



BAG-e-CHA

Catholic Diocese of Bagdogra

Monthly 'E' Newsletter

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(Christmas Issue)

ISSUE NO. XXI



BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Christmas for all people and for all time is a season of Joy and celebration. It is rightly preceded by the season of Advent which is marked by Hope – hope for peace and hope of salvation. Majority of the readings in this period, especially the first readings, are from the Book of Prophet Isaiah. These readings bring forth the message of hope – hope for peace and harmony, hope for redemption and salvation.

There were times when we looked forward to a peaceful preparation and finally a joyful celebration of Christmas. In fact, the days of preparation used to be themselves filled with joys. But times have changed and continue to change. For more than a decade now the atmosphere of uncertainties, fear, suspense, etc. is in the air. Against this backdrop this Advent season and Christmas can and should bring more consolation and assurance.

Christmas brings the good news of God being amidst us, God dwelling among us. What a wonderful source of consolation and

comfort! An awareness of God's presence can change the way we see ourselves and how we relate to the world around us. Our situation may not change, but our ability to move through the situation will change.

For us locally a great consolation is that our non-Christian brethren themselves look forward to the Christmas celebration eagerly and most of them very devoutly. Their genuine devotion especially witnessed as they come to our churches and cribs mark the Christmas with hope, peace, fraternity and joy.

Let us make the best of this Christmas! Let us turn it into an aura of joy, peace and love! Let us spread the joy of Christmas by sharing it with one and all in the most tangible way possible.

Wish you, one and all, a very joyful and meaningful Christmas!

+Vincent Aind
Bishop of Bagdogra

Seva Kendra Siliguri:

Staff Capacity Building: After the two years of gap due to Covid on 3rd and 4th November staff capacity building was done for all education related projects staff, about 60 of them. Fr. Felix D' Souza, Principal of St. Stephen's Academy, Kaffer along with Bryan and Renee his teachers' trainers were the resource persons. Our staff has already begun practicing what they have learned during the capacity building.

Jubilee Preparation: Seva Kendra has been extremely busy last few months preparing for its Golden Jubilee celebration on 17th December. The staff was extra busy in November selecting items for the stage program and preparing reports for the souvenir etc.

Blood Donation: As a part of the jubilee celebration voluntary blood donation was organized on 29th of November. Our target was to collect more than 100 units, but we had to be content to get more than 85 willing donors from among the staff and our target areas of various projects. Surprisingly the camp ended with exact 50 units of precious blood! Many willing donors couldn't donate blood due to medical reasons and under-weight.

-Fr. Felix Pinto



Pradhan Nagar:

The solemnity of the Christ the King was celebrated 20th of November 2022 in Pradhan Nagar Parish. It was very grand. A huge number of Catholics participated in the Eucharistic procession. The procession ended with the Eucharistic Celebration Rev. Fr. Naresh Beck being the main celebrant. The celebration ended with the Holy Adoration.

On 27th of November, the general meeting was held in the parish. The main agenda of the

meeting was the Christmas to be celebrated more meaningfully.

-Fr. Naresh Beck

Limbutari:

Limbutari Parish celebrated the Youth Day on 6th November 2022. More than 80 youths participated in this celebration. The program began with a Holy Mass presided over by Rev. Fr. Santosh Mardi. A few DEXCO members had also come for this program and shared their experiences as DEXCO members. It was well appreciated by all the participants. There was some cultural programme. Finally a delicious meal topped it all. Fr. Santosh thanked all the youth for their cooperation in making this program a successful one.

-Fr. Santosh Mardi



Panighata:

Panighata parish celebrated the Feast of Christ the King on 20th November in a traditional way beginning with a devout procession and concluded with Holy adoration. Then there was the Holy Mass presided over by Rev. Fr. Gevenius Kujur and concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Rajen Kujur. After the Holy Mass everyone present had some breakfast. Indeed, it was a great day for all the faithful of Panighata parish.

-Fr. Rajen Kujur



Chatterhat:

On 13th November 2022, two doctors and three sisters belonging to the FC congregation and three staff members from Navjeevan Hospital Gayaganga, visited St. Thomas Church Chatterhat. The free medical camp was held in the parish premises. 200 people made use of this free medical camp. Those in need were given some medicine. The program began at 9 am and ended by 3 pm. The parish is much indebted to the entire team of Navjeevan Hospital, Gayaganga.

-Fr. Pathic Lakra



Gayaganga:

1. Youth Day Celebration:

The Youth Day was celebrated on 13 November in Gayaganga Parish. 615 youth registered themselves for this day. The day was begun with the tribal custom, putting *Chandan Tika*, washing hands and *Arti* before the Holy Mass. Fr. Nabor Dungdung S.J., the animator of youth in the parish, was the main celebrant. His homily was based on synodality. Fr. Mathias Toppo and Fr. Joseph Xaxa were the resource persons for the input sessions. Fr. Mathias spoke on the Chronicle of World Youth Days and he developed the points on the basis of the story 'The Rich Young Man' (Mt.19:16-22). Fr. Joseph dealt with the topic on 'Challenges for Youth Today and their Response in the Light of *CHRISTUS VIVIT*'. After a delicious lunch there was group discussion on the Role of Youth for forthcoming events in the parish. Then one of the parish Youth leaders read a report on the Youth Convention 2022 held at Bagdogra. After Cultural program Fr. Peter Pappu S.J., the Parish Priest, said a few words

of appreciation and thanked everyone for actively taking part in the event of the day.

2. First Holy Communion and sacrament of Confirmation:

On the Feast of Christ the King on 20 Nov. 33 candidates received Sacrament of the Holy Communion and 47 candidates were confirmed with the Holy Spirit in Gayaganga Parish. The celebration began with Eucharistic procession and then Rt. Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind presided over the Holy Mass. He said in his homily "In the past many kings and emperors in this world appeared and disappeared. They belonged to this earth. How many of us know them and remembered them. But the Christ the Good Shepherd, the eternal King is the King of our hearts. He is always with us as our Lord and protector. And today our children are receiving first time in the form of Body and Blood and the Holy Spirit the same Lord and King." A small cultural program was put up and thus the day was blessed by the presence of the Bishop.

-Fr. Joseph Xaxa



Hansqua:

Popular Mission Retreat was conducted at St. Paul's Church, Hansqua from 22 - 27 November 2022, by Vincentian Fathers from Chopra. This particular retreat was conducted for the first time in Bagdogra Diocese. Everything was organized **by the people for the people**. This was indeed a very special kind of retreat, in which the Parish Priest had to sign officially and hand over the tabernacle key to the director. Fr. Xavier Kumar V.C. is the director of Popular Mission retreat. There were five priests (Frs. Xavier, George, Cyril, John, and Justine) and

three musicians. There were two centres for the retreat: One at Moonee ground and the other in the Parish. On 20th November, an inaugural flag was hoisted. Before the retreat would begin the Fathers went for house visit and welcomed each one of them for retreat. At the time of house visiting, they prayed in each house. In both the centres there was an extraordinary gathering. Faithful of Hansqua Parish have benefited a lot from this retreat both physically and spiritually. Many were healed. Through the marriage renewal, broken families once again started living peacefully together. Many, who had left the Church, are coming back now. This retreat was good and necessary for renewal of both family and parish. There was a victory rally too on the last day. From two different directions faithful came in procession to the Parish: one from Moonee ground and another from Toonah ground.

On the final day, Rev. Peter Pappu S.J., the Vicar General, was the main celebrant. Frs. Vincent Soreng, Timothy Tirkey, Edward Kerketta, Mathias Toppo, Peter Pappu, Joseph Xaxa and Columbus Toppo helped in hearing confession. Sincere thanks to each one of them.

-Fr. Ignatius Bara



Regional Family Commission of West Bengal and Sikkim Region

The Regional Family Commission of West Bengal and Sikkim conducted two days' workshop on Domestic Violence. It took place at Dishari Pastoral Centre in the Baruipur diocese from November 16 to 17. It was a Training of Trainers program. I had taken two couples and a sister from Mailanijote Parish. And as many as 40 selected lay people from eight dioceses, along with priests and nuns from various congregations, attended it. Bishop Shyamal Bose, the Chairman of the Regional Family Commission and the Bishop of Baruipur diocese in his welcome address said, "We need non-violent family and society", and for this "all should show love and respect for each other in our family and society." I am deeply disturbed at the recent incident of family violence in New Delhi where a man had chopped his lover's body in to 35 pieces," he said. He then told to all to focus on the Holy family, St. Joseph, Mother Mary and Jesus. Fr. Joseph Biswas, the Secretary of the Regional Family Commission in West Bengal, gave us sessions on domestic violence, its kinds and ways. He said, "We all have families and in this program, we are all being trained to be resource persons to find out ways to solve the problem of domestic violence. All our collective ideas can make a difference which is the aim of this training program. Violence has many dimensions from overt to covert. Violence begets violence and it does not solve problems. Seeds of domestic violence in the family are in the heart that lacks forgiveness. It starts from a mere shouting to the other members of the family. All the participants were made aware that children can be taught non-violent behaviour. Each person, by changing himself/herself, can influence those around. Fr. Faustin Brank (Advocate) said, "All matters of domestic violence should be settled amicably. One must remember that in most cases matters of divorce start from petty issues and aggravate." Arindam Acharjee (Retired Police Inspector) explained the law and sanctions on domestic violence. Many misconceptions got removed due to this. He said that the 'Domestic Violence Act' of India has a nature of inculcating a peaceful environment. Fr. Pradeep Roy said in his session, "Understanding that our role is not to judge who is right

and who is wrong but to look at them with compassion and help them get out of the difficult situation, the participants will do whatever is within their capacity to alleviate the anger of both partners and be reconciled to each other, in a spirit of forgiveness and love." Finally, we visited Sundarban. The whole day program was organized in the boat by the Secretary and the Priests from Baruipur Diocese. We had Holy Mass on the boat and entire day was spent watching deep Mangrove forest both sides of the river Gomti and delta. I was fortunate enough to see some wild animals. This was my unique experience on this trip.

-Fr. Joseph Xaxa

B E C (SCC) Regional Meet At Raiganj

The Commission for B E C which was earlier known as S.C.C. organized 3 days seminar for all the S.C.C. coordinators from 23-25 November. The participants were from all the dioceses of Bengal and Sikkim. We were 10 of us from the Diocese of Bagdogra. Altogether there were more than 70 participants who actively took part in these 3 days seminar. The theme for the seminar was 'Role of Laity in the Synodal Church'. The session began with Bible veneration. Altogether there were 4 resource persons that included 3 Regional Bishops and 1 priest. The participants shared their joyful and bitter experiences in doing SCC in their dioceses. Fr. I. P. Sarto, the Regional Coordinator of SCC, encouraged all the participants. Finally, Bishop Vincent Aind, the new patron for the BEC in Bengal-Sikkim, thanked all the participants and wished for a successful mission.

-Fr. Anil Kumar

Papal Seminary, Pune

After a gap of two years and pandemic the Papal Seminary and Jnana Deepa campus have returned to its old grandeur of activity and dynamism. The month of November too has been great month for Papal Seminary and Jnana Deepa Campus. The first November was the all-saints day and second of November was the all-souls day which was marked by the evening Mass followed by the candle procession towards the graveyard. The members from various houses and vicinity made the evening an auspicious one by their presence and prayer for the departed brothers and sisters, resting in the peace of papal seminary graveyard. This month was also graced with JD day, a colourful event for the students in Jnana Deepa, Institute of Philosophy and Theology organized on 18th of November. However, some of the students from bachelor of philosophy and post-graduate students both priests and students had to attend an international symposium on "AI, Robotics, Humanoids and the Future of Society and Religion". The international symposium on AI, humanoid and robotics was organized by the Indian Institute of Science-Religion (IISR) in association with St. Aloysius College Mangalore and Chair in Christianity, Mangalore University on 18-20 November at St. Aloysius College, Mangalore. This seminar emphasized on the need and importance of science-religion dialogue for the present and future society to come, for the healthy thriving and nourishing of humanity on the face of technological advancement and innovations. This month also witnessed the Community Day Celebration (CDC) program. CDC is healthy, collaborative, creative and dynamic competitive program for the students and staffs and assistant staffs of Papal Seminary. This event began with positive vibe and hopefully going to end with positive note.

-Bros. Roshan and Anuraj

BIRTHDAYS AND ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS	ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES
08 DEC: FR. EDWARD KERKETTA	03 DEC: FR. TELESPHORE TOPPO
10 DEC: BRO. JOGODISH KUJUR	05 DEC: FR. ANIL KUMAR
13 DEC: FR. PATHIC LAKRA	10 DEC: FR. JOHN B. LASRADO
20 DEC: BRO. RESHMA LAKRA	29 DEC: FR. YAKUB KINDO
25 DEC: BRO. NOEL MUMBAIKAR	
28 DEC: FR. NIRAJ TOPPO	

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year



Catholic Diocese of Bagdogra wishes you all
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

BISHOP'S PROGRAMME FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2022

01	Thursday	04.00 p.m.	:	Return from Nagpur
02	Friday	10.00 a.m.	:	Evaluation Meeting with Bungalow Catechists
03	Saturday	11.00 a.m.	:	Inauguration of SND Novitiate, Tarijote
04	Sunday	06.45 a.m.	:	Mass in Our Lady Queen Church
05	Monday	10.30 a.m.	:	Inauguration of BRBC-CRI-CDPI meeting, LPC
06	Tuesday		:	Meeting
07	Wednesday		:	Meeting/ Departure for Darjeeling in the afternoon
08	Thursday		:	Jubilee Celebration in Darjeeling
09	Friday	02.30 p.m.	:	Meeting on Catechism books, Hatighisa
10	Saturday	02.00 p.m.	:	Continental Synodality, Bagdogra parish
11	Sunday	01.00 p.m.	:	Evaluation & Election DEXCO, Bagdogra
12 - 16	December		:	Discerning Leadership, Bangalore
17	Saturday	11.00 a.m.	:	Golden Jubilee of Seva Kendra
18	Sunday	02.30 p.m.	:	Adoration & Reconciliation, Cathedral
19	Monday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
20	Tuesday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
21	Wednesday		:	Holy Child School, Jalpaiguri
22 - 24	December		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
24	December	10.00 p.m.	:	Solemn Eucharist, Cathedral
25	Sunday*	07.00 a.m.	:	Mass for Inmates of Jeevan Dan, Mailanijote
		11.00 a.m.	:	Mass for M.C. Regional House
26	Monday	09.00 a.m.	:	Christmas Get Together, Hatighisa
27	Tuesday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
28 - 30	December		:	Home Visit
31	Saturday	09.00 a.m.	:	Blessing of Community Hall, Tirhana
01	January	09.00 a.m.	:	Blessing of Community Hall, Titlidangi

***It is highly recommended that every parish informs the local police about Christmas night celebration**

***18 December, Sunday: All the Fathers, Sisters & Seminarians are invited for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the Cathedral**