the oath for their commitment and service.

Fr. Ishwar, CSC

KUMARGHAT PARISH **Variety of Parish Programs**



On September 14 we held a variety of Parish programs. As it was the Holy Cross Feast we began with an informative video show on Blessed Fr. Moreau and about the Holy Cross in North East India. Most Rev. Bishop Lumen CSC was welcomed by the Parishioners after which was the Solemn holy Eucharist, concelebrated by many priests. 75 children received first Holy Communion and 52 received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

As a mark of Teachers' Day special prayers were made for the Teachers from the Kumarghat Parish and they were felicitated by Rev. Bishop Lumen with blessings and gifts. Later the Holy Communion and Confirmation recipients were offered a token of appreciation. Rev. Bishop Lumen was felicitated by the Parish Community anticipating his Silver Jubilee Year. Sr. Ventura Fernandes FS was felicitated on her Golden Jubilee of religious life. Fr. Sahaya Lourdu Raj was welcomed by the Parish Community. The Youth of the Parish headed by Fr. Babu SJ, presented a program to mark the significance of the day. Kudos to the Parish Priest Fr. Lancy D' Souza, MC Sisters, Fatima Sisters, Jesuit Fathers and the Parish Council Members for their hard work.

Fr. Sahaya Lourdu Raj, CSC

Diocese News Nuggets

Media Education Workshop



Ambassa, 17 August 2019: St. Arnold School Ambassa organized

one day Workshop on Media Education for class VIII-XII students on August 17. This was conducted by Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD, the Diocesan Secretary for the Commission of Social Communications. There were 124 participants and also Teachers of

the respective class sections. They learned about the different types of communication and importance of Media Education today. The Resource Person highlighted on Media & advertisement, Media & films, Media & fashion and finally about usage of mobile

phone. Fr. Ivan said, "Mobiles are good and they are smart, but we have not yet become smart to use them". He further added, "Students fall prey to this gadget and companies lure them to buy the latest mobile, even though the parents are poor". Through video clips and power point he explained the students about the good and bad of media.

News Bureau, Ambassa

North Zone SCC Meeting

Ambassa, 10 August 2019: Small Christian Community Meeting was held at Kamaranga Parish for five Parishes of



North Tripura. The Coordinator of SCC for North Zone Fr. Ivan D' Silva, SVD, called on Parish Priests and Leaders of SCC to be present in Kamaranga for the sharing on Christian participatory living in different parishes and villages. There were 30 participants for the Meeting which started with a Bible Procession, Bible enthronement. Fr. Sushil Machar, SVD, the assistant Parish Priest of Kamaranga Parish welcomed everyone. Mr. Pionglama Darlong the Secretary of SCC North Zone placed the agenda before the group. Mr. Bishu Debbarma the Parish Secretary of the host Parish animated the Seven Steps of Bible Sharing. Participants chose the 'Kingdom of God' as the Word of Life for the next three months. The Secretary then called for Parish Reports based on SCC meetings, prayers and action plans. After the Reports Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC, the Diocesan Secretary for SCC put forward the Plans for the forthcoming SCC Convention in Kumarghat to be held on October 5 and 6. At the end of the discussion the Coordinator proposed a date for the next Meeting that would be held at Gachirampara Parish on 18 December, 2019.

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Bishop's Program for October 2019

01: Clergy Meet, Agartala
02: Vocation Camp, Champaknagar
05-28: Missio Campaign, Germany
29: PSC Meet, Delhi
30-31: Caritas GB Meet, Delhi

Training on different Government Schemes



A series of Training on different Government Schemes available for the SHGs was conducted by JUST under Ganganagar R.D Block in Dhalai District. Mr. Lilmohan Reang was the facilitator of the training and he explained the various Schemes available for the SHGs such as Tripura State Support Project on SHGs (TSSPS). It is a state plan scheme being implemented in Tripura since 2009-10 and

there is a provision for providing soft loan for a maximum of Rs.25,000 at the rate of 4 percent interest and equal amount from Tripura State Co-operative Bank. Financing of Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) is another Scheme where the members who are engaged in similar economic activities and are willing to jointly undertake to repay the Loans taken by the group from the Banks can avail the Loan. NABARD Financial Services Ltd. (NABFINS): NABFINS also extends loans to SHGs through its own trained Business & Development Correspondents, Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDPs) is another scheme from NABARD where SHGs need-based Skill Development programs are being supported for mature SHGs which already have access to finance from Banks.

Training on Peace and Human Rights

JUST organized training on Peace, Human Rights and Leadership Skills at Depacherra on 25th August 2019. There were 52 participants who attended the training. The Resource Person Mr. Bikash Debbarma shared on the topics of peace, legal rights and human rights. The Resource Person spoke on 30 basic Human Rights and also shared some details and meaning of Human Rights and how peace is important in our society. He also spoke on



Legal Rights, Education Rights, Forest Conservation Act 1980, and Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989.) *Mr. Cyril Darlong*

World News Nuggets

Five 'courageous people pick up "Asia's Nobel Prize"



This year's winners of the Ramon Magsaysay Award are (from left), Filipino musician Ryan Cayabyab, Thai human rights defender Angkhana Neelapajit, Indian journalist Ravish Kumar, Myanmar journalist Ko Swe Win, and South Korean anti-bullying advocate Kim Jong-ki. Five Asians with a

"powerful sense of personal commitment" and an "uncompromising conviction about the fundamental dignity of everyone" have received this year's Ramon Magsaysay Award at a ceremony in Manila on Sept. 9. They join a long list of over 300 recipients from across Asia recognized for addressing human development issues "with courage and creativity, and in doing so have made contributions that have transformed their societies for the better," the awards panel said. In her address during the awards ceremony, Philippine Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo praised the "bravery" of this year's recipients in battling "injustices and cultures of violence" in Asian society, even as it has become far "too easy for some of us to forget those who are in need." She described the new laureates as "wellsprings of perpetual hope and titans of compassionate and transformative leadership."

Named after the third president of the Philippines after World War II, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is given every year and recognizes "greatness of spirit and transformative leadership in Asia."

Source Marielle Lucen

Our Distinguished Visitors

- SCV Srs. Gracy Mathew, Flowerlit, Anis, Nancy Rincy, Mary Jose, & Mary John from Kerala
- Fr. SVD from Chennai
- Fr. Tomy SVD from Jharsaguda
- Fr. Michael SM. SVD, Mumbai
- Sr. Preethi SSpS, from Indore
- Sr. Alphonse Mary SSpS, from Guwahati
- Fr. Gabriel Darlong CSC, from Arunachal
- MCBS Frs. Sajan, Manoj Johnkutty, Bibin & Anoop, from Arunachal
- Fr. Nickson Gabru SVD, from Mumbai