



BAG-e-CHA

Catholic Diocese of Bagdogra

Monthly 'E' Newsletter



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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

All Souls Day: A Phenomenon

Come November and most of our faithful get ready in many ways for celebrating the All Souls Day! For many of them more than the solemnity of All Saints Day a devoted observance of All Souls Day is important.

This 2nd of November Frs. Basil Pereira and Thomas Vayalil remembered something quite interesting anecdote. They recalled the total curfew which followed the gruesome murder of the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. As a consequence no Fathers could go to any village or tea garden for the Mass in the cemetery. They tried, but the police would not allow them to move. Consequently the people could not get Mass that day. On the following day a faithful accosted Fr. Thomas with the complaint that he did not give them Mass. The priest tried to explain the circumstances which did not permit him. But the faithful would say, "all the same you should have come". Again the priest explained, but the retort was: "phir bhi" or "all the same" There was

no excuse! No matter what, the priest should have given them Mass!

The devotion for the Eucharist on All Souls Day is to be seen even today. No wonder most of our priests are busy practically the whole day giving Mass to different villages. Why such devotion? Why so particular about it?

Many years ago on my first ever visit to Shillong in a pre-Christmas week one Khasi seminarian was my guide. As we were passing through a cemetery he had asked me if I knew why in such great number the Khasis had accepted Christianity. I told him that I did not know. Then he explained to me that one of the reasons was the respect Christianity gives to the dead persons. This reason is also true of our Chotanagpur tribals. In their Sarna belief system the dead are not lost in the oblivion. They continue to exist in spirit. They still belong to the community!

The Church is a community of believers and among the believers are not only those who are living. Also the ones gone before us form a part of the community. There is a triumphant Church and a militant church. The Philippines express this sense of belonging by sharing meals in the graveyard. This sense of belonging surely assures that we pray earnestly for the souls in purgatory.

Seva Kendra Siliguri:

On 29th October Seva Kendra collaborated with MARG an NGO from Darjeeling in organizing a half-day session on 'Role of the Religious Leaders in dealing with Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Abuse'. The input by MARG staff was appreciated by all who attended. There were representatives from **Ramkrishna Mission, Brhamakumaris, Buddhist, Islam, and Christian** faith leaders. Fr. Felix Pinto ended the session with a brief talk on communal harmony

-Fr. Felix Pinto



Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri:

The Seminar for all the Catholic students from class V to class X was conducted in Pradhan Nagar Parish, Siliguri. There were 75 students who actively participated in this seminar. The inputs were given on the importance of Sacraments, vocation, synodality and the importance of education etc.

The Catechism classes for the adults are going on in the parish. It is good to see a lot of people attending the catechism classes.

-Fr. Naresh Beck

This devout observance also helps us prepare ourselves for a well prepared death. It's good to remember the dead very especially during the whole of November month and pray for them. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace by the mercy of God!

+Vincent Aind
Bishop of Bagdogra

Bagdogra:

The Charismatic retreat took place in two of the villages namely Taipoo 11 and Chowpukuria in Bagdogra parish. Taipoo village hosted the retreat on 17th October 2022 and Chowpukuria village hosted the retreat on 20th October 2022. The preachers for the both the villages were Rev. Frs. Xavier Dileep VC and John Ekka IMS. Indeed, it was a fruitful retreat for all the faithful who participated in it.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion was given ceremoniously to 30 candidates on 30th October 2022 in the Good Shepherd Church in Bagdogra. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Yakub Kindo, who preached on the importance of 'Jesus in one's life'. After the Holy Mass these 30 who received the Lord for the first time, were congratulated by others.

-Fr. Yakub Kindo



Bhimbhar:

The Holy Diaconate Ordination of Bro. Ashish Tirkey took place on 30th Oct 2022 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Bhimbhar. It was for the first time ever in the history of Bhimbhar parish, that the parish hosted a diaconate ordination. Bishop Vincent Aind received the traditional welcome by the parishioners. The Holy Eucharistic Celebration began at 8.30 a.m. The Bishop in his

homily distinctively outlined the duties of a deacon in the Holy Catholic Church.

The parishioners shared responsibilities for this great event. The Choir and the commentator were exceptionally good. At the end of the program the parish priest thanked all the faithful. We congratulate and wish Deacon Ashish Tirkey all the best.



Catechetical Centre, Ambari:

The Director of the Catechetical Centre Ambari attended a National Catechetical Conference at St. Joseph Vaz Spirituality Renewal Centre, Old Goa from the 4th of October to 6th of October 2022. The theme of the Conference for this year was "*Anticum Ministerium of Ancient Ministry*". The theme was mainly on the Lay Ministry of Catechesis. It focused on the ministry, identity, formation and types of lay catechists in the church namely, missionary

catechists, Sunday class catechists and religion class catechists. Very enlightening and relevant papers were presented on the theme. In addition to the papers presented by the experts, listening to the various voices from all over India was quite inspiring and enriching.

There was a half day program for the bungalow catechists in the Holy Cross Church Kharubhanga on the 20th of October 2022. The enlightening inputs and the fifteen years life experience on the mission in Nigeria was shared by Rev. Fr. Xavier Babu Ambati PIME. They were quite learning and inspirational moments for the catechists.

There was a seminar for the catholic teachers of St. Peter's Higher Secondary School, Gayaganga on the 22nd October 2022. The resource person Fr. Mathias Toppo gave some inputs on the identity of Catholic Schools and their significant roles in imparting the religion classes. Some proposals by the CCBI Commission for Catechetics were recommended to implement for the ongoing faith formation of the students. The participants through the group workshop proposed some practical plans for implementation in forthcoming days.

-Fr. Matias Toppo

VSCR-CDPI (BENGAL-SIKKIM REGION)

The Conference of the Diocesan Priests of India (CDPI Bengal-Sikkim Region) organised a three day seminar for all the young priests of Bengal region. The program took place from 17th to 20th October 2022. This time, the diocese of Raiganj hosted the program in Jeevan Dhara Pastoral Centre. Altogether there were 80 priests who participated in this program. The inaugural ceremony began on 17th evening with a Holy Eucharistic celebration by Rt. Rev. Clement Tirkey, the Bishop of Jalpaiguri. On 18th of Oct 2022, the Holy Mass was celebrated by Rt. Rev. Fulgence Tigga, the Bishop of Raiganj. The resource persons for the day were Rev. Frs. Jeyraj Velusamy SJ and Thomas Kuzhively SJ. Bishop Stephen Lepcha, the Bishop of Darjeeling, celebrated the Holy Mass on 19th Oct and the resource persons for the day were Rev. Fr. Henry Jose MSFS and Bishop Stephen Lepcha himself. On the final day, Bishop Vincent Aind, the patron of the CDPI Bengal-Sikkim Region celebrated the

Holy Mass and spoke about the importance of synodality, walking together to make the Catholic Church more vibrant in Bengal-Sikkim region. At the end of the last session, there was a pastoral plan presented by all the dioceses. Fr. Prolay Baidya who is the general secretary of the CDPI Bengal-Sikkim region thanked all the bishops and priests for their availability and cooperation in making the program a successful one.

-Fr. Anil Kumar



Regional Youth Convention in Barasat

It was a great time for all the youth of the Diocese of Bagdogra. The October month was filled with activities and preparation for the activities. First of all, this month began with 8th regional youth convention from 1 - 4 October 2022 in Auxilium Convent at Barasat and 54 youth participated from our diocese. The theme of the regional convention was "Young man I say

to you, arise!" Lk 7:14. It was well organized, and sessions were very enriching and fruitful. All the youth actively participated and enjoyed a lot. The theme of the convention was justified by the resource persons and a spirit of aesthetic sense was felt by all.

-Fr. David Ekka

Diocesan Youth Convention

Long awaited day finally reached on 23rd October when the youth commission of the Bagdogra diocese set off the 5th Diocesan Youth Convention in Good Shepherd Cathedral Bagdogra. Inaugural event was heart throbbing and the presence of the diocesan Chairman Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind, Rev. Fr. Peter Pappu SJ, the VG, Fr. Yakub, Fr. Columbar, Fr. Anil, Fr. C.M Paul SDB, Fr. Xavier SJ, Fr. Felix Pinto and other dignitaries gave a new impetus to all present. Looking at the present scenario the theme was aptly chosen "Youth for a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission." Each day of the sessions was related with the theme. Sessions like Spirituality and Faith, Stress Management: how to control emotions, Role of

Youth in the Church, Media and Youth, Marriage and Social Awareness and Guidance were the topics which enriched the youth and gave them a sure foundation for faith, moral values and enabled them to cope up with their emotions and directed their ways for a better life. I am sure it has helped and continues to help them in the days to come.

The credit of the success of this programme goes to all those who willingly contributed and helped in all the ways possible. I would like to thank especially the Chairman Bishop Vincent Aind and the DEXCO members. And I am ever indebted to all the fathers, sisters and lay-faithful.

-Fr. David Ekka

Annual Retreat at Singla

It was on 2nd October that we went to have our spiritual renewal at Singla. This time it was a total 5-day retreat in order to see and discover our own connection with God and with each other. Main theme of this was focused on "Clarity of Vocation". It means the call that we have received must be renewed and we must ponder over whether it has potential to influence others especially the people of God. It began in the evening reflecting over the journey with Cleopas as I was in my spiritual renewal for those five days. During those days I

could look into my own being as well as be able to forgive and leave behind my old ways of living. Even I learnt about how to defend my faith for Mother Mary in the days to come as I would be challenged by many other denominations. It was easy for me to get adjusted in such a warm place since I have come from a similar atmosphere. In short, I could say that it was really fruitful as well as beneficiary as I am on the way to priesthood to do the will of God among the people on the earth.

-Bro. Michael Murmu

ACPI Meeting in Morning Star

MSRS took it as a privilege to host the 45th ACPI (Association of Christian Philosophers of India) annual research seminar from 14 to 16 October 2022. Some 60 philosophers from all over India came to participate in it. The theme of the

research seminar was "Emancipative Education: Policies and Practices. Most Rev. Dr. Bishop Vincent Aind gave the inaugural address. In the presence of Rev. Fr. Dr. Keith D'Souza SJ, the ACPI president, Dr. Sekar Sebastian, the Secretary and Dr. Joy Alunkal OCD, the treasurer, Fr. George Panthanmackal MSFS, the

seminary rector, and Fr Henry Crasta two books were released. One of them was as usual the ensemble of the research papers of the previous seminar, while the second book was A Festschrift in honour of Fr. Henry Crasta for his yeoman service to the Morning Star Regional Seminary. On 15 of October we the Morning Star community assisted by the novices of Sadhna Sadan and Providence presented a cultural program for the ACPI. For us philosophy brothers it was a learning experience in many ways.

CONVOCATION OF THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT AT MORNING STAR COLLEGE

The convocation for the Academic year 2022-23 was held on 31 October. There were 19 students from 9 different dioceses and 3 Religious Congregations who have completed their B. Th. studies. Of them one scored High Distinction (96%), two obtained distinctions (80-89%), 8 got High First Class (70-79%), and other 8 passed in first class (60-69%). They were awarded B.Th. certificates by his lordship Rt. Rev. Vincent Aind, the Bishop of Bagdogra diocese and the chairperson of the Governing Board. Dr. Emmanuel Uppamthadathil MSFS the rector of St Clement College, Nogaon, who was guest of honor, gave a very enlightening talk. His lordship Rt. Rev. Vincent Aind Bishop of Bagdogra also delivered a very inspirational message telling them that they must put into practice what they have learnt as they go about in their priestly ministry.

The same day in the evening the Albert's cultural academy under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Niraj Toppo organized a colorful cultural programme and bade the Fourth Year Brother Farewell. Bro. Robin Ekka raised the toast wishing them all well. Br. Gyandup on behalf of the 4th year students responded to the toast. As a concluding remark Fr. Rector congratulated them and wished them all the best for the future ministries in their respective dioceses and congregations.

-Bro. Gabriel Hansda (3rd Yr. Theo)

Exposure Program (12th -18th October, 2022)

Learning does not take place only in the class room. Due to the unavoidable situation of pandemic for last two years Morning Star Regional Seminary was unable to send the students for the exposure program. But this year the students of all the three batches of Theology were blessed to have an exposure program for a week in different places. The Exposure program was held between 12th -18th October.

The students of 1st year Theology went to Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh for the Ashram experience where they were expounded with the enriching philosophy of Hinduism thought by different Gurus and teachers as well as they were lucky to have a glimpse of various other Ashrams and religious places.

The students of 2nd Year Theology went to Patna to have an ecological experience. They went to the nationwide students' organization to promote ecological sensitivity in India- 'Tarumitra', Friends of Trees. There they learnt about the varieties of vanishing plants and their importance. At the end of their stay in the place, the students of 2nd Year Theology were intensified with the importance of saving the ecological system.

The students of 3rd Year Theology went to Holy Family Church, Kearchand the Santal Parish to have a course and to have an experience of Contextual Theology. For two days moderators Fr. Michael Pandian and Fr. Mohan Murmu meticulously guided the students in giving the necessary information about the Santal Tradition and culture. And on third day the students were sent to different villages two by two. They stayed in the particular villages for four days. And on fifth day they returned back to Parish, and had sharing of experience and evaluation. It was a fruitful adventure for all the 3rd Years. They had rich experience with this exposure. By being with the family and people of those villages, Students learn ample of positive things to contextualize theology in different Contexts. The students of all the batches returned back to Seminary on 18th of October, 2022.

-Bro. Robin Ekka (3rd Yr. Theo)

SOME OF THE GLIMPSES OF MEGA YOUTH CONVENTION 2022



BIRTHDAYS

3rd Nov: Fr. Columbus Toppo

3rd Nov: Fr. Sunil Murmu

8th Nov: Fr. John Lasrado

11th Nov: Bro. Roshan Xalxo

20th Nov: Fr. Arun Kumar Ekka

23rd Nov: Bro. Nishad Tigga

24th Nov: Fr. Thomas Vayalil

27th Nov: Fr. Basil S. Pereira

29th Nov: Bro. Nishant K. Minj

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

7th Nov: Frs. Gevenius Kujur and Pathic Lakra

9th Nov: Fr. Sanjay Kindo

10th Nov: Fr. Dipak Beck

11th Nov: Frs. Arun Ekka and Niraj Toppo

13th Nov: Fr. Columbus Toppo

14th Nov: Fr. Bipin Kishore Tirkey

21st Nov: Fr. Arun D.B. Toppo

Bishop's Programme for the Month of November 2022

01	Tuesday	04.00 p.m.	:	Return from Kolkata
02	Wednesday	08.00 a.m.	:	Mass at Bhuttabari cemetery
03	Thursday	09.30 a.m.	:	Golden Jubilee of Pushpika Girls School, Mal
04	Friday		:	Home visitation
05	Saturday	10.30 a.m.	:	Book Release in Pradhan Nagar Parish
06	Sunday	09.30 a.m.	:	Departure for Bangalore
07 - 14	November		:	CBCI/CCBI Meetings in Bangalore
15	Tuesday		:	Return from Bangalore
16	Wednesday		:	Golden Jubilee of St. James School, Binnaguri
17	Thursday	10.30 a.m.	:	Profession in Holy Cross Provincial House
18 - 19	November		:	Recollection for Seminarians, Nagaon
20	Sunday*	09.00 a.m.	:	Mass & Confirmation, Gayaganga Church
21	Monday	11.00 a.m.	:	Blessing a Wedding at Kalchini
22	Tuesday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
23 - 25	November		:	BEC/SSC Regional Meeting at Raiganj
27	Sunday	07.00 a.m.	:	Inauguration of Jubilee, Mailanijote
28 - 30	November		:	National level SCC/BEC meeting, Nagpur

***It is highly recommended that every parish does something for observing Christ the King Feast in a meaningful way. Instruct the people about its significance.**

10 November, Thursday: Monthly Recollection for the Fathers in LPC Matigara from 8.30 a.m.

<http://catholicdioceseofbagdogra.in/>

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