



TEA LEAVES

DARJEELING DIOCESE NEWSLETTER

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2023

Bishop's House, Darjeeling - 734101 INDIA

MAY

Bishop's message for Lent



Every year, we celebrate the month of May in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of God. Our Christian tradition has a strong and deep connection to our Blessed Mother and promotes a special devotion to her. Her unique role in our salvation history as the mother of our Savior makes her very special in the eyes of God and for all Christian believers. As a matter of fact, Pope Francis called the faithful during first the Covid pandemic and now the war in Ukraine to pray and invoke her intercession for healing and peace in the world.

This month is a great occasion to pray and to reflect on the life of our Blessed Mother. Her exemplary Christian virtues help inspire us in our faith and our relationship with God. Her complete openness to and cooperation with God's plan was instrumental in the incarnation of Jesus, the Son of God – the Word made flesh that dwelt among us, and the fulfilment of God's promise of salvation. Her total obedience, dedication and service to God manifested in humility, simplicity, holiness and gratitude are examples we can emulate and follow.

During the Marian month of May, we have devotional practices and events to strengthen and renew our faith in God, especially during challenging times. Pray the holy rosary daily. Let us unite our hearts and pray to our Blessed Mother to lead us to closer union with God.

In this month of May dedicated to our Blessed Mother, we implore her intercession and ask for the grace to entrust ourselves fully to her Son and His plan for our lives. Mary, Mother of our Savior, pray for us!"

Pope Francis also tweeted an appeal for people "to pray together the rosary for peace every day during May." He followed with another tweet the next day, saying, "In this month dedicated to the Virgin Mary, let us learn from her that prayer is the best weapon of Christian life; without persistent prayer, no victory over evil is possible."

As we honor Mary, the Mother of God, let us also remember with gratitude and affection all our earthly mothers, living and deceased, during this Mother's Day weekend. God has blessed us with our mothers for bringing us into the world, who care, protect, teach, love us, and even transmitted to us their faith in God. Let us give them thanks and pray:

+Bishop Stephen Lepcha

Priestly Ordination of the Magnificent Seven



Attending a Priestly Ordination is considered as a revered pilgrimage in our Diocese and the faithful put in their level effort to come in their full capacity to witness and be a part of this auspicious moment. As the age old saying goes "All Roads Lead to Rome", the 1st of May 2023 saw all roads of the Diocese of Darjeeling-Sikkim least to Kalimpong's St. Augustine's School, the venue for the Priestly Ordination of the MAGNIFICENT SEVEN of the year. Fr. Ronald Rai, Barbote Nimbong, Fr. Francis Lepcha, Lungsel, Fr. David Lepcha, Kalimpong, Fr. Conrad Lepcha, Kalimpong, Fr. Richard Lepcha, Suruk, Fr. Suraj Rai, Lungchok,

South Sikkim and Fr. Paul Lepcha, Samplyangbong, Lava Conferred by Bishop Stephen Lepcha. Fathers, Religious and Lay faithful from far and wide filled the venue to the brim. The melodious choir accentuated the liturgical atmosphere. Tea Leaves wish the New Priests successful ministry in the Lord's Vineyard.



SIKKIM VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY MOST REVEREND ARCHBISHOP LEOPOLDO GIRELLI, APOSTOLIC NUNCIO (VATICAN AMBASSADOR) TO INDIA AND NEPAL, W.E.F. 5TH APRIL – 9TH APRIL, 2023.



His Excellency Most Reverend Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, Apostolic Nuncio (Vatican Ambassador) to India and Nepal accompanied by his Secretary Rev. Fr. Stephen Fernandes made a five days' visit to Sikkim during the Holy Week from April 5 to April 9, 2023. On his arrival at Bagdogra Airport on 5th April, 2023, His Excellency was received by Rt. Rev. Stephen Lepcha, Shri G. T. Dhungel, Hon'ble MLA, Upper Tadong Constituency, Sikkim as a representative of Government of Sikkim, Rev. Fr. David Yozan Rai, Liaison Officer for the event and Parish Priest, St. Paul the Apostle Church, 5th Mile, Tadong, Sikkim, Shri Severine Rai, President, Sikkim Catholic Association, Shri Mahendra Gurung, General Secretary, Sikkim Catholic Association, Ms. Sharmistha Shrestha, Protocol Officer, Home Department, Government of Sikkim, Officials of Tourism Department and IPR Department, Government of Sikkim. His Excellency was declared as "State Guest" by the Government of Sikkim and accorded all the protocols applicable to a State Guest. After a short rest in the VIP lounge at Bagdogra Airport, His Excellency left for Namchi.

On reaching Namchi, His Excellency was warmly welcomed at Loyola College of Education by the students, faculties, government officials, government representatives and Priests. In honour of His Excellency Loyola College hosted a lunch.

After a short rest at Loyola Collage His Excellency left for Namchi Public School Auditorium. His Excellency was accorded a warm welcome by the lay faithful of South West Sikkim Deanery and Namchi Public School. His Excellency presided over the Eucharistic Celebration with all the Priests and Religious working in Sikkim. After



the Eucharistic Celebration a colourful cultural programme was presented by South West Sikkim Deanery. Later, in the evening, Loyola Collage of Education, Namchi also presented a short cultural programme in the College.

On the Second day of the tour, His Excellency visited Don Bosco

Parish, Malbasey, Soreng District. His Excellency was accorded a warm in a traditional way. His Excellency visited the houses of some lay faithful and



interacted with them. After returning from Don Bosco Parish, Malbasey, His Excellency was taken to Samdruptse for sightseeing. In the evening His Excellency presided over the Maundy Thursday liturgy at St. Peter the Apostle Church, Namchi.

After two days of visit to Namchi and Soreng District of Sikkim, His Excellency reached Gangtok, the Capital city of Sikkim in the morning of the 7th April, 2023. Upon reaching Gangtok, His Excellency was given a grand welcome by the Parishioners of St. Thomas Church. He was received by Rev. Fr. Gerad Lepcha, Parish Priest, St. Thomas Church, Gangtok, Rev. Sr. Thaddeus, Regional Superior, Missionaries of Charity, Sr. Sherly, Superior, Holy Cross Convent, Gangtok, Rev. Fr. Derek D'souza, Burser, St. Augustine School, Kalimpong and the Congregation of Parishioners. His Excellency presided over Good Friday Liturgy at St. Thomas Church, Gangtok.

On the fourth day of the tour, 8th April, 2023, His Excellency met Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim, Shri Prem Singh Tamang (Goley) at Mintokgang, the official residence of the Chief Minister. He was accompanied by Rt. Rev. Stephen Lepcha, Bishop, Roman Catholic Diocese of Darjeeling – Sikkim, Rev. Fr. Stephen Fernandes, Secretary to Apostolic Nuncio, Rev. Fr. David Yozan Rai, Liaison Officer of the event and Parish Priest, St. Paul the Apostle Parish, 5th Mile, Tadong, Sikkim, Rev. Fr. Gerad Lepcha, Parish Priest, St. Thomas Church, Gangtok, Sikkim and Shri Mahendra Gurung, General Secretary, Sikkim Catholic Association. Also present in the meeting was Shri Lok Nath Nepal, Hon'ble Minister, Government of Sikkim, Shri G. T. Dhungel, Hon'ble MLA, Tadong Constituency, Shri Y. T. Lepcha, Hon'ble MLA, Gangtok Constituency, Shri Jacob Khaling, Political Secretary to HCM, Shri M. T. Sherpa, Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Sikkim and Shri Shanker Deo Dhakal, Secretary to HCM. After the meeting with Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim, His Excellency was taken to Ganesh Tok for sightseeing.

His Excellency then visited the convent of Missionary of Charity situated at Sichey, Gangtok and then addressed the members of the



SIKKIM VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY.....

press and media at Hotel Five Gangtok, Tadong and gave Easter Message to all the people of Sikkim. The Holy Cross Convent, Tadong, hosted the lunch for the day. His Excellency also visited the families of lay faithful, sick and old people of the St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Tadong. Later in the evening His Excellency presided over the Easter Vigil Liturgy. The parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle Parish accorded warm welcome to His Excellency. Shri G. T. Dhungel, MLA, Tadong Constituency was also present during the Easter Vigil Liturgy. After the liturgy was over Rt. Rev. Bishop Stephen Lepcha thanked Shri G. T. Dhungel for his whole hearted support extended during the visit of Apostolic Nuncio. St. Paul the Apostle Parish hosted the dinner in honour of His Excellency. After the dinner His Excellency left for Christ the King Parish, Pakyong.

On the 9th April, 2023, a public reception programme was organized by the core committee at the School auditorium of St. Xavier's School, Pakyong. The faithful of North East Sikkim deanery were present. His Excellency was received by Rev. Fr. Francis Banerjee, Dean, North East Sikkim Deanery and Principal, St. Xavier School. The Chyabrung dance group welcomed His Excellency in a very traditional way. Yak dance, one of the most popular performing art forms of Sikkim was performed in honour of His Excellency. Apart from the lay faithful, Priest and Religious of North East Sikkim Deanery, Shri G. T. Dhungel, MLA, Upper Tadong Constituency, Shri Em Prasad Sharma, MLA, Namcheybung Constituency, Shri Y. T. Lepcha, MLA, Gangtok Constituency, Shri M. T. Sherpa, Secretary, Urban Development Department, Shri Tashi Chopel, District Collector, Pakyong District and Mrs. Anupa Tamling, Additional District Collector were also present during the public reception programme. On behalf of the Catholic Community and people of Sikkim His Excellency was presented a memento of a Thangka, typical Sikkimese scroll painting (painting of Gurudongmar Lake situated at an altitude of 17500 ft. in the northern part of Sikkim) by Rt. Rev. Bishop Stephen Lepcha. After the public reception programme His Excellency presided over the Eucharistic Celebration of Easter Sunday. Soon after the Easter Sunday Liturgy was over His Excellency completing Apostolic visit of Sikkim left for Bagdogra Airport. Rt. Rev. Bishop Stephen Lepcha, Rev. Fr. David Yozan Rai, Shri Mahendra Gurung, Shri Budhan Ignatius Lepcha, Shri Ramesh Rai and Shri Fabian Lepcha accompanied His Excellency till Bagdogra Airport.

Just as the visit of the Apostles proclaiming the Risen Lord to different towns brought joy in those towns, the presence of His Excellency overwhelmed the Church in Sikkim.

Bhutan long awaited the visit of their Shepherd since the Covid days. Bishop Stephen's visit was a blessing for the people in more than one way. He conferred the sacraments on those who needed it and urged the people to be faithful to their faith in very simple terms and always have a positive attitude in a joyful Christian Hope. He urged the people to be faithful to the King and pray for His Majesty, to be loyal citizens and contribute to nation building. He consoled the people who were suffering and strengthened everyone spiritually. He urged the people to take care of their only priest and support him in his efforts to bring about the good all. He visited Thimphu, Paro, Punkha, Chirang and Gelephu.

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ICYM - DARJEELING SIKKIM OFFERS REQUEIM MASS AT LATE. MR. MYRON RANGER'S RESIDENCE

Date : 14th April, 2023

- John 11 : 25



On 14th of April the Diocesan Youth Commission as per the direction of Bp. Stephen Lepcha offered requiem mass for Late Mr. Myron Ranger in his residence as a sign of unity and condolence to the family.

The Dexco (Diocesan Executive Committee) & the Zexco (Zonal Executive Committee) from 5 deaneries came together and prayed for the departed soul of Mr. Myron Ranger. We were also accompanied by the parishioners of St. Francis Xavier, Sakyong. The main celebrant of the Holy Eucharistic Celebration was Fr. Chrispin Tamang DYD. We were also graced by the presence of Sr. Sira Lama DYLA, Fr. Joseph Chettri the dean of Pedong deanery, Fr. Benny SJ parish priest of St. Francis Xavier, Sakyong and the deanery youth coordinators; Fr. Lawrence Lepcha (Kalimpong Deanery), Fr. Camrus Lepcha (Pedong Deanery), Fr. Silvanus Lepcha (Dar-Kur Deanery) and Fr. Mani Clemment (South West Sikkim Deanery). A letter of condolence was presented to the grieving family. The Holy Eucharistic Celebration was followed by a short prayer service at Late Mr. Myron's Ranger's resting place.





EASTER MUSINGS

*When you are down n out
You need to walk and talk
Be on the road to Emmaus*

*Walk, dont sit and brood
Talk, you lend an ear
Something happens on that road*

*The Scriptures come alive
Your hearts are aflame
You have reached your Emmaus*

*At last you reach home
You break eternal bread
He was there all through*

EAT AND BE MERRY

*They watched Him eat the fish
He took His time over it
Thier minds Opened to look back
Over the Sea of Galilee with fish plenty
When they eat the Last Supper together
Now this little fish disappeared In them He appeared
Showed them the past
The future
The Supper of the Lamb
In His glory
All to be merry*

"COME HAVE BREAKFAST"

*His DEATH
Wrenched their hearts Devastated their dreams
They crawled back to the womb
The sea of comfort The old familiar ways
His CALL
To be fishers of men
Now a dirge on the sea of melancholy
Nets empty and caught nothing
Leave these fishes of Tiberius alone
Go to the Galilee's of the world*



HIS ♥

LOVE

*Beckons once more to face
Not with gold and silver
But in His living memory
To tell the world another story His Father cares!*

EMMAUS

*When I am down and out
I prefer to walk ...
Walk away from troubles
Walk into Eternity*

*On that meandering road
"Things," are reflected back
It ignites my heart
I live*

*Weary n tired
Find room in the inn
Break bread together
It is HIM we encounter*

*Now I continue to walk
Every stranger I close up
I share His story
We march into eternity*



Kinley, SJ



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:

Fr. Alex Gurung, Darjeeling Diocese Communication Commision,
Bishop's House, Darjeeling

E-mail : tealeavesdarjeeling@gmail.com / alecgurung@gmail.com, Mobile : 9641872925