

Pastor's Corner



August 15: Mary's Assumption into Heaven

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary—that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken body and soul into heaven at the end of her earthly life, is a feast celebrated on the 15th of August. It was officially defined by Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950, in the

apostolic constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*. Fr. Tony Kadavil says, "the reasons why we believe in the dogma of Assumption is because of these four reasons. 1) The uninterrupted tradition about Mary's death and assumption starting from the first century. 2) The belief expressed in all the ancient liturgies of the Church. 3) The negative evidence of the absence and veneration of a tomb of Mary while most of the apostles have their tombs. 4) The possibility of bodily assumption warranted in the Old Testament in the cases of Enoch (Gen. 5:24), perhaps Moses (Deut. 34:5), and especially Elijah (II Kg. 2:1). 5) The theological reasons: a) The degeneration of the body after death is the consequence of "original sin," and Mary, as "immaculately conceived," is exempted from the post-mortem decay of the body. b) As receiver of the fullness of grace and holiness, as mother of Jesus and as co-redeemer, Mary's place is with her son Jesus, the redeemer, in the abode of holiness, heaven.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, a human being just like you and me, conquered evil, with the help of God's grace, through her humility and obedience, undoing the ancient sin of Eve. And God rewarded her by assuming her, lifting her, into Heaven. And from Heaven, she is an inspiration and guide for us who are still traveling through the troubled waters of life on earth. **HAPPY FEAST.**

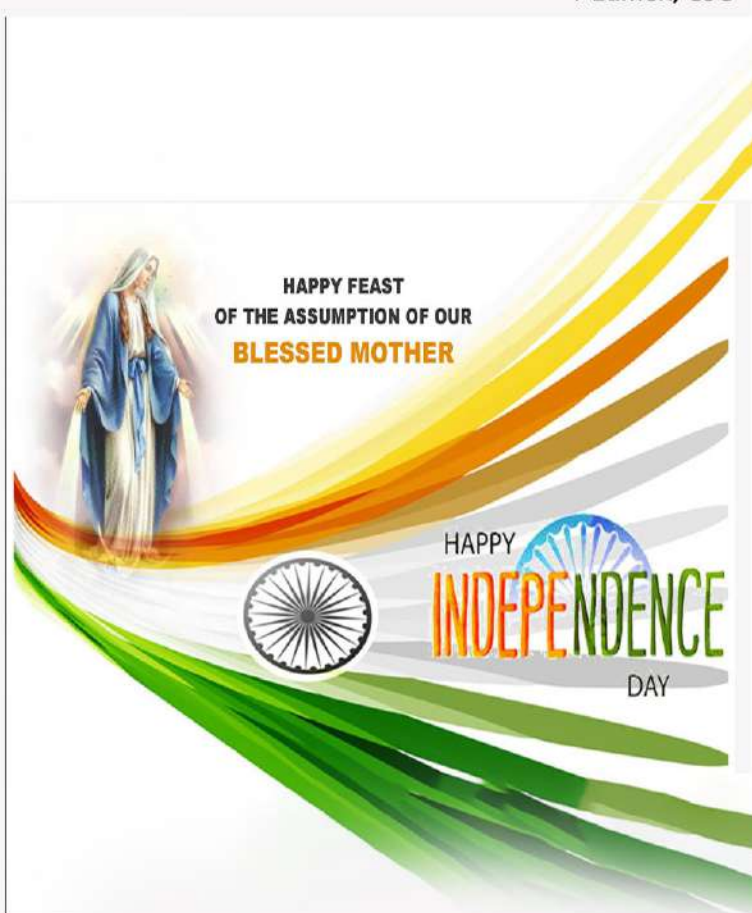
August 15: India's Independence Day

Independence Day marks the day in 1947 when India gained independence from British colonial rule, ending nearly 200 years of British presence in the subcontinent. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, delivered his famous "Tryst with Destiny" speech on the midnight of August 14–15, 1947, as India became an independent nation. It is one of the most iconic speeches in Indian history, marking the end of British colonial rule and the beginning of India's journey as a free country. Here are excerpts from the opening iconic lines: "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance... The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to

More than 75 years after gaining independence, India has emerged as a diverse, complex, and dynamic nation—marked by impressive achievements and ongoing challenges. In the field of technology and space, we have launched missions to the Moon and are preparing for manned spaceflight. Our IT sector powers the digital world, and innovations like UPI and Aadhaar show how India leads in digital infrastructure. Our economy is now among the top five in the world. Startups, industries, and global trade are thriving. Yet, we must also address challenges like unemployment and economic inequality. India's diverse culture remains our greatest strength. With hundreds of languages, religions, and traditions, we continue to prove that unity in diversity is more than a motto—it's a way of life.

India at 75+ is proud, but not perfect. We have achieved a lot, but we must continue striving—to remove poverty, to protect our freedoms, and to make India a place where every citizen thrives. It would be fair to say that India has made great achievements, but we must also recognize and work on the challenges that remain. As young citizens, it is our responsibility to stay informed, think critically, and contribute positively to our country's future. Together, with awareness and action, we can help build a stronger, fairer, and more united India. **HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY.**

+ Lumen, CSC



Editorial

J. Pulinthanath, SDB



August Signpost – Midway the Jubilee Year

It is a touching sight to see groups of people from different parts of the Diocese come to the Parish church here as pilgrims, as it is one of the two churches declared as pilgrimage centres during this Jubilee year. The fact that pilgrimage is centred on the theme of 'hope' makes it even more poignant.

They come, ordinary people, weighed down by the struggles of life—a mother anxious about her rebellious daughter, a young man unsure about what tomorrow holds, a grandpa feeling unwanted by his own children, a family burdened by debt, illness, or broken relationships. They come—not because the road is easy, but because the burden is heavy. They make their way—sometimes in silence, sometimes in tears, but always with hope. They come because, deep within, they believe—or want to believe—that there is more to life than pain. That beyond all hardship, there is healing. And that in Christ, everything shall be well.

Pilgrims of hope always inspire because their pilgrimage is not an escape but an encounter. As they walk the landscape of their lives, each step is a prayer, each mile, a surrender. Although the road is not paved, but rugged with doubt, disappointment and delay, they still walk because they trust that God is still working, that Christ walks alongside them, even when surrounded by darkness.

We are in August – a sort of midpoint in our Jubilee Year. It is a month that has key feasts that emphasize transformation and heavenly hope – the Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6) and the Assumption of Mary (August 15). Both moments pull back the veil and show us glimpses of glory. They remind us that the pilgrimage of faith, though often wearying, leads to beauty beyond comprehension. They affirm that hope is not naive optimism but a confident trust in God's power to renew all things.

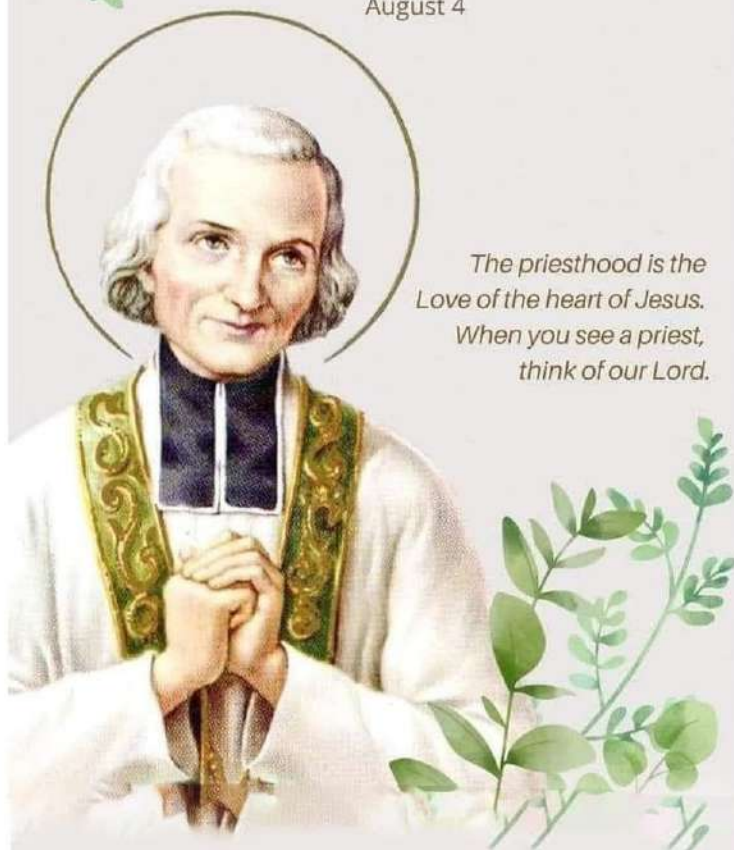
This midpoint in the Jubilee Year is not a lull—it is a pivotal moment. Like the oasis for the desert traveller, August offers refreshment, yes, but also a chance to evaluate our path and deepen our resolve to realign ourselves with God and to reignite hope, not in fleeting human assurances, but in God's unchanging fidelity.

As we move forward in this Jubilee Year, may August inspire us not to grow weary, but to walk on with greater faith. We move on, step by step, toward the promise. Hope does not disappoint.

For us citizens of this ancient country, the 15th of this month is the 79th Independence Day of our Country. On that day, we remember in a special manner, the sacrifices made by countless freedom fighters to gain for us independence as a nation. We continue to hope that the hard-won independence becomes a reality in the lives of all sections of people in this vast country.

Feast of St. John Mary Vianney

August 4



*The priesthood is the
Love of the heart of Jesus.
When you see a priest,
think of our Lord.*

LINK

*Wishes Happy
Priests Day*

Karbook Parish
Bishop's Pastoral Visit



On 5th–6th July, Bishop Lumen Monteiro made a pastoral visit to Our Lady of Good Health Parish, Karbook, bringing encouragement and spiritual guidance to the faithful. He was warmly welcomed by hostel children, sisters, and priests upon arrival.

The Bishop also visited the Claretian Mission at Suknachari, meeting with priests and lay leaders to discuss pastoral initiatives.

On Sunday, he celebrated a solemn Mass and, in his homily, stressed the importance of faith, unity, and community support. He also interacted with parishioners, listened to their concerns, and encouraged the promotion of local vocations.

The visit left a lasting impact, strengthening the parish community's faith and sense of connection with their shepherd.

– Br. Anvesh, II Theology

Kamaranga Parish
Srirampur mondoli gets a new Chapel



On 13th July, the long-awaited dream of the faithful in Srirampur (Kamaranga Parish) was fulfilled with the inauguration and blessing of their new village chapel. The chapel, built in just three months on land donated by Mr. Swapn and Mrs. Pushpa Rani Debbarma, was blessed by Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, and inaugurated by Fr. Arun Minj, SVD, its designer. Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD, unveiled the commemorative plaque.

The chapel's Jubilee Year of Hope-themed façade drew much admiration. Furnishings were donated by sub-stations and well-wishers. The joyful occasion ended with a short felicitation program and fellowship meal. The community expressed deep gratitude for this long-awaited spiritual home.

– Fr. Arun Minj, SVD

Gandatwisa Parish
Investiture Ceremony at the School



On 29th June 2025, St. Arnold Higher Secondary School, Gonda Twisa, held its Investiture Ceremony for the new Student Council. Mr. Khajendra Tripura, Headmaster of Class XII School, Ganda Twisa, was the Chief Guest, joined by Principal Fr. Praveen, Fr. Amal Raj, and Fr. Sebin.

Mr. Tripura conferred badges and sashes to the SPL, ASPL, house captains, and class leaders, followed by the oath-taking ceremony. In his address, he highlighted the values of leadership and appreciated the school's progress.

Fr. Praveen thanked the Chief Guest for his encouraging presence. The student leaders pledged to serve with dedication and uphold the school's values. The event showcased discipline and unity among students. Teachers and parents applauded the confidence of the newly elected council. It was a proud moment for the entire school community.

The ceremony concluded with the National Anthem.

– Fr. Sebin

Bishramganj Parish
Media Education for the Students



Fr. Remol Marak SDB, Parish Priest of Bishramganj, organized two Media Education Seminars for parish school students, with Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD, Secretary for Social Communication, as the main resource person. On 14th July, 142 students of Don Bosco School, Bishramganj, and on 15th July, 94 students of Nabasardar Don Bosco School attended the sessions.

Fr. Ivan addressed the effects of mobile phone use on youth, while Fr. Bala Showryuri presented on social media. The sessions were interactive, using videos and PPTs, and ran from 9:00 AM to 1:40 PM. Students found the seminar informative and eye-opening.

– Fr. Ivan D'Silva, SVD

Tuikarmaw Parish
Farewell and Gratitude Media

On 13th July, a heartfelt farewell was organized at St. Mary's Church, Tuikarmaw, for Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC, who served as Parish Priest for three years. The event was attended by Fr. Alfred, CSC, Province Administrator, and village representatives. During his tenure, Fr. Thomas led significant spiritual and infrastructural growth, including the construction of five village chapels and the founding of Takma Chara, the 20th Catholic village. The celebration included Eucharist, cultural performances, and speeches.

Fr. Thomas was praised for his simplicity, dedication, and pastoral care. He expressed gratitude for the community's love and support. The program ended with a fellowship meal and prayers for his new mission in Champhai, Mizoram.

– Fr. Vicky, CSC

Two new Village Chapels blessed



On Saturday, 19th July 2025, Bishop Lumen Monteiro blessed the newly constructed St. Raphael Chapel at Tuirubuma Village, under Tuikarmaw Parish. Funded by Church in Need, Germany, the chapel serves as a center of spiritual growth and unity for the local Catholic community.

On Sunday, 20th July 2025, the Bishop blessed another newly built chapel – St. Barnard Chapel at Ichachara Village, also under Tuikarmaw Parish. This chapel was made possible through the collaborative efforts of the villagers and generous donors from Mumbai. Both chapels stand as testimonies to the faith, unity, and dedication of the people.

Faithful from nearby villages gathered in large numbers to witness the blessings and to celebrate the milestone with joy and reverence. Traditional music and cultural items enriched the celebration, reflecting the community's gratitude and devotion.

Fr. Thomas Pereira, CSC, the outgoing Parish Priest, expressed his heartfelt thanks to all contributors and reminded the faithful of their role in nurturing these chapels through prayer, unity, and continued participation in Church life.

– Jagadish Uchoi, Parish Secretary

LEGAL CELL – Diocese of Agartala



A workshop on “Laudato Si and The Constitution of India” was organized by the Diocese of Agartala in collaboration with LCHR – A unit of Prachodaya Trust on 19th July, at St. Joseph Hall, Cathedral Campus, Durjoynagar, Agartala. The workshop was supported by Missio through LCHR, Guwahati. The key resource persons were Fr. Owen Chourappa SJ and Fr. Ivan D’Silva, SVD. There were forty participants from different fields such as catholic lay leaders, advocates, law students, social workers, priests and religious. The Workshop on “Learning Laudato Si and the Constitution of India” was a good initiative by Legal Cell of the Diocese of Agartala. The workshop has ignited the hearts and minds of all the participants. Many participants became aware of the document “Laudato Si” for the first time. We thank Fr. Owen SJ and Fr. Ivan SVD, the two resource persons. My sincere thanks to our dear Bishop for the opportunity and encouragement.

Fr. Nabin SVD

YCS/YSM Agartala Diocesan Animation and Orientation Empowering Youth Leaders for a brighter future



YCS/YSM Diocesan Animation & Orientation Program Held at Nandannagar

The YCS/YSM Agartala Diocese, in collaboration with the Diocesan Youth Commission, organized a successful Animation and Orientation Program on July 12 at Don Bosco School, Nandannagar. The event brought together 74 participants from various YCS/YSM units across the diocese.

Sr. Wansuk, MSMHC, North East Regional Coordinator, led sessions on leadership, the value of cell meetings, and advocacy for the marginalized. The program fostered unity, learning, and inspiration among young participants.

DEXCO members played a key role in planning and organizing the event, showcasing strong leadership. The Diocese is grateful to the NERYC office for its support. The event marked a meaningful step in empowering youth for positive action.

– Fr. Derrick, Diocesan YCS/YSM Chaplain

Women’ s Commission Two-Day Diocesan Resource Team Training Empowering



A two-day Diocesan Resource Team Training Program to empower women leaders was held on 12th–13th July at the Cathedral Hall and Holy Cross School, Agartala. The sessions were led by Sr. Lidwin Fernandes, Executive Secretary of the National Women Commission, and attended by 18 women from various deaneries.

The workshop focused on strengthening women’s groups in parishes and mondlis, emphasizing self-confidence, communication, and community leadership. Participants found the training inspiring and transformative.

Sr. Veronica Fernandes, Secretary of the Diocesan Women Commission, and Sr. Sushila Xess also took part. The sessions concluded with a planning discussion for future deanery-level trainings.

– Sr. Veronica Fernandes, FS

Agartala Diocese Youth participate at 5th Regional Youth Convention in Kohima A journey of Faith and Fellowship



The 5th Regional Youth Convention, held in Kohima from June 27–30, brought together over 2,000 delegates from 15 dioceses across Northeast India. 49 youth delegates from the Agartala Diocese actively participated in this vibrant event, organized by the Nagaland Catholic Youth Movement in collaboration with NERYC.

With the theme “Pilgrims of Hope”, the convention featured sessions on faith, leadership, social media, and youth empowerment, along with rich cultural performances celebrating Northeast’s tribal heritage.

Prominent leaders, including Meghalaya CM Conrad K. Sangma and former Arunachal CM Nabam Tuki, addressed the gathering. A proud moment for Agartala Diocese came as Mr. Jeremy Darlong and Ms. Priyanka Debbarma received the ICYM North East Excellence Awards 2025.

Ms. Khasrang Debbarma, Joint Secretary,

Catechists of the Diocese Ongoing Animation and Seminar



From 15-18 July twenty-seven full time Catechists of the Diocese gathered together at Pastoral Centre for a three days’ ongoing animation program. The topic of the animation was on Psalms for Prayer and liturgy in the Church. The resource persons for the Animation program, Frs. Amal and Maxim, gave the input on the Book of Psalms with a deeper understanding of the nature and purpose of Psalms in the Bible and the practical ways of praying the Psalms for the daily prayers personal as well as communal. They were also given the input on the significance of the Psalms in the Liturgy of Word in the Eucharist.

The Catechists were happy and delighted to know the richness of Psalms in the Bible as well as its use in the Liturgical worship. On the third day of the Animation program Bishop Lumen met the Catechists and gave them important points on leadership. Later on, the Catechists interacted with our Bishop bringing to his notice certain issues and personal concerns. The final day ended with a get together of the Catechists and were happy to be together as a group of Catechists. They also thanked the Director for organizing this event.

Fr. Maxim Rodrigues SVD

Agartala Deanery hosts Youth Seminar



A one-day Youth Seminar was held on July 20 at Auxilium Girls’ School, organized by Agartala Deanery under the leadership of Fr. Christopher SDB and Sr. Aquila FMA. The theme was “Growing in Faith, United in Hope”, with youth participation from various parishes.

Sr. Marcellina FMA spoke on “Who am I as a Catholic?”, encouraging youth to value their Catholic identity. Fr. Pulinthanath Joseph SDB gave a session on the four marks of the Church—One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.

The day included the celebration of the Holy Eucharist by Fr. Christopher, with a choir led by Bishramganj Parish youth. New Deanery Youth Executive Members were also elected. The seminar enriched the participants’ faith, leadership, and unity.

Sr. Aquila Makri, F.M.A., PYA, Nandannagar

Mother's Day Celebration Empowers Single-Headed Women



Mother's Day celebration under the project Socio-Economic Development of 180 Single-Headed Women. The program honored the strength and resilience of single mothers and women heading households, blending fun-filled activities with impactful learning. The day featured interactive sessions and group activities that fostered camaraderie and emotional support.

A highlight of the event was a capacity-building training session where women learned practical skills such as candle making, surf, and phenyl production. These skills aim to empower participants to generate income and become self-reliant. Fr. Lathees S., Director of JUST, and Parish Priest Fr. Abraham addressed the gathering, praising the dedication and perseverance of these women. They encouraged the participants to utilize their new skills to improve their livelihoods and assured them of continued support from JUST.

The celebration also included moments of prayer, reflection, and storytelling where the women shared their personal journeys, struggles, and victories. This created a sense of solidarity and inspired many to take bold steps toward shaping a brighter future for their families. The event ended on a joyful note with songs, dances, and the distribution of certificates for the training session.

Empowering first-Generation Leaders



In May 2024, JUST launched a Coaching Centre under its social upliftment initiative in Twikrakma-B village, Amarpur Subdivision, Gomati District, to provide basic education to children with no prior schooling experience. Twenty-seven children were enrolled and received free foundational education and essential learning materials. Most were learning to read and write for the first time. Over the year, from May 2024 to April 2025, the Centre recorded remarkable progress, with 19 children successfully transitioning into formal education—16 joined Dhananjay Para JB School, 2 children enrolled in Kalamati JB School, and 1 child in Karbook Eklavya High School.

The initiative was supported by local authorities who helped with resources and facilitation. The Centre not only taught literacy skills but also built the children's confidence to pursue regular schooling. This initiative highlights the transformative potential of community-based educational efforts in remote and underserved areas.

Encouraged by this success, JUST now plans to expand the coaching centre model to neighboring hamlets where similar needs exist. Discussions are already underway with village leaders and school officials to replicate the approach. With continued community collaboration and donor support, this model holds promise for reaching more children deprived of education and offering them a brighter future through learning and empowerment.

Robert Lushai

Our Distinguished Guests

- Fr. Owen Chourappa SJ, from Guwahati
- Sr. Lidwin, National Secretary, Women Commission
- Fr. Stephen, Nuncio's Secretary from Delhi
- Late Fr. Victor's family members from Mangalore



Bishop's Program for August 2025

- 03: Installation of new PP @ Tuikarmaw
- 05: Colloquium on Jubilee Year @ Cathedral Campus
- 09: OLG Sisters Convent blessing, Gachirampara
- 10: Parish Youth Mass, Kathalcherra Parish
- 16: JUST GB Meeting @ HO, Damdamia
- NESNIM Inaugural @ Holy Cross Agartala
- 17: Confirmations, Don Bosco Parish, Nandannagar
- 18: NESNIM Closing ceremony @ Holy Cross Agartala
- 20: Health Seminar @ Guwahati
- 21: NECHA AGBM, Guwahati
- 23: Sr. Joplin FMA, Silver Jubilee
- 24: Parish Feast, Mariamnagar
- 31: Parish Pastoral Program, Sindukpathar