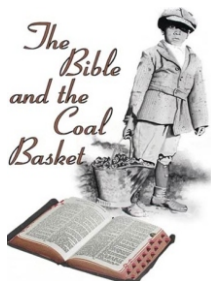




## Pastor's Corner

### The Coal Basket Bible

Joe Eruppakkatt tells the story of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains of Kentucky with his young grandson. Each morning, Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading from his old worn-out Bible. His grandson who wanted to be just like him tried to imitate him. One day the grandson try to read the Bible just like understand it, and what I do forget as soon as I close the good does reading the Bible Grandfather quietly turned coal in the stove and coal basket down to the river a basket of water." The boy did even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, "You will have to move a little faster next time," and sent him back to the river to try again. This time the boy ran faster, but again the basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was "impossible to carry water in a basket," and he went to get a bucket instead. The old man said, "I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough," and he went out the door to watch the boy try again. At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty. Out of breath, he said, "See Papa, it's useless!" "So you think it is useless?" the old man said. "Look at the basket." The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old coal basket, it was clean. "Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out."



That is the work of God in our lives. God bless. +Lumen, CSC

### Agartala Diocese congratulates

- Very Rev. Fr. Abraham Vettuvellil MSFS, newly elected Superior General of MSFS Congregation
- Bro. M. K. Devassy SG, newly elected Provincial Superior of Montfort Brothers NE. India Province



## Editorial

### 'March' of much Promise!

This March promises to be action-filled for the Church, both local and universal. There's just been a resignation of a Pope, and March hopes to see the vacant papacy once again occupied. No doubt, there aren't many elections in the world that's as closely watched as the election of a Pope. The change of guard at the helm of world's largest organization is 'prime time news' and 'front page story' not only for the Christian world but for all. Understandable perhaps, considering the impact the occupant of that chair is able to wield, in every nook and corner of the world, directly or indirectly.



'Every nook and corner of the world', of course, includes this tiny State we call our own too. On the very day the Pontiff will lay down office at the Vatican and thereby create history, Tripura will be engrossed in the peculiar excitement that 'election results' alone can generate in a State that holds the record for the highest voter turnout in the country. March will see the victorious party or parties forming a new government and taking up the reins of the State.

As the season of Lent swiftly proceeds to its climax in the celebration of the Paschal Mysteries, the Church all over the world, including our villages in Tripura, get more eloquent and expressive. It is one season of the year during which even the sleepest of *mondolis* in the Diocese comes alive. Palm leaves and passion plays, feet-washing and way of the cross, new fire, Exultet and Alleluias - an impressive package indeed, by any standards.

The month of March has still more in store. Students, who for months have burnt mid-night oil to be able to face the challenge of the examinations that March inevitably brings along with it, know it well enough.

Our own Diocese holds the annual Meeting of the Pastoral Council and Chrism Mass in March two events which bring together representatives from all parts of the Diocese for celebrations of great significance.

It is clear we have just begun a month that has in it a huge amount of happenings we cannot be indifferent to. Perhaps, the most talked about among them will be the 'Conclave' and the new leader it will give rise to. The month of February ended with the Pope signing off his papacy; the month of March will conclude with the victorious shout of the 'Alleluia' resounding from all dark caverns of the world. "He is risen, indeed!"

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

## Kathalcherra Parish

### Parish Sabha 2013

The Parish team geared up its energy and resources to organize the 22nd Annual Parish Sabha at Moinama village which is 25kms away from the parish centre. The three day Sabha included input sessions, evaluation of *mondolis* and planning for the next Pastoral Year. This year being the year of Faith the theme of the Sabha was 'Faith in Christ: Newness of Life'. Fr. Cyprian Pinto, svd, explained the Pope's Exhortation *Porta Fidei* and invited the faithful to know, deepen and share their faith. Bishop Lumen Monteiro applauded the efforts of the Parish team and invited them to keep alive the faith. The *sabha* ended with the solemn Eucharist and fellowship meal.



### Sendoff cum Welcome

HCHS Kathalcherra bid sweet adieu to its pioneering member Fr. Lourdhusamy, csc, on 16 February 2013. A meaningful cultural program was organized in honour of Fr. Lourdhu for all his contributions to the institution. At the same occasion farewell was given to the outgoing *madhyamik* batch. Fr. Lancy the new Secretary was welcomed on the same day. Fr. Lourdhu in his parting words narrated the journey of HCHS from a simple begging at Puranbari Village to the present stage where in the school has grown in strength and stature with 1,100 students and three boarding houses. The School community welcomed Fr. Lancy.

### Sendoff cum Installation Program

The Parish Community bid a sweet send-off to Parish Priest Fr. Lourdhusamy, CSC, on Sunday 17 February and welcomed Fr. Lancy D'Souza, CSC, the new Parish Priest. The installation ceremony commenced with the Holy Eucharist presided over by Bishop Lumen Monteiro and concelebrated by 16 priests. Fr. Abraham KJ, CSC,

Provincial Superior, applauded the efforts of the pioneering member of the mission for his immense contribution to the centre. Fr. Lourdhu has spent about 11 years at



Kathalcherra as Parish Priest for two terms. He gets the credit of starting the Maria Sangha in the Parish, Executive team, Construction of village chapels, etc. Fr. Lourdhu in his farewell speech thanked God for giving him strength and support; he also applauded the parish community for their co-operation during his tenure. He called on the faithful of the parish to extend the same help and cooperation to the new Parish Priest Fr. Lancy D'Souza. The send-off program ended with a grand meal. **Fr. Valerian, CSC**

## Khumwlng Parish

### New motha added to St. Alphonsa Parish

St. Alphonsa Parish Khumwlng has tribal communities of Debberma, Jamatia, Hrangkhawl and Kaipeng. The dawn of the New Year welcomed the fifth tribal community called Rupini to the Parish. Man proposes God disposes--His designs are incomprehensible!



We along with the evangelists planned to venture into familiar fertile pastoral grounds of one side and God provided the unfamiliar pastoral pasture on the other side of the parish. The Rupini village called Twisikampara accepted joined the Parish on 10<sup>th</sup> February after our constant visits and catechesis. It was a red letter day for the villagers for having formed the village community after a long wait. The joy and enthusiasm of the villagers was seen on everyone's face. The new villagers have started to come to the Parish centre for all major pastoral services. It is a small hillock village consisting of about 35 families. Villagers are rather poor solely depended on *jhum* cultivation and forest products. The new tribal community has added tremendous joy and happiness to the parish. **Fr. Arun Minj, SVD**

## Kumarghat Parish

### Annual Parish Gathering

The Annual Parish Sabha of St. Paul Parish, Kumarghat, was held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at Masli Reang Para. The theme of the Sabha was "increase your faith". The arish Sabha began with prayer service on 25<sup>th</sup> evening. 350 faithful from different *mondolis* gathered at Masli Reang Para for 3 days, sharing their life in common. On 26<sup>th</sup> morning the Parish celebrated the birthday of Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC, with Holy Mass followed by birthday wishing. The Resource Person was Fr. Robert Mathias, CSC, who gave a few talks on faith, being the Year of Faith. In the afternoon Bishop Lumen was solemnly welcomed into the village. The Sunday Holy Eucharist was celebrated by Bishop Lumen in the presence of Fr. Diago Pereira (elder brother of Fr. Thomas Pereira) and several other priests. The Parish Priest presented his Report and said that the year of faith is designed to renew the faith of Catholics so that we will be credible, joy-filled witnesses to the risen Lord in the world today, capable of leading others to Jesus. He also presented the Parish Accounts using Power Point. The Parish Sabha came to an end with a fellowship meal.

**Fr. Agi CSC**



**Change of Guard**

This is to introduce to you **Fr. Jeevan Kennady, SVD**, who has taken over the leadership of JUST from **February 13, 2013**. He is a priest from SVD society and worked mainly in Tripura. He is expert in local languages and a good leader. He has been associated with JUST for very many years. We have got a right person in this position to take forward the developmental initiatives of the Diocese of Agartala. I request each one of you to continue to support him and the cause of the people of Tripura.



As I have been transferred from JUST, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support and collaboration that you extended for the past eight years. I am now appointed as the Director of ASHA Holy Cross, a developmental organization of Fathers of Holy Cross, North East India. My email is: robertagartala@gmail.com

Fr. Jeevan Kennady can be contacted at 9436484401. Our organization's email remains the same.

*Fr. Robert Mathias, CSC*

**Medical Camp**

A medical camp was organized on 24 January 2013 at Raibura Para. Many patients received consultation and free medicines during the camp. From the observation it was realized that many of the patients who came to the medical camp are mostly suffering from fever, stomach pain, gastric, eye problem, swelling, and headache. Most of the patients are children. We also visited two patients in their houses who were suffering from leg pain.

**Exposure Visit**

An Exposure Trip was organized on 21st January 2013 at Sankhola, Khowai District. There were 22 SHG members in total along with two Animators taking part in the trip. At first we visited a Federation shop and had conversation with the Federation leaders regarding the running of the shop. We then went to visit Sishama Bodol to have a view and knowledge about *vermi*

*compost*. We then visited Athukari Bodol at Don Bosco School who are running a canteen. The final phase of the visit was Daksin Bodol who worked on Tat.

*Deepan Gurung*

**SIGNIS India studies new media**

Fr. Bosco, SVD attended the Signis-India four-day annual assembly in Secunderabad from Feb 16-19 as a representative from this



Diocese.

Here is a report: 100 members representing 13 Signis regions in India along with its world president discussed the theme "new media for a new generation." Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal, Chairman, urged the communication professionals to become more committed to and involved in the mission of the Church and in the proclamation of the Good News of Christ.

The Indian wing was lauded for its actions in the filed of communication. Signis India's "vibrancy has led the way in ideas, new initiatives and curative practice," said Signis World Secretary General Alvito DeSouza said. He further asked Signis India members to develop monitoring and evaluation system for media projects.

*Source: CBCI*

**Cardinal Filoni releases Catholic Directory India**

Presenting the first copy of the directory to Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, he said the directory will help evangelization as



it "has all the information about the dioceses in India. India is a unique country where all the Catholics of three rites live their faith and grow together peacefully in brotherhood, the top Vatican official noted." CDI 2013, which has 2,548 pages, comprises of three parts with

first part being the general information about the universal church with the latest demographics and other statistics. The second part is about information about the 166 dioceses with maps, history, statistics and addresses and the third part is about conference of Religious India, societies of Apostolic life, secular institute and Pious Association, said Fr. Benny Kanjirakatt, editor of CDI.

*Courtesy UCAN*

**International Conference at Holy Cross College, Agartala**

Holy Cross College organized an International Seminar on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of February. The English department collaborating with Tripura University organized the two day long international conference on the topic "The Emerging Trends in Contemporary English Literary World". The Chief Guest at the inaugural function was Prof. Arunoday Saha, Vice Chancellor, Tripura University. The special guests were Brigadier DAB Udaya Kumar, Army Headquarters, Agartala, Ms. Inge Buchel and Ms. Imelda Buhler from Switzerland. The guests of Honour were Prof. Jyotish Nath, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Commerce, Tripura University, Prof. P.K. Haldar, Shri Pramod Pal, Regional Manager, SBI, Agartala and Rev.Fr. Robert Mathias, Vice-Chairman, Holy Cross Educational Foundation.

The Keynote Address was given by Brother John Tryon, CSC, Assistant professor of English at Holy Cross College, Notre Dame, Indiana, USA. He focused on the theme of "Teachers as awakeners," which was appreciated by all. One of the presenters, Prof. Noreen O'Connor joined the conference through SKYPE from King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, USA and presented her paper.

The Valedictory function was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February. The Chief Guest was Shri Kishore Ambuli, Secretary, Higher Education, Govt. of Tripura. The guests of Honour were Dr. B. Palit, Director, Higher Education and Sri Rajat Dey, Principal, Bhavan's College of Teacher Education. The special guest for the function was Prof. Rita Smith from Stonehill College, Easton, Massachusetts, USA. The students of the college interacted with the presenters after each presentation.

*Courtesy [www.holycrosscollege.in](http://www.holycrosscollege.in)*



**Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi of Mobile, Alabama, USA writes on the Pope's resignation:**

The surprising news spread quickly around the world: The Holy Father had resigned! The last time a Pope had resigned was in 1415, almost 600 years ago. Although more than once Pope Benedict XVI had given some indications that he would resign if he ever thought he could not fulfill the ministry of Pope due to age or infirmity, the timing of his announcement took the Church by surprise. At age 85, Pope Benedict apparently felt now was the time to step aside. As he explained in his statement of resignation: "After having repeatedly examined my conscience before God, I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry." He went on to explain that in fulfilling the role of Holy Father, "...both strength of mind and body are necessary, strength which in the last few months has deteriorated in me to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfill the ministry entrusted to me."

This act of resignation was first and foremost an act of faith. Jesus entrusted to St. Peter the role of being the shepherd of the Church on earth. After the Resurrection, Jesus told Peter three times to "Feed my lambs." "Tend my sheep." "Feed my sheep." (John 21:15-16) The Lord entrusted His own flock to St. Peter, the apostle whom was originally called Simon and whose name Jesus changed to Peter, the Rock, upon which Jesus promised to build His Church. (Mt 16:18) Peter was also the apostle to whom Jesus promised: "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven."

(Mt 16:19) Peter eventually moved to Rome, where he served in his ministry and where he was martyred. We believe that the ministry Jesus entrusted to Peter ("the Petrine Ministry"), did not die with Peter any more than the Church died with Peter. The early Church understood, and it has been passed on through the centuries, that whoever succeeds Peter as the Bishop of Rome, succeeds Peter in the ministry Jesus entrusted to Peter to strengthen the Church in faith and safeguard its unity. Pope Benedict, believing in how



vitaly important this ministry is to the people of the Church, came, through prayer, to feel called by God to relinquish it for the good of the Church.

This act of resignation was also an act of humility. It takes humility to admit ones limitations and to be willing to lay down prestige and authority so that another may take it up for the good of the Church. The role of Holy Father is a role of service. The traditional title of the Pope is "Servant to the Servants of God." He, as is true of all of us, is called to follow the Lord who said: "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve..." (Mt 20:28) At the same time, the office of Pope is surrounded at times by great pomp and beauty. The significance of the office can tempt frail human nature to lose sight of the Lord's call to serve and not be served. It is obvious that this is not true of Pope Benedict. He has devoted himself to service and is willing to step aside from the trappings of office as his conscience directs.

Finally, this act was also an act of love. It was a sign of the love of a shepherd for the flock. The decision to retire, although brought about by the Holy Father examining the state of his health, was not at its core a

decision focused upon him at all. It was a decision which at its core focused upon what is good for the flock. This shepherd was willing to act out of a genuine concern for the flock because of his love for the flock.

Let us pray for Pope Benedict, especially in this time of transition. Any transition in life, whether it is the first day of school, a wedding, or resigning from the Papacy, brings with it a mixture of emotions. We cannot know what emotions Pope Benedict is feeling, but we can pray for him. Please remember him in your prayers.

Courtesy  
www.catholicnewsagency.com

### Visitors at Bishop's House

- Bro. John Tryon, CSC, from USA
- Fr. Diago Pereira from Mumbai
- Sr. Anselm, SJC from Kolkata
- Sr. Geraldine, SJC from Jamshedpur
- Sr. Joy, BS Provincial Superior from Guwahati
- Sr. Mary Diki, BS Provincial Councillor

### BISHOP'S PROGRAMME FOR MARCH 2013

- 02-03: Kamaranga Parish Sabah at Katalutma
- 05: CDC Meet, Agartala Clergy Meet & Recollection, Agartala
- 08: Women's Day celebration, Agartala
- 09-10: Parish Pastoral Program, Bodhjunnagar
- 11-15: Caritas National Consultation, Delhi
- 14: CBCI-CARD Meet, Delhi
- 17: Mass & Inauguration of Youth Centre, Mandwi
- 19: Feast of St. Joseph, Agartala Parish
- 24: Palm Sunday, Khumulwng Parish
- 26: Pastoral Meet & Chrism Mass, Agartala
- 28-31: Holy Week Program, Depacherra Parish