



## Pastor's Message

### Celebrating two momentous events On 15<sup>th</sup> August

The 15<sup>th</sup> of August has two important Feast days that coincide. While the Catholic Church commemorates the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mother Mary, our nation celebrates its Independence Day on that very day. Mother India or Bharat Mata got its political freedom with the blessings of Mother Mary or Mata Mariam on that day!

Assumption Day commemorates the belief that when Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, died, her body was "assumed" into heaven to be reunited with her soul, instead of going through the natural process of physical decay upon death. The Assumption of Mary is one of the four Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church. Pope Pius XII defined it on 1 November 1950 in his apostolic constitution *Munificentissimus Deus* as follows: We pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever-Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. The declaration was built upon the 1854 dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, which declared that Mary was conceived free from original sin, and both have their foundation in the concept of Mary as the Mother of God.

India's Independence Day—a momentous occasion that stirs the hearts of millions! On August 15, India celebrates its hard-fought freedom from British rule, which was officially granted in 1947. As our country celebrates this Day in 2024, we see several opportunities across various sectors due to its large and diverse market, growing economy, and evolving technological landscape. These opportunities highlight India's potential across various sectors, driven by demographic trends, technological advancements, policy reforms, and increasing consumer demand. We also take cognizance of the many challenges that India faces today, spanning economic, social, environmental and political realms. Addressing these challenges requires sustained efforts from both government and civil society, focusing on inclusive growth, sustainable development, and equitable distribution of resources.

The poem "Let My Country Awake" by Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), expresses the aspiration of every law-abiding citizen of India. Salil Shetty Indian-born human rights activist and Secretary General of Amnesty International describes the poem as "a powerful call to action and a declaration of belief in achievable change". Perhaps most moving, however, is his statement that the final phrase, "let my country awake", could quite easily be replaced with, "let the world awake". To Salil Shetty, the poem is "about universal aspirations", and I think we would do well to read it with our own aspirations and that of the wider society in mind.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;  
Where knowledge is free;  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;  
Where words come out from the depth of truth;  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;  
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action –  
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Wishing you a Happy Independence Day.

+ Lumen, CSC



"How great is the Priest!  
..... if he realized what he is, he would die.  
For the Priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus"

**FEAST OF**  
**SAINT JOHN MARY VIANNEY**

**A Day to Pray for Priests**

LINK Wishes All the Priests In Our Diocese A Happy Priests' Day





# EDITORIAL

## Peripheral Concerns



In addition to the feasts of the Lord, feast days of the saints dot the liturgical calendar of the Church, commonly called the Ordo. Interestingly, the Ordo also has numerous days earmarked to honor various categories of living people. We name a few from the long list. A few days ago, on the fourth Sunday of July, we observed 'Grandparents' Day'. 'Day of the Fathers' of families on March 19, 'Mothers' Day' on the fourth Sunday of Lent, 'Youth Day' on Palm Sunday, and not to leave out Children, Pope Francis declared May 25-26 this year as the first 'World Children's Day'.

What we take note of is that the Church makes an effort to cover every age group. That is not all. Look at the other categories the Church focuses on. Workers (May 1), Migrants and Refugees and also the deaf (Last Sunday of September), the Sick (February 11), the Poor (third Sunday of November), and those with disabilities (December 3). We have only mentioned a few; there are many more.

This wonderfully shows the concern and thoughtfulness that Mother Church has for her children – of all age groups, categories, and standings. Add to this, the insistence of the Church to reach all nations and peoples, irrespective of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The picture we get is of that an amazing inclusiveness or universality that the Catholic Church has always upheld and insisted upon.

We live in times, that quite insensitively excludes peoples and groups, sometimes for flimsy reasons.

We live in times where the wealthy and the famous, the influential and the prominent call the shots at all levels – world, national, local.

Do we reflect well enough the universality and inclusive nature of the Catholic Church in the way we run our local Church – the parishes and our villages, is perhaps a matter for examination.

In most cases, the local Church too is blessed to be a microcosm of the Church at large – a veritable conglomeration of diverse elements. Are the differences connected to wealth, education, influence, and breeding found in the local church or parish, allowed to blur the universal character of the Church? In other words, do we also float along with the tide of the times, where the prominent are recognized and the weak marginalized?

In the parishes of our own Diocese with their mind-blowing diversity, an awareness has caught on, in matters of culture and language, thanks to decades of engagement in multicultural and multilingual contexts. However, such awareness is perhaps yet to catch on when the differences are found in the less obvious yet important areas like wealth and education. The question we would do well to ask is, 'Do the weak and the inconsequential, the less educated, the unemployed, and the expendable find themselves pushed to the peripheries of our collective psyche?

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

### Meghalaya Govt honors Bishop Mamalassery, renames Holy Cross Road in Tura after him

Meghalaya government has decided to rename PA Sangma Road to Holy Cross Hospital in Tura as Bishop George Mamalassery Road. The development was announced by Chief Minister, Conrad K Sangma after the cabinet meeting. CM Sangma said the road which was earlier known as Holy Cross road will now be renamed in memory of the longest served Catholic Bishop in Tura, Bishop George Mamalassery who passed away on July 5, 2024. Bishop Mamalassery's tenure in Garo Hills began as a missionary in 1960s, eventually leading to his role as the Bishop of Tura. His legacy is marked by the establishment of numerous educational institutions, including several LP schools, 35 M.E. Schools, 16 Secondary Schools, 2 Higher Secondary Schools, and 24 Girls' hostels and 23 Boys hostels spread all across the Garo Hills. In the healthcare sector, Bishop Mamalassery founded over 20 dispensaries and the 150-bed Holy Cross Hospital in Tura, enhancing healthcare access for the people of Garo Hills. Additionally, he established the Rino Simoneti Nursing School for General Nursing and two old-age homes for the poor and destitute, including one in Tura. For the physically challenged, he invited the Montfort Brothers to establish the Montfort Centre for the Physically challenged at Danakgre.

(Hubnews)

### National Eucharistic Revival, Indianapolis, IN

The National Eucharistic Congress concluded on 21 July with a Mass with tens of thousands of people in an NFL football stadium, where the crowd prayed for "a new Pentecost" in the U.S. Church. Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle presided over the closing Mass in Indianapolis' Lucas Oil Stadium on July 21 as Pope Francis' special envoy for the event. He shared that the Pope told him that he desires the congress to lead to "conversion to the Eucharist." "The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is a gift and the fulfillment of his mission," said the Cardinal pro-prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Evangelization. "Those who choose to stay with Jesus will be sent by Jesus," Tagle added. "Let us go to proclaim Jesus zealously and joyfully for the life of the world." The nearly 60,000 Eucharistic congress attendees were sent out with "a great commissioning" on Sunday morning in which keynote speakers urged participants to proclaim the Gospel in every corner of the country. More than 1,600 priests, seminarians, bishops, and cardinals processed into Mass in the Indianapolis Colts' stadium in a dramatic opening procession lasting 25 minutes. An additional 1,236 religious sisters and brothers were praying in the stands, according to the event organizers.

Courtney Mares CNA



## Ambassa Parish

## Green Sunday celebrated



Holy Spirit Catholic Church in collaboration with 'OISHO BANI SOCIETY' celebrated Green Sunday. Prior to this Fr. Ivan DSilva, SVD the treasurer of the Society and the parish priest submitted an application to the Forest office Ambassa requesting for the saplings. They accepted the requisition and asked us to collect the 500 saplings of different kinds from the nursery. On the previous day of the celebration, we collected saplings of Neem, Champa, Agor, bamboo, Guava, Jongcha, and Jackfruit. On June 16th Fr. Ivan made a special mention in his Sunday homily on the Environment. He said, "Green Sunday reminds everyone that we are the product of this earth and we have a responsibility to keep the environment green." He further added "We are called to plant trees not only to make greenery but also to avoid the pollution and rising temperatures". After the Holy Mass he blessed the plants and distributed them to the people. He said, "It is not enough that we plant the saplings but we should nurture them". For a few years it has been a tradition for Oisho Bani Society together with the Catholic Church to plant trees during this period. All the 500 plants are taken by the people to their homes to plant them.

## Grand Parents Day celebrated



Ambassa (Tripura) July 21, 2024: Holy Spirit Catholic Church celebrated Grand Parents Day on Sunday. The PP Fr. Ivan DSilva, SVD offered the Holy Eucharist and reminded the congregation to pray for the grandparents. He said, "there are grandparents who are looked after well and there are also those who are not cared for. Many of the elderly people suffer because they are old and they are dependent on others for their needs". Fr. Ivan called the faithful to offer the Mass for the intention of all elderly people. After the Mass all the twelve grandparents were felicitated by the Church leaders and the children. They were offered flower bouquets and gifts. Choir members sang a song of Jubilation and the whole congregation stood up wishing the grandparents.

Fr Ivan D'Silva, SVD

## Kumarghat Parish

## Parish Feast and Green Sunday



On the 30th of June St. Paul's Parish Kumarghat celebrated the annual Parish Feast. Just before the holy Mass the Parish Priest and Parish Council members welcomed our dear Bishop Lumen. Before the Holy Mass Mr. Lala Darlong gave a brief history of the Catholic Church of Kumarghat. The holy Eucharist was presided over by Most. Rev. Bishop and a number of guest Priests concelebrated. In his homily, Bishop highlighted important roles played by St. Paul during his preaching ministry. He was a strong pillar of the Church, especially in evangelizing the Gentiles. Bishop recalled how the early catholic leaders and the catechists in Tripura went from village to village to spread the message of Christ to the people. Now we are all evangelizers and we all must share our faith. After the Mass, the faithful joined for the Holy Eucharistic procession. It was the highlight of the day and an eye-pleasing event of the day where hundreds of Catholics walked together escorting the Blessed Sacrament on the streets of Kumarghat Town. The last program of the day was the celebration of Green Sunday in the Church premises. Bishop Lumen planted a sapling along with the Parish priest and some leaders. This is followed by a fellowship meal for all.

Sr. Margaret, FS

## One day Bible/Charismatic Retreat



On 14th July St. Paul's Parish organized acharismaticRetreat at the Parish center. The enriching Retreat was led by Fr. Leenus VC Director of the Retreat Centre and PP of Mariam Nagar. We started the day with the Rosary and followed by Praise and Worship animated by Sr. Soona CMC. The theme of the Retreat was "WORD OF GOD AND FAMILY" Fr. Leenus VC was the main Speaker who explained how everyday reading of the Word of God is very important and how the Word of God has changed the lives of people. All those who had an encounter of God were changed people. He beautifully conducted the Adoration and invited the faithful to make a meaningful confession. Before the Holy Eucharist he organized the anointing of the faithful with blessed oil. Mass was the culmination of the whole day Retreat. People from morning 9am to 4pm sat in the church and attended the Retreat very prayerfully.

Sr. Margaret, FS

## Marriage Course &amp; Marriage rectification



Kumarghat Parish organized two days Marriage Course. 13 couples attended the Course. The day began with Bible enthronement and reading the word of God by Catechist Mr. Subia D/B. The first session was animated by Mr. Roitua Darlong (Parish Council Secretary).He focused on six pillars of Marriage and explained them beautifully, after which Mr. Sakunga Darlong dealt with the role of couples in the family and in the society. They have to model their family on Holy Family of Nazareth. This was followed by Mr. Lala Darlong who spoke about the Sacrament aspect of Marriage. Sr. Gerald MC shared how prayer life is an important aspect of the Family and Marriage lives. Fr. Lancy CSC the Parish Priest took a class on what is Marriage and the Sacrament of Marriage. All were prepared well for Sacrament of reconciliation. At the end of the course various sacraments were given and their marriages were rectified. All the couples were very happy with the Workshop and for having their marriages rectified.

Sr. Margaret, FS

## Nandannagar Parish

## Confirmations &amp; First Holy Communion



21st July 2024 Don Bosco Parish was blessed with 20 children who received the first Holy Communion and 17 grownups who received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Our dear bishop Most Rev Lumen Monteiro CSC, DD the main celebrant, administered the sacraments. Besides the Fathers of the community, Fr Novin Lakra SVD and Fr Cyprian SVD also joined us. In his homily the bishop exhorted the people to have a sense of belonging to the Church. Reflecting on the readings of the day, he encouraged us to be like shepherds in our own family, in the Church and in the society. The candidates were all well prepared by Sr. Irine Lyngdoh FMA, Sr. Puspamary SSs, Catechist Jitu Debbarma, Mr. Paul S Darlong and Madam Lucy Jamatia. Prior to this day they had two weeks of intensive classes every day. Rehearsal for confession was examined by the Parish Priest himself three days before this day. So, on the eve of the celebration 3 Priests helped in the confession. The Parents of the first communicants were also encouraged to go for confession. A teenage deaf girl was among those who received the first Holy Communion. The altar servers around the altar were like angels around God's throne and the Savio youth group sang so melodiously. The liturgy as a whole was well animated and every one experienced the presence of God in their lives.

Fr. Christopher Wariarphi, SDB



### Entry of SD Sisters, Krupadham Province, in the Diocese



After seeking the Bishop's permission, the Society of the Divine Word (SVD ING Region) Fathers and the Sisters of Destitute, (SD Krupadham Province), represented by Fr. Ivan and Sr. Gracelet, the Provincial Superior, a historic agreement has been reached and signed to collaborate in the Diocese of Agartala at Ganganagar Mission.

This partnership aims to enhance the spiritual and social wellbeing of the community, fostering a stronger presence of the Catholic Church in the region.

This landmark agreement between the SVD Fathers and SD Sisters marks a significant step forward in the Diocese of Agartala's history, to spread the Gospel and deepen the faith of the local community and to provide quality education and health care services to the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society.

We pray for the success of this partnership and the blessings of the Almighty on their shared mission.

*Fr. Jaibu Mathew, SVD*

### BEC Deanery level Convention at Depacherra



It was a remarkable event held from 20th to 21st July, drawing around 90 participants from six different parishes. This gathering was a great opportunity for parishioners to deepen their understanding of the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) and to strengthen their faith and community ties. Rev. Fr. Lancy CSC, Diocesan BEC Coordinator taught on the foundational role of BECs within the church structure, emphasizing their importance in fostering a vibrant and cohesive church community. Rev. Fr. Ivan, Parish Priest of Ambassa Parish spoke about BEC as a Self-Reliant Neighborhood Community. Discussion on self-sufficiency of BECs, showed how these communities can support themselves and grow spiritually and materially. Rev. Fr. Amalraj, Parish Priest of Depacherra explained the essential characteristics that define a BEC, fostering a deeper appreciation and commitment to these communities. Let our church not be a consumer's church rather a Community of Communities, he said. The event was graced by the presence of Most Rev. Bishop Lumen CSC, whose participation added a special significance to the Convention. Bishop Lumen celebrated the Holy Eucharist, providing spiritual nourishment and encouragement to all attendees. His inspiring message urged everyone to live the Word of God in their neighborhoods and work towards building a strong and united church. The BEC Deanery Level Convention at Christ the King Parish Depacherra, was a grand success, marked by insightful teachings, spiritual enrichment, and a strengthened sense of community. The event not only enhanced the participants' understanding of BECs but also inspired them to actively engage in their communities, fostering self-reliance and spiritual growth.

*Fr. Amalraj*

**Let's Celebrate!**  
**National Youth Sunday**  
"Those who hope in the Lord  
will run and not be weary"  
(cf. Is 40:31).

**4 AUG 2024**

**NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION**  
CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF INDIA

For details contact:  
The Executive Secretary  
National Youth Commission  
Mob. 9891792508  
ccbiyouthcommission@gmail.com  
website: ccbiyouth.in

### Social Justice Sunday

**18<sup>th</sup>  
Aug  
2024**





## JUST organizes inter-cultural exchange program



Jana Unnayan Samiti Tripura (JUST) organized an Inter-ethnic cultural exchange program on 6th July at Paharpur. Fr. Lathees S, the Director of JUST, addressed the community, highlighting the significance of appreciating diverse cultural heritages and learning from one another. He emphasized the need for fostering dialogue, building relationships, and overcoming barriers caused by cultural, linguistic, or traditional differences. The Director advised the participants on ways to promote peace within their village and encouraged support among different ethnic groups, stressing the importance of tolerance and respect. He outlined the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), underscoring that Women can unite to foster societal peace and make meaningful contributions to the community. Speaking on World Environment Day, Fr. Lathees raised awareness about environmental protection, discussing the adverse effects of plastic pollution, deforestation, and air pollution. He urged participants to take positive actions such as planting more trees, maintaining cleanliness, and avoiding plastic use. After the input session, there was a short cultural program where different ethnic groups performed their traditional dance and songs and shared their cultural heritage and learn from others how to live in unity. The participants were from different villages. After the program fruit saplings were distributed to the participants for planting in their own places.

*Robert Lushai*

## Training on Leadership Development for single-headed Women



JUST organized a training on leadership development for the single-headed Women at Christ the King Parish, Depacherra on 7th July. There were about 85 women who attended the program. Fr. Lathees S, Director of JUST and Fr. Amal Raj, the Parish Priest were present in the program. The Resource Person was Mr. Ashim Uchoi, Assistant Inspector of Schools, Karbook. The Resource Person used different Bible verses and motivational quotations from different Saints to motivate and inspire the women. He spoke primarily on different qualities of good leadership like integrity, innovation, vision, passion, communication, self-awareness, empathy and courage. He also stressed on developing confidence and exhibiting leadership qualities. Then Fr. Lathees took the session on the role of the single-headed Women in the society. For the smooth running of the project, parish-level and Deanery level executive committee leaders were formed. The training sessions inspired the Women to participate actively.

*Robert Lushai*

## Our Distinguished Guests

- Fr. Sushanto Gomes, CSC, from Notre Dame College, Dhaka
- Mother Sheen Maria, SD Provincial from Ghaziabad, UP
- Sr. Pauline Therese, SD, from Ghaziabad, UP
- Pastor Rev. Prabin Barik UCPI from Delhi
- Pastor Rev. Parimal Kaipeng TBCU Agartala
- Mother Gracelet, SD Provincial from Wardha, MS
- Sr. Kochurani, SD Vice Provincial from Wardha, MS
- Bro. Sesuraj, CSC, Principal of Holy Cross Matriculation School, Salem
- Bro. Suresh, CSC, Principal of Notre Dame School, Salem
- Fr. Swamy, CSC, Principal of Holy Cross, Aizawl

## Bishop's Program for August 2024

01-23 : Appeals in Parishes, USA  
 25 : Parish Feast, Mariamnagar  
 26-31: NERPC & NE Bishops Meet, Guwahati