



TEA LEAVES

DARJEELING DIOCESE NEWSLETTER

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2022

Bishop's House, Darjeeling - 734101 INDIA

JULY



Bishop's message

The months of May to August were referred to as the golden months for the people of the hills by Fr. Marian Rodrigues while he served as parish priest in various parishes of the Diocese. These monsoon months are ideal for plantation in the hills. So Fr. Rodrigues himself used to collect tree saplings and plant them all around the Parish and used to teach the parishioners to do the same too. He taught the people of Sangsay, Mirik, Gitdubling, Mamring Sittong, even Namchi Sikkim to be caretakers of the earth and actively join hands in planting more greenery around together with earning a sustainable livelihood. Another priest so similar to him was Late Fr. Victor Khawas. He was known as the "Amlishow father" (Amlishow is used in the hills to make Brooms). Both of them were indeed pastors having a holistic vision for the people of the Hills. They were indeed the "walking Jesus" in the decades of the 70s and 90s working in the remote villages. There were neither motorable roads nor electricity in the entire villages. People lived in difficult times. As Jesus multiplied bread and fed the hungry people, these priests too rendered miraculous service to the people. These priests not only took care of the souls of the faithful but worked tirelessly for the economic development of the people in the Hills, mainly through agriculture. The people of Upper Mamring -Sittong still remember their Priest Fr. Marian Rodrigues as their real leader in constructing almost 7-8 kms of motorable road, connecting the village with the national high way as well as many owe their economic upliftment to these stalwarts.

"A true leader is one, who knows the way, leads the way and walks the way". Both these priests were indeed living examples of a saviour. Their life indeed inspires all of us. As all of us are experiencing climate change very vividly. Extreme cold and extreme hot weathers, floods in the plains and landslides in the Hills disrupting the normal life of the people and animals. The recent news of the Manipur landslides which killed many of our own sons posted in the army camp there is a dreadful incident. Many such natural calamities may inadvertently take place in the near future.

But who is responsible for all these? The Holy Father Pope Francis in his encyclical "Laudato Si" has given a strong message that "The Climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all" Therefore each person is responsible in saving the earth. Let us love the earth, let us love the nature and live in true peace and harmony for we are all called to be "caretakers of our common Home, Earth."

ZEXCO VISIT TO DUKA



Under the guidance of diocesan youth director Rev. Fr. Chrispin Tamang and deanery youth coordinator Rev. Fr. Camrus Rai, the eight Zexco members paid a visit to newly erected quasi parish Duka-Gangyep on 3rd July 2022. The motive behind their visit was to form icym team in the parish and convey the necessary functions of the deanery youth. The full day program

was attended by 35 young people of the parish. The day began with the Holy Mass presided over by Rev. Fr. Chrispin Tamang. He highlighted the importance of being a solid pillar for the synodal church in present day and this is the right time to explore and walk with our Lord. In the second session Mr. Stany Lepcha the president and Mr. Sameer Subba the secretary of the Zonal team spoke about the role of youth in the church as well as in the society respectively. The interactive and input session was followed by the election of new members for the smooth running of the parish level activities. The ten strong members were chosen to represent the parish in all the future activities that will be conducted in the diocese or elsewhere. After the formation of the parish executive committee, the newly elected members along with the Zexco, DYD and Coordinator planted a saplings as a sign of respect and care towards our mother earth (Laudato Si). Mr. Alouis Lepcha the catechist delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of the parish.88

Krishnagar New Bishop Ordination on 23rd July, 2022

Krishnagar, July 15, 2022: An educationist for almost four decades, Salesian Father Nirmol Vincent Gomes will on July 23 be ordained the bishop of Krishnagar diocese in West Bengal.

The uncle of the bishop-elect, Bishop Emeritus Theotonius Gomes of Dhaka will preside over the episcopal ordination to be held in Cathedral of the Holy Redeemer Krishnagar.

Dignitaries expected at the event include Vatican Nuncio to India and Nepal Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli and president of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Salesian Cardinal Charles Bo of Myanmar.

Gomes, the sixth Salesian priest to serve as the bishop of Krishnagar diocese was the rector of Salesian College Sonada as well as vice-principal of Salesian College Siliguri

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BISHOP'S PARISH VISIT:

05.06.2022: Pentecost Sunday in Sikkim. Fr. Robin Kalikotey in charge of Sangkhola Mission had invited Bishop a couple months before to St. Mary's Mission Shangkhola, a substation of St. Joseph's church, Martam. Fr. Robin though busy with administration work as the Vice-Principal and Bursar of St. Xavier's School, Pakyong, East Sikkim, looks after this mission with great pastoral interest. Bishop was asked to bless the newly Priest resident, beautiful grotto, and also a Criss built by the faithful through the initiative of Fr. Robin. Bishop gave confirmation to 9 candidates during the Holy Mass. Beautiful choir of the place added solemnity in the Eucharistic celebration.

After the Mass there was a short cultural program, during this time Parishioners along with Fr. Robin felicitated the land donor and some important persons who had contributed a lot in building the Priests resident, Grotto and Criss dara. There are only 36 families, comprising of 4 BEC in this mission, yet very vibrant community. Mrs. Sunita ex-Panchayat and present Panchayat Sita Sharma and other dignitaries were present for the whole program. The day ended with the festive meal provided by the Catholic community.

11.06.2022: On kind invitation of Fr. Clement Lepcha the parish priest of Pahar ki Rani church, Glenburn, Bp. Stephen Lepcha, Judicial vicar Fr. Edward Baretto and Anugyalaya Staff Mr. Sudeep Bomzan went to the parish. Main reason was to do the SWOT Analysis of the parish for its upcoming Golden Jubilee which will be celebrated in the month of October 2022. This plan will continue for two months. Together with Swot analysis, there will be recollection and finally three day retreat in view of Golden Jubilee preparation. The faithful are enthusiastically waiting for the celebrations. First Sunday itself the church was full to its capacity. All of them took part actively. The faithful welcomed the Bishop and the team. Bishop gave an introduction. Fr. Edward also spoke few words of encouragement and expressed that he too would give guidance in case of need. Fr. Sudeep Bomzan the main resource person chosen by the Diocese for this SWOT Analysis started his first session. And the day concluded with the Holy Eucharistic celebration by Bishop.

18.06.2022: Saturday: Visit to Rimbick after four years. Rimbick is the farthest mission station under the jurisdiction of St. Mary's Parish; Kankebong is Boarder of West Sikkim and below Phaldut and Sandakpu Mountain range. Beyond is Nepal.



Its distance from Darjeeling is 66 km. Parish Kankeybong to Rimbick is 17 km. Fr. Vincent George S.J is in charge of St. John Paul II mission, Rimbick. Though he stays in Kankebong Parish community with Fr. Arun Pradhan S.J, parish priest of Kankeybong but he gives total pastoral care of 27 catholic families scattered all around far distance mountains. There are 3 SCC units. Fr. Vincent is the newly appointed Mission in charge taking initiative to visit the families offering Sunday mass regularly and visiting the families, promoting SCC. He finds difficult to organise catechism for children due to the distance. Sunday is the only possible day. Father Vincent S.J, reports that main source of Income of his Parishioners is Potato cultivation. Potato of Rimbick is of very good quality and in high demand.



Bishop reached Rimbick at 12 pm; the faithful were still waiting for the Mass. Small chapel was full to its capacity. After Mass the faithful shared Cell Rote (Nepali Bread with Aludam (Potato carry) and tea by initiative of Fr. Vincent S.J. Pope Francis says "go to the poor and the afflicted" Thanks to Notre Dame Congregation following this motto, who started a School which Registered in West Bengal Board already and providing a quality education there. It's indeed a commendable job. After Mass the bishop visited the few families at lower

Lingsebong on the way to Kankebong parish. Mr. Leonard Subba of this village is a graduate youth who has started Jordan farm Home stay. He and his wife are both working very creatively and giving an example for other people that miracle can happen when we believe and work. Bishop Stephen was overwhelmed by seeing his farm and coming up new venture. Tea leaves congratulates him. Bishop arrived NDA Convent at Sumbuk and offered Mass for the community at 7.30 pm. After dinner, Sr. Nalini outgoing sister and the community members shared their Mission. This community is the oldest one at Sumbuk. They have a school up to Class X now. Through Education Sponsored by Asha ESA, 80 from Sumbuk and 57 Kainjalina are helped through ESA. They look after disable children. They also do physiotherapy treatment to the many sick people through help of trained Physio Therapist visiting Doctor and staff. They conduct Health awareness program through the help of trained Paramedics and health in charge sister. NDA sisters are collaborating with Hayden hall Social service society Darjeeling.

Sisters also run an economic Development project known as I.G.P, Income Generating programme in these areas e.g. Cow, pig rearing, poultry farm etc. It's a rolling fund. Besides all these multiple ministries, few sisters are involved in parish ministry especially teaching catechism to the children, leading women group, accompanying in SCC meetings in villages.

19.06.2022: Fr. Arun Pradhan S.J, the parish Priest of St. Marys Church, Kankebong had well organised Sunday Liturgy and parish day. He himself being an artist had decorated background at the altar. Choir was solemnly conducted by catechist Albert Rai.



The day was dedicated to fathers. 15 candidate received Confirmation on that day. The day ended with Prembhaj. Fr. Arun Pradhan reports that Kankeybong parish has 145 families, divided into 9 SCC. Kjalay substation has 19 families and 2 SCC. This parish has Women group, youth and CIC, Holy childhood etc. PPC is existing but Catholic Association and finance committee is yet to be formed. Although the catholic community have deep faith in God, yet big challenge remains, to come up to the level of Christ witnessing values. Effort is on.

I.C.Y.M South-West Sikkim Deanery

The ICYM South-West Sikkim Deanery under the banner of Indian Catholic Youth Movement organized 7th Summer Camp, 2022 at St. Teresa's Primary School, Salleybong, Namchi South Sikkim from 24th June, 2022 to 26th June 2022 on the theme **"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" Mt 5:7**, Around 150 youth delegates attended the said convention. The convention started with a short prayer by Rev Fr.



Moni Clement Lepcha, ICYM Coordinator SW Sikkim Deanery and the main celebrant of the Holy Eucharist was Rev Fr. Roniee Thrikhatri and Rev Fr George D'Souza gave a beautiful homily on the above mentioned theme. The day was concluded with Parish activities followed by Blessings of the Coordinator.

The Second day of the Summer Camp was started with the Holy Eucharist, the resource person for the first session was Rev Fr. Chrispin Tamang DYD and the topic for the session was **"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" Mt 5:7**. After that the three senior most Youths of the Deanery i.e, Mr Samuel Santa Rai, Mr John Rai & Mr Pritam Mukhia shared their ICYM experience. After the sharing session was over the Youth Delegates were divided in ten groups and they visited the Catholic families of Lower Silleybong. Thereafter, Adoration cum Praise & Worship was started which was conducted by Miss Simran Marylin Tamang (Diocesan Youth Joint Secretary) where all the delegates participated in Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). The day was ended with Group Activities followed by Blessing of Rev. Fr. Moni Clement Lepcha, Coordinator S-W Deanery.

The Third day of the summer camp was started with Holy Eucharist, the main celebrant was Rev. Fr Moni Clement Lepcha and the Summer Camp was concluded with the vote of thanks by Mr. Bibek Gurung, President South-West Sikkim Deanery.

The ICYM intend to animate the Youth Delegates to be committed in Fellowship, Leadership and Service towards building up a liberated, clean and peaceful society and Church.



20.06.2022: On the way to Darjeeling Bishop offered mass for the NDA community of Kajalay at 6.30 am. After breakfast Bishop had a short meeting with sister community. Sr. Carmila Hembrom NDA, Sup & Principal of NDA School Kajalay reports this: The School is has 575

students nursery to Class Ten, having 18 Staff members. Salary is managed by the tuition fees. Parents are very cooperative, even during lock down period; they continued paying the tuition fees so that they could pay the full salary to the staff members. 96 students wrote Madhyamik Board exam and 100% passed out this year. Teachers are also very cooperative.

Besides school duties, all sisters go for house visit, taking catechism class for the catholic children regularly, accompanying in SCC meetings one a week.

Sisters felt very happy especially people sharing vegetables, whatever they were having with the sisters. People around them were very caring. The School also could contribute Rs.10,000/-to three families whose houses were totally burnt down. Sisters are happy to teach the children the value of sharing with the needy one. Thanks to NDA sisters for living a life of witnessing values. Tea leaves congratulates them and wishes them for their ministry.



Krishnagar New Bishop

before becoming 16th provincial of Salesians' Calcutta province and headed the Don Bosco operations of Bengal, Sikkim, Nepal and Bangladesh

The first Bengali Salesian provincial contributed to improve the welfare of youth of Bengal and Bangladesh.

To give thrust to quality education, and leadership formation, he had initiated the catchy slogan "KG to PG" offering quality educational facility from Kindergarten to masters level in rural area, so that young people get access to English medium education.

Born to late Andrew and Agnes Gomes at Khalpara (Begopara), Ranaghat in Nadia district, the 63-year-old bishop-elect has a doctorate in Pedagogical Sciences from Salesian Pontifical University, Rome.

Popular teacher of music, with an iconic accordion strapped on, Father Gomes charmed and enthused young people not only in Salesian College Sonada but also as lecturer and Campus Minister at Salesian College Siliguri.

Besides English, Father Gomes is fluent in several European languages including Italian and German as well as Indian languages Bengali, Hindi and Nepali.

The diocese of Krishnagar established in 1870 comprises of Nadia and Murshidabad districts of central Bengal.

Courtesy: Matters India

PIC OF THE MONTH



Mother - God's face on earth

Closing Ceremony Of the Family Year

Date: 22/06/2022 • Venue: St. Teresa's Church, Kalimpong

A closing ceremony of the Family Year in diocesan level was held at St. Teresa's Church, Kalimpong on 22 June, 2022. Almost six to ten members from each parish including a nun and a priest representative had attended the said program. Mr. Denis Lepcha & Mr. Rajen Banerjee were the chief spokespersons of the day. Mr. Denis Lepcha beautifully presented the pope's message for the elderly i.e., "To be elderly is not a burden but a vocation." A vocation to inspire young minds. He also spoke the mind of the pope that we should stop the throw away culture specially when it comes to deal with elderly. He also suggested that the second elderly year could be celebrated on 24/07/2022 where the whole liturgy could be dedicated to the elderly.

Mr. Rajen Banerjee spoke on the topic "Difficulties of Family Life." He also spoke the mind of Pope saying that, Church needs to understand the difficulty of the faithful. Church need not take the moral decision without knowing the difficulties of various families. We the people of God are called to create not to change. We should not only teach to follow rules but listen to them tenderly. Don't throw our laws to the people without knowing their true situation is what our Holy Father says.

Besides these, a Thanksgiving Eucharist was celebrated by most Rev. Bishop Stephen Lepcha, who thanked profusely all the faithful for their active participation. He also thanked the spokespersons and congratulated them for their effort to enlighten the simple faithful. The program ended with an Agape prepared and served by the faithful of St. Teresa's Church.

FR. Amar Rai.

One Day Charismatic Recollection



9th July 2022 Conducted at Cathedral, Darjeeling Kurseong Deanery.

The session talk was given by Fr. V.V George (Spiritual Director).

Praise and worship by Ephatha Music Ministry under the guidance of Mr. Bharat Francis Mothey (Charismatic Coordinator).

Welcoming address for the participants and the preacher was delivered by Fr Amar Rai the Co Pastor. FR. Alex Gurung was available for confession throughout the Holy Mass



Our mother - Am Bidha

*She was ordinary but extraordinary
She was no saint but saintly*

*She was the glue that united us
She lived her life on her terms*

*She was generous to a fault
She gave without counting the cost*

*She had a heart for the least n last
She dealt with a heart not her head*

*She bore her pain with dignity
She did not give in to despair and hurt*

*She loved each one of us uniquely
She had a niche in her heart for all*

*She lived her ninety plus years
She lived with ups n downs but no regret*

*She was not overtly religious but deep
She lived a life of care n concern*

*She gave her all n so it was easy
She let go peacefully when the time was up*

*She now leaves a great legacy of a life lived
She would want her all to emulate*

*She would love her memory to be love
She would want hers to live in love for the other*

*She has not left us but her form changed
She wants us to discover her now in love*

*She goes before us to prepare a place for us
She will be there to welcome when we cross shores.*

*(Recalling her memory as I sit next to her at night, July 18, 2022)
-Kinley Tshering*

Kindly Communicate!!!

Tea Leaves is the medium through which the individual parishes, communities and institutions can share with others, about the activities and events of your areas of work. So please send in the reports of your initiatives and programmes to:

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