



PASTOR'S CORNER

Mother of mine!

People around the world called her Angel of mercy; in India she was simply the Mother...Mother of not only the poor, suffering, the unwanted, lonely and rejected ones but of every Indian.

Blessed Mother Teresa, the saint of the gutters and Nobel laureate who dedicated her entire life for the service of the poorest of the poor, the downtrodden and underprivileged in the society is an epitome of self-assured simplicity. She also symbolizes dedication and total service and she is a role model to the future generations of the entire world. Her life and living was an inspiration to many and she is a landmark in human history. She saw the face of God in each and every suffering person. She loved the poor and served them and was the embodiment of peace and affection. She was an outstanding humanitarian who devoted her life to care for the children, the destitute, the poor, the sick, the dying, the homeless, the hungry, the crippled, the blind and the lepers...just like Jesus her Master!

Many books about Mother Teresa have been written. But as Dr. Robert Inchausti says, "The clash between Mother Teresa's wordless deeds of love and the writer's need for a good story almost always results in a parody of whatever genre the writer uses. For example, one journalist attempted to uncover the historical origins of Mother Teresa's social mission by interviewing her colleagues from the time when she was a high school principal. To the writer's surprise, few could remember her, and those who did remarked only about her ordinariness."

On August 26, the centenary of her birth is a special day for us in Tripura. A program has been drawn up with a theme from Mother's own words: 'Service to humanity is service to God.' The program includes an Inter-religious Prayer Service, Symposium, Cultural Program and Floral Tribute. The Honorable Governor of Tripura will be the Chief Guest. We also hope to have a street in Agartala Town named after Mother.

God bless. +*Lumen, CSC*

LINK congratulates Fr. Roy Thalackan, CSC, on his election as Assistant General of the Congregation of Holy Cross. He will reside in Rome from October 2010.

EDITORIAL

Mother's Kolkata

In this centenary year of Mother Teresa's birth, there is an eagerness on the part of many to be associated with the numerous events lined up in Mother's honor.

Kolkata, the epicenter of the celebration best typifies this welcome trend. I had the chance to learn this from the person responsible for hosting the forthcoming 'Mother Teresa International Film Festival' in that city later this month. (*It is interesting that film festivals are organized today to honor Mother Teresa – a person who shied away from media all her life.*)

Like numerous companies, organizations and individuals that have come forward with offers of help, the Government of West Bengal too has gone out of its way for Mother's sake. Not only has the Chief Minister consented to inaugurate the festival, but in a rare gesture of collaboration the government has also made available for free the whole of their showpiece complex *Nandan*, for the four-day event.

Kolkata, its people and their government, all have their reasons, after all.

It would be wrong to say we in Tripura have no reasons. We have two marvelous centers of service in the State run by Mother Teresa Sisters – Nirmala Sishu Bhavan in Agartala and the Leprosy Rehab Centre in Shantipally, Kumarghat.

We hear it reiterated time and again that Mother doesn't any longer belong to a religion or a group. She has become a beloved daughter of the world and of heaven. That's very true but at the same time, the fact is, she eminently belongs to the group that professes to show the world what Jesus Christ is all about.

In these troubled times, the memory of this sari-clad frail woman continues to remind the world of the best face of Christianity; one that would still work, if only we were brave enough and true enough.

J. Pulinthanath, sdb

News from the Parishes

Tuikarmaw Parish

Bishop Lumen's Pastoral Visit to Tuikarmaw Parish was organized from 17th to 20th of June. During his visit Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, visited eight villages of our Parish: Lakicherra, Kathalia, Pothichori, Mundaria, Hatipocha, Bortoli, Holaketh and Twikarmaw. Everyday he visited two distant villages administering Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Every village community gave a warm welcome to our Bishop, many of them walking long distances to show their love and gratitude. Everywhere the Bishop talked about unity among the people and how they have to exercise their faith in the midst of struggles and challenges. He also visited the two convents in the Parish precincts. On the final day evening the SCC groups of Tuikarmaw Village welcomed Bishop Lumen and briefed him about their activities. The SCC has brought a lot of unity and spirit of service among the members.

Two weeks later Bishop Lumen was again in Tuikarmaw to complete his Pastoral Visit to the remaining villages. He was at Chandrapur, Peretia, Tuikarmaw Parish Centre and Dhuptoli *mondolis*. Our Bishop's visit brought lot of life and enthusiasm among the people and with our people I sincerely thank him.

Fr. Lancy, CSC

Kathalcherra Parish

Spiritual Renewal in Good Shepherd Parish, Kathalcherra

"The Spirit searches everything, even the hidden depths of God's purposes." (1 Cor. 2:10) June 5th and 6th were important days in the spiritual movement of Kathalcherra Parish as these days were set apart for a Charismatic Retreat preached by Fr. Joshy. During the two days of Retreat people from every nook and corner of the Parish flocked to the Church in large numbers to experience the touch of God in their lives. The Talks, Eucharist, Confessions, Adoration and Rosary helped people to strengthen their faith and experience the presence of Spirit in their lives.

"For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, Father, my Father!" (Rom 8:15). This was the experience of the people during the Healing Session on the second day of the Retreat. The powerful sessions, hymns and prayers stirred the people to cry out to God as "Abba Father". Indeed the power of the Spirit was visible in the Church and people witnessed miracles which led them to praise and thank God. This Retreat was an enriching experience and it energized the faithful of Kathalcherra Parish.

Sr. Reena Edel Pinto, BS

Depacherra Parish

Kedarnal now has a new place of worship

4th July was a great privilege and delight for the Catholic families of Kedarnal village as their long cherished dream of having a house of prayer has finally come true when Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC, Bishop of Agartala blessed and inaugurated the Chapel during the concelebrated Eucharist. The grand inauguration and blessing was held on 4th July at 9 am. Prior to that a warm ceremonial welcome was accorded to the Bishop, to Fr. Bosco Parish Priest and Religious Sisters. In a felicitation program that was organized after the Holy Mass, the *mondoli* leader narrated the circumstances that led to the construction of a Chapel. He gratefully recalled Fr. John Diniz, former Parish Priest, who initiated and financed the project. The program ended with a delicious meal.

Fr. Prasad

Moharpara Parish

Bishop's Pastoral Visit from July 8th to 11th: Bishop Lumen began his Pastoral Visit with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist for the local *mondoli* at Moharpara village. All the four days were packed with visits of School, Hostels and to various villages. Out of eight catholic tribal communities present in the parish, Bishop visited six different communities at different places. This visit enhanced the joy and the faith of the people. All the communities welcomed him with happiness, dance and hospitality.

Mothers' Day: A young lady becomes a mother when she begets a child to cement the bond of the sacrament of marriage. And from then on she becomes the backbone and the root of the family. So we honored 58 mothers of our local village on July 18th by taking them in procession with garlands and thanked God for their faith and perseverance in the family and in the Church. Fr. Robert, CSC, animated the Seminar in the local language. The day was significantly marked with the inauguration of a new basketball court in the campus.

Blessing of new Chapel at Nunnacherra: Buildings build images and give identity. The long awaited dream of this Molsom village which needs four long hours of walk to reach finally got their dream fulfilled. Along with many of our village leaders and catechists, Frs. Joachim Kullu, SVD and Paul C.R. CSC walked and witnessed the joy, happiness and hospitality of these villagers. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Kirche-in-Not and remain grateful. May God bless their generosity.

Fr. Kanikkai, CSC

God Experience in Dharmanagar

On 25th June 2010, a day long Life Skills training program was animated by Fr. George, SDB, in the vicinity of Holy Cross Convent School, Dharmanagar. The participants (Class IX & X students) numbering 64, got a taste of God experience. The Resource Person dealt with the various disturbances occurring in the minds of teenagers, specifically,

the obscene and malicious programs shown on TV and how to avoid them from polluting their minds, and also how to maintain control over their natural instincts. He gave them the key to master their mind, which is hoped to prove instrumental in the process of moulding their lives.

It was at the dawn of 26th June, that 22 teachers of Holy Cross School were eager to introspect themselves under the direction and guidance of Fr. George, SDB. He enlightened the teachers on knowing oneself, others, nature, cosmos and God. He also brought home to us the message that we need to be God-oriented, integrated persons and cope with life and its problems. He spent his time with the teachers guiding them in person. Silence was emphasized to have God experience and listen to one's own self. He also interacted with 26 hostlers making them aware of God's presence through Bible stories. Fr. George, the Resource Person spent his time in guiding the querying minds. His presentation was lively and inspiring. *Bethany Sisters, Dharmanagar*

News from the Diocese

State level Cultural Exchange Program

It is our dream and aspiration to build a peaceful society. To realize this dream we have been organizing various activities. As part of it ASHA Holy Cross in collaboration with JUST organized a Cultural Exchange Program from 23rd to 26th June 2010. It was aimed at preserving and promoting culture and tradition by bringing together people from different backgrounds and ethnic groups under one umbrella by having an interaction cum sharing of their cultures and traditions. A win-win situation was created wherein everyone will be benefited. There were 75 participants representing 12 tribal communities and a non-tribal community as well. The program was animated by Fr. Joachim SVD, Fr. C. Abraham CSC, Mr. Nanda Kumar Debbarma and Fr. P J Joseph SDB. The participants spent three days in discussions, group interaction and cultural shows learning from one another. The program came to an end with a 'Cultural Nite' wherein Indian Idol Ms. Surabhee Debbarma was the Chief Guest and Fr. George Jacob, CSC was the Guest of Honour. The 'Cultural Nite' had variety of traditional Dances and Songs. The cultural Exchange program came to an end with the promise of having many more programs of this sort in a massive scale. *Fr. C. Abraham CSC*

Holy Cross College, Agartala

Inauguration of the Academic Year and welcoming of "Freshers"

Holy Cross College welcomed the second batch of "freshers" and inaugurated the academic year on July 5th, 2010. The College offers two more new Courses, BBA and BSc this year, besides the BA and BCA courses that had started last year. Among the dignitaries present were Shri. Brijesh Pandey, the DM and Collector of Tripura West (Chief Guest), Most Rev. Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, DD and Smt. Sobha Debbarma the Director of CDC, Tripura University. In his keynote address, Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Kallarackal, CSC, the Principal of the College invited the students to fight "*the enemy called the average*" and to "*do more*". He exhorted them to take the responsibility "*to build their own future*" and realize their dreams making use of all the opportunities offered by Holy Cross College with a sense of optimism and without the fear of defeat, and the fear of trying. Other dignitaries too inspired the students with their valuable words of challenge and encouragement. Bishop Lumen invoked God's blessings upon all the students, faculty and authorities of the College. The students entertained all present with their melodious songs and rhythmic dances. *Fr. Emmanuel, CSC*

'Yarwng' on its way to Brisbane, Australia

A poignant episode in the history of Tripura will once again come alive in Queensland's premier city of Brisbane (Australia) on 7th August when 'Yarwng' will be screened and discussed there as part of the city's month-long indigenous festival called, 'Black History Month'. The Kokborok film on tribal displacement in Tripura is the only entry from Asia and will feature alongside indigenous issue-based movies from Australia, New Zealand and Canada. This is the second time 'Yarwng' travels Down Under; the first was when it formed part of the Brisbane International Film Festival last August. Closer home, 'Yarwng' picked up the 'Bronze Drum' award at the recently-held Nepal International Indigenous Film Festival in Kathmandu. It was also screened at Kolhapur, Maharashtra as part of Indian Panorama festival held there at the end of July 2010. *LINK News Desk*

News from JUST

Training of Trainers for the staff of JUST

On 9th July Training of Trainers for the Staff of JUST was conducted in JUST Hall. 15 Animators participated in the program. As most of the Staff of JUST are dealing with different types of Trainings, Workshops and Seminars we felt that our Staff needs certain skills in organizing the training program in a methodical way. A SWOT (Strength Weakness Opportunities and Threats) Analysis was done for the Organization's Staff. The participants have enhanced their skills and knowledge as well as their attitudes.

Need Based Training on Project Cycle Management

A two-day need based residential training on Project Cycle Management was organized for the Project Coordinators, supervisors, Accountant and Senior Staff of the organization at JUST training hall on 28th and 29th June 2010. The facilitators of the training were Fr. Robert Mathias CSC, Director of JUST, Sr. Bastian D' Silva, Coordinator, Mr. James Halam, Coordinator and Mr. Daniel Debbarma, Coordinator. A total of 23 participants attended the program. The participants felt that the training really helped them for their career.

State Level NGO Consultation on Child Rights

A State level NGO Consultation on review of 1974 national Child Right Policy was organized at JUST on 16th June 2010 with an aim to propose recommendations to the ongoing process of study under the ministry of women and child development. Fr. Robert Mathias CSC, Director of JUST was the Convener and Dr. Ashes Gupta, Tripura University Reader was the facilitator. 12 NGO representatives, media personnel, Tripura University faculty members and senior social activists participated in the discussions. The consultation focused on four topics viz., survival, development, protection and participation of the child. Points of convergence and divergence were identified and discussed. The relevant recommendations pertaining to the welfare of the children were suggested and a report was forwarded to the national committee. As a part of this process Dr. Ashes Gupta was selected to represent the State in national consultation on 28th and 29th June at New Delhi. *Mr. Kollol Datta*

NEWS BRIEFS

Nation-wide Programmes to mark Mother Teresa's Centenary

Catholic groups across India are planning a series of programs to mark the birth centenary of Blessed Mother Teresa on Aug 26. Various Dioceses in the country have planned their own programs which include prayer services, public meetings and social work. A national-level symposium on the 'Life and Message of Mother Teresa' will be held in India's capital on Aug 27. President Pratibha Patil will preside over a commemorative meeting in New Delhi on Aug 28. A commemorative coin will also be released by the government on the occasion. A week-long photo exhibition on the work of Mother Teresa will be held in New Delhi from Aug 23 to 30. In Agartala, a 3-day festival on Mother Teresa will be the highlight of the celebrations, starting on August 22

Mother Teresa was born in 1910, in Skopje in Macedonia, to Albanian parents. She came to India in 1929 to work as a nun of the Loretto Convent in Kolkata. She started the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, which has spread its work in several countries, providing shelter to leprosy patients, the homeless, destitute and orphaned children. Mother Teresa was honoured with the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1979 and the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour, in 1980. She died on Sep 5, 1997. *dailynews@cathnewsindia.com*

Fr. Chinnadurai awarded International Peace Prize

Fr. Vincent Chinnadurai, Chairperson of the Commission for Minorities, Government of Tamil Nadu, and President of SIGNIS India, has been awarded 'International Peace Prize' for his contribution towards peace and harmony in the society. "Men and women who make deliberate everyday decisions to promote global unity and tolerance are chosen to receive this honor. You, Rev. Chinnadurai, are included in this highly exclusive group", wrote Mr. J.M. Evans, the US-based General-in-Residence of United Cultural Convention.

The Prize recognizes excellence in promoting peace in face of obstacle, on the local or international level. Through the Minority Commission, Fr. Vincent has been organizing a series of programmes initiating meaningful dialogues between various communities for better understanding and working relationships. He is also the Director of Santhome Communications Centre which is the executive arm of the Commission of Social Communications, Tamil Nadu Bishops Conference. *Media News*

Pope Benedict XVI 7th Oldest Pope in History

On July 19 Benedict XVI became the seventh oldest pope in history, considering only those popes who reigned since the year 1400 when records became more reliable. Blogger and author Anura Guruge reported this milestone at his site Popes and the Papacy. There, he includes a chart showing the 83-year-old Benedict in the No. 7 slot, having overtaken Gregory XIII, Paul IV and Benedict XIV, who all died at age 83, but closer to their 83rd birthdays than Benedict XVI now is. On Monday, the Holy Father was 30,410 days old. Pope John Paul II, who died just over a month before his 85th birthday, is in the No. 6 spot, having lived 31,000 days. The record for the oldest pope in history, Guruge reports, is held by Pope Leo XIII, who died at age 93, reigning from 1878 to 1903. (*Zenit News*)

Belgaum Diocese Priest wins Ecumenical HR Award

A Catholic priest working in India's Karnataka State has been selected for a Human Rights award instituted in memory of a Protestant clergyman. Father P. J. Jacob from Belgaum Diocese is the first Catholic priest to be conferred the M. A. Thomas National Human Rights Award. He will receive a citation and cash prize of 100,000 rupees (US\$2,174) in Bangalore in August. Father Jacob, founder of the Vimochana (liberation) Development Society, has "contributed immensely" toward social justice and "consistently promoted" people's rights for 45 years, the Vigil India Movement (VIM) said in a statement. VIM set up the award in 1993 to honor Reverend M. A. Thomas of the Mar Thoma Church, who died in 1993 at the age of 80. *www.theccsf.org*

Fr. Jim Borst served Quit India notice

It is a shocking surprise that Father Jim Borst, the only Mill Hill Missionary serving in the Kashmir Valley been served a notice by the Foreigners Registration Officer, Kashmir to quit India by July 2010—the State of Jammu and Kashmir, to be precise, where he has been living since September 1963. It is not only disturbing but consternating too, that the Government which is tooth and nail opposed to the Hindutava and other fundamentalist elements has succumbed to the pressure of some fundamentalist and fanatic groups to show the venerable and highly adored Catholic Missionary the way out, lending support to the theories built by those in the opposition that there is a yawning gap between the theory and the practice of the government run by the coalition of the Indian National Congress party and the Regional National Conference party supported by certain independents. *www.theccsf.org*

New Apostolic Exarchate for Syro-Malankara Church

Pope Benedict XVI erected an Apostolic Exarchate for the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in the United States, and appointed Father Thomas Naickampampil of the Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum as its first bishop. The bishop-elect, 49, was also appointed apostolic visitor for the Syro-Malankara Catholics in Canada and Europe. Thomas Naickampampil was born on June 6, 1961 at Mylapra in Pathanamthitta District of the Eparchy of Pathanamthitta. The new exarchate will have its headquarters in New York City, and the main parish will be the Malankara Catholic Church in Long Island. *Zenit.org*

Our Readers' Write

In the midst of all your problems you keep up the LINK. May the NE experience an enduring peace. + **Stan Fernandes, SJ, Ahmedabad**

As always THE LINK arrived and it was well put together and interesting. **Peggy Gott, USA**

Thanks for the July Link. Made interesting reading! **Lilian, Pune**

Thanks for July Link. Thanks for the beautiful message that you have given at the outset of the Link - which expresses the preciousness of life and time. **Corbinus, Guwahati**

Again, LINK reminds me that the seconds... and months are flying out! Thanks a lot for that warming air from Tripura because here we are still below 20 although July is in... **Conrad, Canada**

It is always inspiring to read the LINK. Best wishes. **Paul Puduserry, Boston, USA**

Your LINK July edition came right in on July 1st. Thank you so much. I did enjoy your Bank Account story and it gives me a good idea of how to occupy my 86,400 seconds of today. **Nadeau, Canada**

Thanks for the great and true thoughts. **Devasia Nellikunnel, Tezpur, Assam**

Thank you for sending July LINK, interesting and informative. Though our worlds are far apart, it helps to keep up contact. +**Evarist Pinto, Karachi**

Thank you for the LINK as usual. It's a very interesting read. **K & Sam, Switzerland**

Thank you very much for LINK. It is always a small gift for me. **Rudolf Tengler sdb, Germany**

Thanks for the LINK. Great works in spite of the odds and obstacles on the way. Keep it up! **Davis, CSC**

Visitors at Bishop's House

Sr. Prabha, SSpS, Provincial from Guwahati

Alex and Bro. Joice, Jesus Youth

Vincentian Fathers Cherian and Vincent from W. Bengal

Fr. Thomas Manjaly, Senior Professor OTC, Shillong

Sr. Santan, FS Superior General & Councilors from Pune

Fatima Sisters Superiors from three Indian Provinces

Bishop's Program for August 2010

01: Dhupcherra & Dolacherra, Mariamnagar Parish

03: Consultors' Meet, Agartala

03: Clergy Meeting & Recollection, Agartala

04: Visit of Fr. Vaclaw Klement, SDB

Visit of Fr. Marcel, OCD

07: Capuchin Mission House Blessing, Kanchanpur

08: Parish Mass

11-13: NEDSSS GB Meet, Guwahati

14-15: Parish Pastoral Program

22: Mother Teresa Day, Parish Mass, SJC Agartala

26: Mother Teresa Birth Centenary Celebrations

29: Fr. Joachim, SVD, Silver Jubilee, Ambassa Parish

Published at : Jeevajyothi Diocesan Centre, Bishop's House, Airport Road, Durjoynagar, Agartala – 799 009, Tripura, Tel:91-381-2342401, Email: lumenmonteiro@gmail.com, www.agartaladiocese.org