



Tea Leaves

DARJEELING DIOCESE NEWSLETTER

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2019

Bishop House, Darjeeling - 734101, INDIA

March

Message from the Bishop's Desk:



My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we have entered into the Season of Lent. This season holds a very significant meaning in our Catholic faith. This is not just a ritual of the Church but a special time of reawakening ourselves and rendering our hearts as written in Joel 2:12 "yet even now" declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart." Lent is characterized by Fasting, prayer and almsgiving or Charity. We are called to observe these three virtues with even more fervor at lent. Pope Francis says the lent "invites Christians to embody the paschal mystery more deeply and concretely in their personal, family and social lives, above all by fasting, prayer and almsgiving. This Lent let us be reborn spiritually by fasting not just in the usual material sense but let us fast from all our thoughts and deeds that are self centered, let us fast from our attitude of indifference towards others. When we pray may our prayers teach us humility, mercy and forgiveness just as revealed in Christ himself. May our almsgiving be from the heart and not imposed. Let us be conscious of our neighbours' material, physical, emotional and psychological needs. May we learn to share cheerfully with the less fortunate for "God loves a cheerful giver." In sharing our time and resources we will be sharing the love of Christ received at the Eucharistic table.

This year's Lenten collection will be used to fight Malnourishment and to promote nutrition for the poor communities. Caritas India and Anugyalaya, the social service society of our Diocese will be using the Lenten collection so generously contributed through sacrifice by faithful like you, for this cause. So let us join hands and stand in solidarity with Caritas and Anugyalaya to wipe out malnutrition so that our fellow brothers and sisters may lead a healthy and nutritious life.

I once more quote the Holy Father who has said "let us not allow this season of grace to pass in vain! Let us ask god to help us set out on a path of true conversion. Let us leave behind our selfishness and self absorption....let us stand beside our brothers and sisters in need, sharing our spiritual and material goods with them."

My dear brothers and sisters let us make this Lent meaningful. Let us radiate the love of Christ through our deeds. Let us overcome the vices that keep us away from God and that makes us ignorant of our neighbours' wants. Let us see Christ in all creation and live the virtues of compassion, justice and charity.

+Stephen Lepcha

SIXTH DIOCESAN BHAJAN IDOL FINALE

The auditions for the 6th Diocesan Bhajan idol were held in three venues i.e. Kalimpong, St. Mary's Catholic church, Sangkhola, Sikkim and St. Peter's Church, Namchi. 26 singers were selected from the different deaneries for the second and third rounds which were held at Mary Mother of God Church, Relli Road, Kalimpong. In these two rounds 12 out of the 26 contestants were selected. The semi final round was organized on 9th January 2019 at St. Augustine's School, Kalimpong in which the four finalists namely, Ms. Rose Mary Tamang (St. Thomas Church, Gangtok), Ms. Marina Lepcha (St. Joseph's Church, Kashyong), Mr. Augustine Rai (Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Tandrabong) and Mr. Rajesh Victor Rai (St. Joseph's Church, Rhenock) were selected.

The Grand finale of the Diocesan Bhajan Idol was held at St. George's H. S. School, Pedong on 25th February 2019. The competition was judged by Fr. Michael Lepcha Jr., Mr. Boniface Lepcha and Mr. Puran Gurung. Fr. Joseph Chettri, Dean of Pedong Deanery was the chief guest. Many priests, nuns and faithful were present for the function. After giving very soulful and melodious performances finally Ms. Rosemary Tamang was declared the 6th Diocesan Bhajan Idol. Ms. Marina Lepcha stood second followed by Mr. Augustine Rai and Mr. Rajesh Victor Rai. The winner was awarded a sum of Rs. 20,000/-, the first runners up received Rs. 15,000/- and the third and fourth positions received Rs. 7,000/- each.

The Diocesan Youth Commission is grateful to all who supported the event materially and spiritually. It was through their benevolence that this event was successful in encouraging young talent to sing and make melody unto the Lord!



PIX of the month

The fruit of silence is PRAYER
The fruit of prayer is FAITH
The fruit of faith is LOVE
The fruit of love is SERVICE
The fruit of service is PEACE

-St. Mother Teresa



DIOCESAN SCC CONVENTION REPORT



The Roman Catholic Diocese of Darjeeling and Sikkim hosted a 3 days SCC Convention from 29th to 31st January 2019 at Namchi Public School. It is worth mentioning that

Small Christian Communities (SCC) have been functioning actively in the Diocese since the last three decades. This convention was organised on a large scale with around 700 members of the Parish Animation Team including priests and religious from across the Diocese participated in it.

The inaugural function of the Diocesan SCC Convention was held at Namchi Public School on 29th January 2019. The theme of the Convention was "SCC evangelises Families". The presence of eminent dignitaries, Bishop Clement Tirkey of Jalpaiguri, Bishop Salvador Lobo of Baraipur, Bishop Fulgence A. Tigga of Raiganj, Fr. I.P. Sarto, Regional secretary and Sr. Christine from the National Service Team added extra zeal to the Convention. Participants came in great numbers from across the Diocese as well as from Bhutan, Nepal, Assam, Jalpaiguri, Bagdogra, Baraipur and Raiganj.



The inaugural function commenced with the Bible Procession and enthronement of the Holy Bible, Reading the Word, reflection on the Word and prayer. Thereafter the SCC flag was hoisted by Bishop Clement Tirkey, Chairman, Regional SCC Commission and the Convention was declared open by Bishop Stephen Lepcha. In his Welcome speech Bishop Stephen said "SCC has brought a renewal in the lives of the faithful of

Darjeeling and Sikkim." He urged all to "celebrate the life of God and experience the pouring of the Holy Spirit".

Bishop Clement in his keynote address emphasised on putting our faith



in the Word of God and living this faith in action through the SCC.

It is worth mentioning that the children of St. Thomas, Gangtok and St. Paul, Tadong

presented a very meaningful prayer dance. Sr. Christine in her talk emphasised on Family Spirituality on the first day.

The second day of the Convention had Fr. Abraham speak on Proclamation and SCC. Bishop Salvador Lobo shared his expertise on the role of communication in the family. The theme SCC and family was dealt with by Fr. I.P. Sarto and Mr. Arpan Emmanuel Rai, executive director of Anugyalaya DDSSS spoke on the topic 'Diakonia and Evangelisation'. A panel discussion on Family and importance of prayer was conducted by Fr. Alexander Gurung with five couples from the five deaneries as panelists. Thereafter a documentary on the history and success of SCC in the diocese was shown.



The three days SCC Convention, the first of its kind held in the Diocese of Darjeeling-Sikkim came to an end on

31st January 2019. On the final day more than 30 people were felicitated for their contribution to the growth and work of SCC in the diocese. Fr. Pius Marcus, Sr. Maria F. C., Mr. Peter Rai and Late Paul Pradhan, the first team to have received training on SCC and the pioneers who first started SCC in the diocese were amongst those to have been felicitated. An interactive evaluation session was also conducted where the participants shared their views.

The Holy Mass for the closing ceremony was celebrated by Bishop Paul Simik of Nepal. Then Bishop Stephen of Darjeeling retrieved the SCC flag and declared the Convention officially closed.

BIRTHDAYS in April

Fr. Francis S. Banerjee	- 02nd April
Fr. Swid N. Singh	- 02nd April
Fr. Alexis Lepcha	- 07th April
Fr. Lawrence Lepcha	- 15th April
Fr. Anup Gerard Rai	- 16th April
Fr. Walter Crasta	- 23rd April

Obituary



FR. ANDREW SADA (20.03.1947-02.02.2019)

"You have been my help, In the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to you;

Your right hand holds me fast." (Psalm 63:7-8)

Fr. Andrew Sada was born on 20th March 1947 in Kalimpong to Mr. M. Sing Sada and Mrs. Maria Tamang. He received his initial schooling at Kumudini Homes, Kalimpong. Thereafter he joined the Diocesan Seminary which was in its nascent stage, housed in the attic of Bishop's House, Darjeeling. After completing his Philosophy and Theology from St. Albert's College, Ranchi, he was ordained a Priest on 13th April 1976 at St. Teresa's Church, Kalimpong.

Fr. Andrew served the Diocese in various capacities. In May 1976 right after his ordination he was at the Bishop's House preparing for the communication media pastoral centre as well as serving as the Assistant pastor at the Cathedral. In June 1978 he was appointed Parish priest of St. John Berchman's Church, St. Mary's hill, Kurseong. In February 1982 he was back in the Bishop's House looking after the upcoming Pastoral centre as well as preparing for an M.A. in Nepali. From May 1986 he served as the Parish priest of St. Patrick's Church, Pringtam Kankebung and in May 1990 he became the Parish Priest of St. Joseph's church, Git Dubling. In January 1999 he was in charge of formation of catechists at Pushpika Pastoral centre, Kalimpong and in June of 1999 he came back to Darjeeling as the parish priest of the Cathedral. After a year in June 2000 he was appointed Director of Pushpika Pastoral centre and once again he looked after the formation of catechists. In June 2002 he became the priest in charge of St. Joseph's Church, Nagsay, 5th Mile, Kalimpong. From July 2009 he served as the Parish priest of Maria Pahar ki Rani Church, Glenburn, Darjeeling and in January 2017 he retired and was in Gianora Home, Kalimpong.

Fr. Andrew Sada was a multi talented person. He could be called the 'Beethoven' of the Diocese, credited for his innumerable melodious compositions of hymns and religious scores. His classic compositions of the 'Passion narrative' and the 'Exultet' in collaboration with Fr. Leonard Tamsang, guarantees us a vibrant liturgy. Apart from being a great lyricist he was also a vocalist par excellence, with a voice deep enough to pierce the core of his audience's heart. Armed with a Prabhakar in classical music, he could weave words into enchanting melodies. He has been instrumental in many liturgical works in Nepali like compiling hymn books and translation works.

He was a man of instant positive wit and unparalleled optimism. Any conversation with him or any gathering with his presence was never a dull moment. He was a simple person, a good pastor with heart for the people. In spite of being talented in so many ways he always accepted his priestly ministries with obedience.

We thank God for the gift of Fr. Andrew Sada to the Diocese and we pray for the repose of his soul. We thank his family for their generosity and support to Fr. Andrew in his ministry and especially during his final days of sickness. The Diocese is also grateful to all those who helped him in every way possible. Fr. Andrew will always be remembered and greatly missed. No doubt the Diocese has lost a stalwart in his death but the Heavens have surely welcomed one of God's beloved sons with great rejoicing!



FR. PAUL D'SOUZA (26.06.1954 27.12.2018)

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award me..." --(2 Timothy 4: 7-8)

Fr. Paul D'souza was born on 26th June 1954 at Malecody in the Alipade Parish on Bantwal Taluk of South Canara District of Karnataka. His parents were Late Patrick and Late Teresa D'souza. He had one brother and two sisters. Fr. Paul completed his initial schooling at the Parish school at Alipade in 1966 and Junior High school from Kirem in 1973, after which he joined St. Peter's Apostolic School, Kirem, and was there till 1975. He completed his B.sc.(Hons) from St. Xavier's college, Kolkata with distinction. He studied philosophy (1981) and Theology (1985) at Morning Star College, Barrackpore. He did his Regency at St. Xavier's School, Pakyong from June 1981 to June 1982) and diaconate ministry at Christ the King Church, Mirik, Algarah. He was ordained priest on 25th March 1986 by the late bishop Eric Benjamin at Our Lady of Lourdes church, Bhimbar.

He served the Diocese in multifarious capacities as Associate pastor of Shanti ki rani Church, Maria Busty from 1st May to 1st December 1986, as the vice principal and later as the Principal of St. Augustine's school, Kalimpong from 1st January 1987 to 31st January 1997. During this time he also completed his B. Ed (1990) from St. Xavier's college. He was the Principal of Namchi Public School from 1st February 1997 to 13th June 2005 and Principal of St. Joseph's school, Rhenock, East Sikkim from 20th June 2005 to 31st December 2012. He was the Principal of St. Xavier's school, Pakyong, East Sikkim from 1st January 2013 to 30th June 2013. He was on a sabbatical and medical leave from 1st July 2013 to 25th October 2014. Then he served as the Associate Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Git Dubling from 26th October 2014 to 31st May 2015 and then as quasi parish priest of St. Stephen's Quasi Parish, Kaffer, Kalimpong from 1st June 2015 till his death.

Fr. Paul, as a student was very hardworking and excelled in both academics as well as sports. He carried forward this love for education even in his priesthood and contributed wholeheartedly, in a big way in the field of education in the Diocese. He always inspired and urged his students to give in their best and excel in whatever they do. He instilled a winning attitude among them. For him education was not just academics but a holistic development of the students. He always believed that quality education should have quality infrastructure. He took life with all its challenges in its stride and stood courageous and undaunted even in the hardest of times.

The Diocese is grateful to God for sending a visionary educationist and priest like Fr. Paul. His service has made a difference in numerous lives in numerous ways. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

You are a priest forever in the ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK



Welcome to the Presbyterium

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressure and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.



LENT

BISHOP'S PASTORAL VISIT

On 23rd and 24th February 2019 Bishop Stephen paid his pastoral visit to Kainjaley Sumbuk mission under St. Mary's parish, Kankebong. This entire mission comes under the Bijanbari Block in Darjeeling district. Situated right at the foothills of Tonglu, Sandakphu and Phalut on the Indo Nepal border, this picturesque but once a far flung region was chosen by the Jesuits as their Mission station thirty years ago on the behest of Late Bishop Eric Benjamin. The Jesuits were followed by the sisters of Notre Dame in their mission. Since then the priests and nuns have been contributing immensely towards the spiritual, educational and social development of these areas. Its worth noting that thirty years ago these regions could be reached only via a pony road but now with the initiative of the government it is well connected to Darjeeling.

The local people of all faith highly appreciate the mammoth contribution made by the fathers and sisters especially in the field of education and health. The Notre Dame high school initially started by the Jesuits is now run by the NDA sisters. There are three sisters, Sr. Sheetal, the principal, Sr. Neeta and Sr. Carmel who along with twenty staff members look after the 600 students studying there. This is a substation of Kainjaley and has 17 catholic families divided into two small Christian Communities. The Catechists and the sisters look after the community and every day a priest travels for 40 minutes to say Mass for the sisters and on Sundays for the faithful.

The next community is in Sumbuk Notre Dame Convent with four sisters. Sr. Nalini SNDvis the superior and she looks after the Health centre, Urban Swasthya Kendra. They run a community based rehabilitation program for differently abled children where they are provided with inclusive education as well as physio therapy. They also run a Mother and Child village health program covering 10 villages with trained paramedics in collaboration with MCH by CHAI and Hayden Hall. The sisters also take care of children not attending schools due to various hindrances. they provide sponsorship to 155 poor children and also provide mid day meals for their students through the government sponsored SCDS program. They also run Nutrition programs in the villages with the help of their benefactors from Japan. The sisters run a hostel for apostolic children and also an Income generating program AGB through which they provide soft loans to 40 families to assist them in farming and rearing cattle. 6 study centres are operated to help students who cannot afford tuitions. Besides these community work the sisters give priority to Parish pastoral work and faith formation through Catechism.

In Kankeybong Fr. Arun Pradhan, a young Jesuit looks after this Church alongwith Fr. Frank Subba who is a Licentiate in Scripture from Rome. Both these young priests are putting in their very best in the service of God and community. There are 28 families and three SCCs. Here too the sisters have a Notre Dame School upto class10 with 410 students. Sr. Neha is the headmistress along with Sr. Leena Margaret and Sr. Sony. May God continue to bless these dedicated priests and nuns as they work for His people.

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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