



# Link



Vol. XXX

No. 05

May 2026



## Pastor's Corner

### Enough of War

"Enough of the idolatry of self and money! Enough of the display of power! Enough of war! True strength is shown in serving life. Those who pray are aware of their own limitations; they do not kill or threaten with death. Instead, death enslaves those who have turned their backs on the living God, turning themselves and their own power into a mute, blind and deaf idol, to which they sacrifice every value, demanding that the whole world bend its knee. War divides; hope unites. Arrogance tramples upon others; love lifts up. Idolatry blinds us; the living God enlightens." (Pope Leo XIV, during an evening prayer vigil for peace in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican April 11, 2026.)

Faced with massacres and wars caused by the idolatry of power—by those who even presume to 'enlist' God on their side, offering religious justification for the killing of innocents—Pope Leo XIV has appealed to the overwhelming majority of people throughout the world who want peace, believe in peace, pray for peace, and build it day by day. He did so on the evening of Saturday, April 11, 2026, during the Prayer Vigil he convoked to implore an end to the wars currently underway.

Less than a week before the celebration of Easter, and on the eve of Eastern Easter, the memorial of the Prince of Peace's defenseless victory, the Bishop of Rome thus places his hope in the prayer of a silent majority, in order to face the dramatic hour of history that humanity is living through. He asks that the invocations of so many be united with the "infinite possibilities of God," in an effort to break what he calls a "demonic cycle of evil."

The words of the Pope, who has made peace the hallmark of his magisterium, are unequivocal both in identifying the ultimately diabolical root of war and in rejecting outright any revival of the claim that "God is with us." No, God cannot be with those who massacre civilians. God is with those who suffer, with those who die beneath the rubble.

Some expressions used by Pope Leo XIV are striking: prayer is "bulwark against that delusion of omnipotence that surrounds us and is becoming increasingly unpredictable and aggressive," because those who pray are aware of their own limits and neither kill nor threaten. The exact opposite is true of those who make "themselves and their own power into a mute, blind and deaf idol, to which they sacrifice every value, demanding that the whole world bend its knee." [Andrea Tornielli in Vatican News]



### PEARL JUBILEE OF MY EPISCOPATE

This year I will join you all in celebrating the Pearl Jubilee of the Diocese and my Jubilee too later this month on the 24th of May. Emotions of joy and gratitude continue to well up in me as I reminisce the years leading me to this Anniversary. I thank Almighty God for His numerous blessings throughout the last 30 years. The Holy Spirit who descended on the Apostles on the first Pentecost and set them on fire precisely that they in turn would set the world on fire, is the same Spirit who descended on me and sent me forth on that Pentecost Sunday in 1996! 30 years later I stand in humility and with gratitude uttering the very same words: LEAD US ONWARD! I invite you all to join me for the grand celebration that is being prepared at Agartala!

+ Lumen, CSC


*LINK Wishes*

Our beloved Bishop

on his

## PEARL JUBILEE


OF HIS EPISCOPATE



*Ad multos annos,  
Bishop!*

May God bless you abundantly  
with good health, joy and strength  
as you continue to shepherd His people.

With Love & Prayers





## EDITORIAL

J. Pulinthanath, SDB

### Diocesan Pearl Jubilee musings!

It was on 26th of May exactly 30 years ago, that the journey began with much flourish and fanfare. Hordes of people from all parts of Tripura thronged the school grounds of Holy Cross School Agartala. All roads that day led to Durjoynagar, as if urged by a foreknowledge that something new, momentous and historic was about to happen. Braving the sweltering heat, they came in droves with expectation and eagerness writ large on their faces. This ancient land of Tripura was about to witness the birthing of the Diocese of Agartala.

It was the beginning of all that we are celebrating today, 30 years later – most of which then were only ‘dreams’ and ‘possibilities’ awaiting their turn to come into existence. It was also in some ways a culmination of sorts – culmination of decades, if not centuries, of mostly unrecorded service rendered by lowly men and women at the service of the Gospel in this distant land.

To be able to celebrate the 30th anniversary of that hugely significant event, at the same spot, almost on the same day makes one lost for words. It must be more so for Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, DD who, on that day 30 years ago, took upon his shoulders the chief responsibility of taking forward this ‘enterprise’ amid unusually challenging circumstances. The young and dashing, eager and enthusiastic, friendly and forward-looking Holy Cross priest Lumen of 1996 still spearheads what came into existence on that day along with his mitre and staff – the Diocese of Agartala. 30 years later, he has not only retained all those qualities but has added to them age and experience and continues to be at the helm of the Diocese even today as its first and only Bishop till date.

T. S. Eliot once said, “the past is altered by the present just as much as the present is directed by the past.” We could look back at the 30 years of the Diocese through this lens. We are able today to see in a new light the hard work of Bishop Lumen and the earlier generation who had to work with only great courage but limited resources. We see them today in fuller light because of what the Diocese has become today – a vibrant local Church with its own identity, rooted in the culture and life of Tripura. We can say the present maturity of the Diocese in a way, ‘alters’ the past because it reveals more clearly the significance of those early efforts, sacrifices and decisions.

In other words, we can now recall to mind the past - a land that looked considerably more remote and distant, a people struggling to make sense of their place in the scheme of things - politically and socially, the smallness of our communities, the many obstacles to free movement even within the State, meagre resources, paucity of funds and personnel, lack of catechetical materials, inadequate infrastructure, and security concerns in the face of wide-spread ethnic disturbance and so on, and see them all in a different light.

It means that today, as a Diocese, we look back at them, not as mere hurdles and hindrances that had to be overcome, but as stepping stones that helped us climb higher. Oh no, ours is not a dead, frozen history, but one that is alive, dynamic and changes significance as years go by!

Conversely, we also see how the past has greatly influenced and shaped the present. We are living out the fruits and consequences of decisions and choices made in the past. The growth - in numbers, parishes, institutions, personnel, quality and reach – they all have their roots in the past. We know we didn’t randomly stumble into what we are currently.

This connectedness between the past and present is something that our Jubilee should dwell on and relish. It will surely help us to see the greater picture emerging, and maybe will help us appreciate things better and feel a little more grateful even. Seeing our own story with fresh eyes will also help us to understand better where we are headed, to look forward to the future with humility and hope. As Jubilee bells ring, and as we refresh a thirty-year old memory, may our lips be found uttering that prayer in gratitude: Lead us onward!

**Kokborok Course  
for Priests & Religious**

Starting 25 May 2026  
Ending 10 June 2026  
at Don Bosco Peace Centre, Agartala  
Class timings: 9.00 AM - 4.00 PM  
Contact 8731032366, 8787695356

Register now:  
link below

**Learn Kokborok**  
in the relaxed atmosphere  
of like minded learners  
in the comfort of AC Classroom,  
with learning materials tailor-made  
for the needs of your ministry.  
Total Course Fee Rs 6500/-

**CATHEDRAL PARISH**

**Pastoral Meet & Chrism Mass**



Agartala: The Diocese of Agartala held its annual pastoral meeting and Chrism Mass celebration at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral on 31st March. Held under the leadership of Bishop Lumen Monteiro, the event gathered over 200 priests, religious, catechists, parish council secretaries, parish representatives, and diocesan commission members to reflect, collaborate, and strengthen their shared pastoral mission.

The gathering commenced with a prayer session led by dedicated catechists. Bishop Monteiro delivered the keynote address for the day, highlighting key developments within the diocese and emphasizing pressing pastoral concerns that require concerted action.

A central highlight of the day was the celebration of the Chrism Mass. During this sacred liturgy, priests of the diocese renewed their priestly vows while Bishop Monteiro blessed the holy oils.

In the afternoon, the focus shifted to a review of diocesan activities. Fr. George presented a comprehensive overview of parish reports, offering valuable insights into community life across the diocese. This was followed by Fr. Amalraj's presentation on Commission reports, which outlined various diocesan initiatives and the challenges faced by different pastoral teams. The presentations sparked an engaging question-and-answer session, allowing participants to voice concerns, seek clarifications, and propose collaborative solutions. Concluding the event, Bishop Monteiro expressed deep gratitude to all participants and emphasized the critical role of teamwork and collaboration in advancing the mission of the Church in Tripura. The day's proceedings left attendees with renewed energy and a strengthened resolve to nurture and guide the faith community of the diocese.

Fr. Derrick Augustin

**PITRA PARISH**

**Youth Gathering**



Pitra: The One-Day Youth Gathering at St. Joseph Parish, Pitra, held on 28th March, was a well-organized and spiritually enriching event that brought together parish youth for fellowship, reflection, and growth. The program began with a prayerful inaugural session, including a welcome address by Rev. Fr. Sunny and the introduction of newly appointed Sisters. A flag hoisting ceremony symbolized unity, followed by interactive sessions a keynote address on youth development.

Spiritual activities included confession, praise and worship, and Holy Mass. The afternoon featured talent and animation sessions, along with a motivational talk. A group discussion allowed for planning future youth activities, with the annual plan presented. The event concluded with a vote of thanks and closing prayer. Overall, the gathering strengthened unity, leadership, and commitment among the youth while providing a platform for spiritual and personal development.

Sachlang Jamatia,

Asst. Media Secretary, DEXCO

**NANDANNAGAR PARISH**

**Kantakobra Motha**



On 12th April our dear Bishop Lumen Monteiro CSC, made a maiden visit to Kantakobra village under Don Bosco Parish Nandannagar. He was accompanied by Fr. Christopher SDB the Parish Priest and two Salesian sisters. The faithful of the village were filled with joy and gratitude as they welcomed the bishop. This historic occasion marked a moment of spiritual renewal and unity for the parish community in Kantakobra. A short welcome was held at the portico of the Church lead by the catechist Mr. Jitu Debbarma who is also the Church Secretary. The faithful got the chance to wish bishop personally. The Parish Priest during the Holy Eucharist, thanked the bishop for accepting his invitation to visit the village. It was an occasion to pray for the diocese as it celebrates the Pearl Jubilee and to congratulate the bishop in particular for the thirty years of shepherding the diocese. This day was the Divine Mercy Sunday and so after the Holy Mass we prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Bishop Lumen expressed his happiness to see the faith of the people in the village. He thanked them for the warm welcome and also the Parish Priest who took him to this village.

**Social Work by BEC Members**

On the 15th of April, the Basic Ecclesial Community (BEC) of Nandannagar Parish conducted the cleanliness campaign in front of the Parish.



Parish conducted the cleanliness campaign in front of the Parish. This was part of the annual project to do Social Work in the Parish besides the Spiritual and Corporal works of Mercy. There were 15 members who took part in the campaign which they began soon after the morning Mass. The BEC members were assisted by the Parish Priest and the Sisters.

Fr. Christopher, SDB

**AMBASSA PARISH**

**Retreat at Holy Spirit Parish**



We organized one day of Retreat for the parishioners to reconcile with God, oneself and others. The Retreat began with morning prayer and rosary. The parishioners attended the Retreat from different sub-stations. The retreat preachers Fr. Leenus V.C. and Sr. Shalini C.M.C. preached on the need of reconciliation with God, oneself and others. Anointing with the Holy Spirit and healing was conducted. Parishioners attended the Retreat in a prayerful and devout atmosphere. The Retreat strengthened the faith of the people.

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

**The spirit of Easter House Blessing**



Very next day of the Easter, we began house blessing at Ambassa parish. Parishioners were excited with Easter joy and happiness to welcome the priest for blessings. They accompanied the priest door to door to share Easter joy with the people. Easter is the celebration of new life in Christ, mend relationships and experience reconciliation. We priests are encouraged and energized at the devotion and interest of the people. It is one of the best opportunities to connect, listen and be with the parishioners. Though the summer temperature is on rise but spirit of Easter is more powerful than the heat!

Fr. Arun Minj SVD

## Benjamin's Day celebrated with grandeur at St. Joseph School, Gokulnagar



Gokulnagar, April 11: St. Joseph School, Gokulnagar, celebrated Benjamin's Day with joy and grandeur. The occasion also marked the initiation of Nursery and the UKG Convocation, where the little learners of Nursery were warmly welcomed into the world of education and the UKG children were ceremoniously graduated to Class 1.

Bishop Lumen Monteiro, graced the occasion as the chief guest, while Fr. Prasad Rao attended as the Guest of Honour.

The program was well organized by the school and presented in a cheerful manner. Tiny participants took center stage and showcased their talents through songs, dances, and delightful performances, winning the hearts of the audience. Their innocence, confidence, and enthusiasm made the celebration truly memorable. Bishop Lumen Monteiro blessed the children and extended his good wishes for their bright future. The event stood as a joyful beginning for the nursery children and a proud milestone for the UKG graduates, reflecting the school's commitment to nurturing young minds with care and excellence.

Fr. Jojappa

## Parents Day at Holy Cross School Agartala



Agartala. The show began with the first act - Rising from the Ashes that staged the giant leap of the Indian nation from pre independence to the launching of the Mangalyaan. This was followed by an act - Renaissance of Art showcasing the evolution of art in various genres like music, fashion, cinema and dance. Guardians of the Nation came next, an ode to the defense forces that honored their unwavering courage and supreme sacrifice left the audience spellbound. Unity in Diversity was the fourth act that signified Unity without uniformity and diversity without fragmentation which is the core identity of pluralistic India.

A sensational Finale marked the end of the show, with every festive light that shone claiming that with hearts together we are one. The grandeur of the Parents Day this year was praiseworthy as all eyes were glued to the stage till the spectacular display of fireworks that lit up the night sky and the Tricolor was flying high in all its glory spreading the essence of patriotism amongst all.

Ms. Reshmi Paul

## News From All Over

### NE Region participates in CDPI held at St. Joseph Vaz Spiritual Renewal Center, Old Goa



NE Region participated in the XXII CDPI National Extended Council Meeting held from 13-16 April 2026 at St. Joseph Vaz Spiritual Renewal Centre, Old Goa. A total of 146 diocesan priests from 65 dioceses attended, including priests from Agartala, Dibrugarh, Diphu, Imphal and Itanagar. The theme focused on pastoral life in the digital world. The meeting concluded fruitfully and decided to hold the next gathering in April 2027 at Guwahati under CDPI leadership.

Fr. Sebin Kunnappallil, DF Secretary, Agartala Diocese

### Vocation Camp at Jeevadhara Minor Seminary Champaknagar



A Diocesan vocation camp was held from 6th to 8th April at Jeeva Dhara Minor Seminary, Champaknagar with the theme "Follow Me." Fifteen young men from Depacherra, Korbook, Gandatwisa, and Mohorpara Parishes took part in the program. The three days were simple but meaningful. The participants spent time in prayer, attended talks, and had open discussions about their lives and future. There were also moments for silence, which helped them think more seriously about what God might be asking of them. Several Fathers and lay people shared their own experiences and spoke about the importance of listening to God's call.

The camp was made possible through the efforts of Fr. Praveen, the vocation promoter, whose initiative and hard work brought everything together. Thanks, are also due to Fr. Maxim Rodrigues SVD and the community of Jeeva Dhara Minor Seminary for their support and cooperation, which helped the program run smoothly. By the end of the camp, the participants returned home with a clearer mind and a willingness to reflect more deeply on the direction of their lives.

Fr. Khakchang Uchoi

### Animation Program for Deanery level PPC Members



Pitra, April 21, 2026: Depacherra Deanery organized a one-day animation programme for PPC members at St. Joseph Parish under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Sunny SDB. A total of 65 members from various parishes participated actively. The programme began with a warm welcome and traditional reception. Three sessions were conducted on Christ-centred parish life, the role of laity in faith formation, and fostering belonging in the parish. Resource persons included Fr. P. J. Joseph, Mr. Rajulal Debbarma, and Mr. Paul Darlong. Group discussions followed, moderated by Fr. Lawrence Darlong. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr. Danunjoy Reang.

Fr. Bala Showry

### SHG Cluster Meeting held at Ganganagar



A Self-Help Group (SHG) Cluster Meeting was held at Ganganagar R.D. Block, Dhalai District, on 21st April with the participation of 40 SHG members. The meeting aimed to strengthen coordination among SHGs and review ongoing activities related to savings, credit management, and livelihood development.

During the meeting key issues were discussed such as internal lending, income-generating activities, and challenges faced at the group level. Participants also shared their experiences and success stories encouraging others to adopt better practices. Emphasis was placed on maintaining proper records, ensuring regular meetings, and timely repayment of loans. The session also highlighted the importance of skill development, market linkages, and access to government schemes for improving the socio-economic condition of SHG members. The meeting concluded with a commitment from all participants to work collectively for strengthening their groups and enhancing their livelihoods.

### Parent-Teacher Meeting at the Non-Formal Learning Centre



On April 11, JUST staff conducted a quarterly parent meeting at the Rambhadra Non-Formal Learning Centre as part of their follow-up activities on children's academic progress and overall performance. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss students' progress, share insights from both home and school, and align expectations regarding educational growth, classroom behavior, and test outcomes. The meeting aimed to help parents better understand their child's progress, interests, and social interactions within the learning environment. It also provided an opportunity for teachers to suggest effective teaching methods and educational resources that parents can use to reinforce learning at home, thereby strengthening collaboration between educators and families. The session also enabled teachers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of students' needs, learning styles, and potential challenges through parental input, helping to identify and address learning or behavioral issues at an early stage. To further enrich the discussion, JUST staff invited a resource person, Mr. Ashim Kumar Uchoi, AIS (Assistant Inspector of Schools), who provided expert guidance and helped set learning goals for both parents and teachers. He shared valuable insights on behavioral, psychological, and academic aspects, contributing to a more holistic approach to supporting children's development.

Robert Lushai

### Our Distinguished Guests

- Sr. Avita D'Mello, SRA Provincial Superior from Mumbai
- Sr. Christa Prema, SRA Provincial Councilor from Mumbai
- Sr. Grace Kaiparambil, OLG Provincial Superior from Indore
- Fr. Jeevan Kennady, SVD Regional Superior from Guwahati
- Fr. Shaji M.L. CSC, from Family Ministry Canada

### Bishop's Program for May 2026

- 02-14: Health checkup & convalescence, Bangalore
- 16 : Bethany Convent Blessing, Khayerpur
- 17 : Installation of new PP @ Twithampui
- 19 : Installation of new PP @ Suknacheri
- 23-24: Episcopal Pearl Jubilee @ Agartala
- 30-31: Parish Sabha & Feast @ Ambassa