



# TEA LEAVES

## DARJEELING DIOCESE NEWSLETTER

visit us at: [www.darjeelingdiocese.com](http://www.darjeelingdiocese.com)

2025

Bishop's House, Darjeeling - 734101 INDIA

JUNE

### *Bishop's Message for the Month of the Sacred Heart*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Warm greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The month of June holds a special place in the heart of the Church as we lovingly turn our gaze toward the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus—a symbol of divine love, mercy, and compassion.

The image of the Sacred Heart, pierced and aflame, reminds us of Christ's boundless love for each of us. In a world often torn by division, hatred, and indifference, we are invited to rest in His heart and draw strength from the fire of His divine love. Jesus continues to call us, just as He did St. Margaret Mary Alacoque: "Behold this Heart which has so loved men."

During this month, let us take time to:

Contemplate His love in Eucharistic adoration and personal prayer,

Imitate His compassion through acts of charity and forgiveness,

Consecrate our families and communities to the Sacred Heart.

I encourage each parish and family to renew their devotion by celebrating the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (this year on Friday, June 27, 2025), participating in the First Friday Masses, and offering prayers of reparation and intercession.

Let us also remember our priests this month, as the Sacred Heart is the model of priestly love and service. May their hearts be conformed ever more closely to Christ's own heart.

As your shepherd, I place our entire Diocese under the loving gaze of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. May His love renew our hearts, our homes, and our Church.

With every blessing in the Heart of Christ,

**+ Stephen Lepcha, Bishop of Darjeeling-Sikkim.**



### **Night Vigil Prayer Service at St. Paul's Church, Kurseong lead by PP Fr Peter Jong Lepcha (SJ).**



On the evening of Saturday, 7th June 2025, the faithful gathered at St. Paul's Church, Kurseong for a deeply moving Night Vigil Prayer Service, held in preparation for the Solemn Feast of Pentecost. The service commenced at 8:30 PM and continued through the night, marked by a spirit of devotion, reflection, and unity in prayer.

The vigil was a sacred time of spiritual preparation, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and the birth of the Church. The night was filled with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, scripture readings, hymns, and faith-sharing sessions, creating an atmosphere of grace and anticipation. Silent prayer and intercessions were also offered, invoking the Holy Spirit to renew hearts and strengthen the faith of all present.

The vigil culminated in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 4:30 AM on Sunday, 8th June 2025, ushering in Pentecost Sunday with joy and spiritual renewal. As the first light of dawn bathed Kurseong in serenity, the gathering dispersed, uplifted by the experience of a night spent in prayerful communion and awaiting the gifts of the Holy Spirit.



## Useful tips for vibrant BEC's in Parishes:

An effective Pastoral Plan for Fostering Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) in a parish should focus on spiritual, organizational, and social dimensions to strengthen these small communities. Here's a structured approach:

### Vision

"To build vibrant, Christ-centered Basic Ecclesial Communities as living expressions of the Church, fostering communion, participation, and mission."

### Pastoral Plan

#### 1. Formation and Education

- Conduct BEC Orientation Programs
- Train clergy, lay leaders, and parishioners on the concept, purpose, and importance of BECs.
- Ongoing Formation for Leaders
- Offer workshops and retreats to deepen leaders' spiritual, pastoral, and managerial skills.
- Scripture and Catechesis
- Promote Bible-sharing groups and catechetical sessions to deepen faith and foster a sense of community.

#### 2. Evangelization and Mission

- Door-to-Door Evangelization
- Encourage BEC members to visit families to invite them to join, share the Gospel, and address spiritual needs.
- Incorporate Social Media
- Use digital platforms to share inspiring stories, updates, and resources about BEC activities.
- Celebrate BEC Sunday
- Dedicate a specific day to celebrate BECs with Mass, testimonies, and community-building activities.

#### 3. Building Relationships and Collaboration

- Foster Unity with Parish and Diocese
- Strengthen the link between BECs, the parish, and diocesan activities for better coordination and support.
- Promote Inter-BEC Fellowship
- Organize gatherings, sports events, or retreats to build relationships between BECs in the diocese.
- Encourage Family Participation
- Ensure all members—youth, couples, and seniors—feel included and valued.

#### 4. Social Action and Outreach

- Address Local Needs
- Identify and address community needs, such as poverty

alleviation, education, and healthcare, through collective action.

- Disaster Preparedness and Relief
- Train BECs to serve as first responders in times of crisis or calamity.
- Environment Care
- Integrate programs like tree planting or waste management to foster stewardship of creation.

#### 5. Spiritual Nourishment

- Regular Prayer Meetings
- Encourage weekly or bi-weekly gatherings for prayer, reflection, and sharing.
- Sacramental Life
- Ensure access to Mass, confession, and other sacraments within the community.
- Pilgrimages and Retreats
- Organize events to deepen the spiritual lives of BEC members.

#### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Establish a Parish BEC forum
- Create a dedicated team to oversee BEC development and provide resources and guidance in the parish.
- Set Clear Goals and Metrics
- Define targets such as the number of BECs to establish annually or the percentage of parishioners involved.
- Annual Assembly
- Hold an annual parish BEC assembly to review progress, share best practices, and plan future activities.

#### Key Elements for Success

1. **Active Clergy Support:** Regularly involve priests and religious in BEC activities.
2. **Empowered Lay Leaders:** Train and equip lay leaders for leadership roles.
3. **Inclusivity:** Ensure everyone feels welcome, especially marginalized members.
4. **Sustainability:** Secure funding and resources for continuous growth.
5. **Prayers and the Holy Spirit:** Ground all activities in prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit.

For a latest videos visit us at :  
youtube : darjeeling divyavani prastuti  
For all publications, videos & Media  
visit us at :  
<https://www.darjeelingdiocese.com/media/>



## Report on the Media Seminar Held at Divyavani

Date: 24th May 2025

Venue: Divyavani Communications Centre, Darjeeling

A one-day Media Seminar was successfully organized on 24th May 2025 at Divyavani Pastoral Centre, with the aim of equipping parish media cell members and youth leaders with foundational knowledge and skills in basic media communication and media ethics. The seminar was convened by the Diocesan Media Desk of the Catholic Diocese of Darjeeling under the leadership of the diocesan media Secretary.



### Objectives of the Seminar:

To promote responsible and ethical use of media in church and community settings to build media literacy among lay volunteers to foster collaboration among parish media cells for more effective communication.

The seminar brought together 52 participants from various parishes, including media cell members, youth leaders, and catechists, all actively engaged in church communication work. Their presence reflected a shared commitment to making media a tool for evangelization and community engagement.

The day began with a prayer and Jubilee Song followed by opening remarks by Bishop Stephen Lepcha (via video) who welcomed the participants and emphasized the importance of media in today's mission of the Church.

### Session I: Introduction to Media and Communication

Resource person Ms. Prashansa Caroline Rai, an educator and media expert delivered a dynamic presentation on the role of media in society and the Church, highlighting various forms of traditional and digital media and their influence on public opinion.

### Session II: Media Laws and Ethics in the Indian Context

This session was conducted by Fr. Alexander Gurung. He explored key principles of media ethics, such as truthfulness,

responsibility, privacy, and respect for human dignity, especially in relation to Indian legal and cultural norms.

### Session III. A talk on Pre-Production, Production and Post -

Production was conducted by Mr. Aditya Raya, Director of Darjeeling Television and a film maker. He taught the techniques of photography and editing.

Media in the context of Church in Darjeeling-Sikkim and Interactive Workshop.

This session was conducted by Mr. Mahindra Gurung who very succinctly explained the importance of media in evangelisation. Participants were divided into groups for a hands-on workshop on writing basic news reports, taking effective photos, and using social media positively. Each group presented a short piece of news related to their parish, which was discussed and critiqued.

A lively panel discussion on "The Role of Youth in Church Media" featured young media volunteers from different parishes sharing their experiences, challenges, and aspirations.



The seminar concluded with a feedback session and concluding Mass. The inspiring sermon delivered by Fr. Francis Tamang encouraged all participants to be a "faithful witnesses in the digital world."

Outcomes of the seminar could be cited as, increased awareness about responsible media use, strengthened network of parish media cell members and new ideas and plans for collaborative media initiatives in the diocese.

The seminar proved to be a meaningful step toward building a media-literate Church community in the Darjeeling Diocese. Participants expressed their enthusiasm for more such training programs and committed to being "messengers of truth and light" through media.



## Massacre Of The Innocents

"A voice was heard in Ramah weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

-Matthew 2:18 (Jeremiah 31:15)

The cries have not died down.  
The wailing, the howling,  
fifty thousand and more.  
Beyond Bethlehem,  
all Gaza sings a dirge.

The massacre of the innocents goes on.  
Madness without end.  
Shame on Herod of old.  
Shame on Netanyahu now.  
Shame on all of us.  
How can we allow this?

October 7 was evil.  
No excuses for the wrong.  
But to crush an ant...  
an elephant storms in.  
Lasting peace will never come by blood.  
How can we allow this?

The voice of the voiceless  
cries to the heavens.  
There is nothing left of humanity.  
How can we allow this?

Evil is on a rampage.  
Good men sit and stare,  
silent on piles of rubble.  
How can we allow this?

Have you no heart?  
"Harden not your hearts today."  
Immunity has grown stale.  
Cries may be far from my home,  
but innocent blood chokes my peace.  
How can we allow this?

-By Fr. Kinley Tshering, SJ



## Jubilee Cross Veneration at St. John the Baptist Church Gielle DARJEELING-SIKKIM DIOCESE

A chapel under Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Takdah.



As part of the Jubilee Year celebration, St. John the Baptist Church, Gielle had the blessed opportunity to host the Jubilee Cross, a powerful sign of Christ's sacrifice and the unity of the Church. Though there was no celebration of Holy Mass, the faithful gathered in prayerful veneration, offering hymns,

personal prayers, and moments of silent reflection before the Cross.

The simple yet solemn gathering stirred hearts—renewing faith and strengthening the bond of the chapel community with the wider Church.

After the time of veneration, the Cross was taken back to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Takdah from where it was formally handed over to Mariya Pahar ki Rani Church, Glenburn, continuing its spiritual journey through the hills and touching lives in every community it visits.

The event was particularly meaningful for parishioners of the chapel, fostering unity across all age groups—from youth to elders—and renewing the chapel's mission as a spiritual beacon under the umbrella of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish.



## 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 Commission, Bishop's House, Darjeeling  
E-mail : [alecgurung@gmail.com](mailto:alecgurung@gmail.com), Mobile : 96418 72925

Published by Darjeeling Diocese Communication Centre on behalf of Diocese of Darjeeling. Editor : Fr. Alex Gurung  
Designed at PEETSAR GRAPHICS, Darjeeling - 734101 [98320 33006]