



BAG-e-CHA

Catholic Diocese of Bagdogra

Monthly 'E' Newsletter

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(New Year Issue)

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

January for a Reflection

As we come towards the end of the year 2022 and look forward to the New Year 2023, it is good to take a clue from the name of the first month of the year for our reflection. The name 'January' in the Roman Calendar, it is said, comes from the Roman god by name 'Janus'. Every god among the several gods has some specific role and characteristic. Accordingly, god Janus is said to have had two faces – one in front as many of us have it and another at the back. From this point of view the name 'January' is an apt name for the first month of the new year. It is fitting because this month is partly a time to look back into the past (year) and partly to look ahead!

Thus, looking back we may assess our life and work, what we have given and what we have received, what we have contributed and what we have achieved; that is, to/from the society at large and to/from the Church in particular. Secondly, this new year what we wish or resolve to give, contribute and achieve for the society at large and for the Church in particular.

As priests and religious we are consecrated to the Lord and His vineyard, which is the Church

and the society at large. Our work and life both should be witnessing to the fact that God's love and concern for the humanity and the entire creation continues to be there. Human values and concern for the nature or the mother earth both are at stake today. Can we make a difference in and through our way of living and working? What are the areas we need to improve, and which are the things we need to change in ourselves first and in the structure?

We are in the synodal period (2021 to 2024). The call to synodality is a clarion call to bring about change in our leadership, in our attitude and in our approach. Each one of us as priests and religious is a leader. It would be worth focusing on ourselves as leaders and our leadership.

May the Lord of History give us courage to change ourselves as leaders first and help us to bring about courageous but effective changes in the society and the church!

+Vincent Aind
Bishop of Bagdogra

Panighata:

The advent was a season for a good preparation for the Christmas. We first went to all the substations having carol singing and through it giving message to faithful and then confession. Vigil Mass took place at 10.30 pm on the 24th of December. The Liturgy was very much appreciated by all especially the well selected hymns for the occasion. After Mass everyone had some tea and snacks. On the 25th we gave Mass in some of the substations. Fr. Lalit Tirkey SJ helped us by offering Mass in one substation.

In order to conclude the year 2022, we had one hour of adoration on 31 Dec followed by Vigil Mass at 11 pm at Panighata village chapel. Once again on the New Year Day all the substations got Mass, thanks to the availability of Frs. Lawrence SJ and Santosh Kujur.

-Fr. Rajen Kujur

Gayaganga:

1. Program for the Widows and Widowers

The Program for the Widows and Widowers was held on Dec. 11 in Gayaganga Parish. 400 Widows and Widowers turned up for this program. Fr. Joseph Xaxa offered the Holy Mass for them and made special prayers. He tried to make them aware of their double responsibilities as single parents. They were reminded of the need to show special concern for their children. There was short input session after the Mass. Mr. Lazarus Ekka (Catholic Sabha President) spoke about the Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission. He also stressed on family prayer. Fr. Peter Pappu SJ emphasized on spiritual life, good life and responsibilities etc. of these Widows and Widowers. Some of these participants became emotional as they shared how most of the time they are suppressed by others in the society. They are not considered as good persons. And they face many other challenges every day. This program strengthened and motivated them to stand firm against such unpleasant happenings. They asked for Holy Mass at least once a month separately for themselves. They thanked the Parish Priest for organizing this program. Finally, everyone was served delicious lunch.



2. Pre-Christmas Get-Together for the Village Catechists, Panch, Mahila and Youth Leaders

Pre-Christmas Get-Together for the Village Catechists, Panch, Mahila and Youth Leaders was celebrated on Dec. 18 in Gayaganga Parish. Around 200 leaders were present for the Holy Mass and gathering. Fr. Simon Kerketta SJ presided over the Holy Mass. Christmas Gathering started after the Mass. Each one brought a gift to give to his/her Christmas friend. They also did the carol singing. Fellowship meal was provided for them. Finally, Fr. Peter Pappu SJ addressed the group thanking them for their selfless service and support to the Church.

3. Distribution of Ration in the Parish

The Vincent De Paul Society of the Parish distributed ration to 130 poor families of the Parish including a few non-Christians. Three items (Suji, Sugar and oil) were distributed in the name of Christmas, so that all may enjoy this festive time having something at home.



4. Pariwar Diwas

On the occasion of feast of Mary Mother of God, Gayaganga Parish celebrated *Pariwar Diwas* on 1st Jan. Fr. Joseph Xaxa was the chief celebrant on this day. A large number of people participated,

sitting family-wise. At the end of the Mass before the final blessing each family was blessed individually. It took time but for good reason.

-Fr. Joseph Xaxa

Tirhana Village Chapel Blessed

Factory Line, Tirhana, did not have any respectful place to gather for prayer meetings and for Mass as and when a priest came to the village. This much needed village chapel was finally ready with some help from the SOS India, Italy. On 31st of December this chapel was blessed in the name of St. Sylvester. Some 50 Catholic families rose to the occasion to do the cleaning of the compound and decorating the new chapel. They also organised a good meal for the invited guests and their own community of faithful. The Catholic community from Merry View Tea Garden offered a yeoman help by giving more than a mere moral support for the liturgical celebration. There were a few Catholics also from Ord Tea Garden. Frs. Yacub Kindo, Anil Gotivada, Edward Kerketta, Niraj Toppo and Alwyn Minj SJ concelebrated with the Bishop. There were three guests of honour as representatives of the SOS India from Italy for this auspicious occasion.



Community Hall Blessing in Titlidangi

A church is more than just a place of worship. Church plays a vital role in our Christian community. While starting and managing a church, one of the most important things to do is

stay organized. Formal but solemn inauguration and blessing of the new church dedicated to St. Patrick took place on 1 January in Titlidangi. Rt. Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind, Priests, Religious Sisters and invited guests were welcomed by washing of their feet with water and garlanding according to Adivasi culture. Without further delay the SOS India representative cut the ribbon and the Bishop entered the Church blessing it with Holy Water. Then there was blessing of the most sacred place, the altar. Only after that the Holy mass began. The local youth and Mahila Sangha made a splendid choir.

Three special guests Patrizia, Don Andrea and Mr. Zani Giuliano from Italy, who had helped us to build this Holy Church, honoured the occasion. After Mass there was a felicitation and cultural programme organized by our youth and interesting items from different villages. Mr. Athnas Kujur presented the History of the parish of Titlidangi.

The entire program was well organized and came out really excellent way with the providence of God and collaboration of one and all in the community. The parishioners are truly very grateful to God for his abundant blessings. They are sincerely grateful to all the people who assisted in making this edifice and this inaugural event a success.

-Fr. William Tirkey



BRBC-CRI-CDPI Annual MEETING at MATIGARA

The annual meeting of the Bengal Regional Bishops' Council (BRBC), Catholic Religious of India (CRI), Conference of Diocesan Priests of India (CDPI) of the West Bengal-Sikkim Region took place from 5th to 7th Dec 2022. This time, the diocese of Bagdogra hosted the annual meeting and the venue was 'Loyola Pastoral Centre, Matigara'. There were total 76 participants that included 7 regional bishops, Bishop Alwyn D'Silva (Auxiliary Bishop of Bombay archdiocese), the CBCI chairperson for ecology, and the major superiors and representatives of different religious congregations and the dioceses. The main theme of the meeting was: Ecological Conversion. The inaugural ceremony began at 10:30 am. Rt. Rev. Bishop Vincent Aind, the local ordinary, officially welcomed the participants to the diocese of Bagdogra and to this seminar.

The first session began at 3 pm. In his keynote address Rt. Rev. Alwyn D'Silva highlighted the theme and presented some facts and figures of ecological sin and stressed on the need of ecological conversion. The second resource person, Sr. Colette SJC, presented the climate scenario of Bengal and Sikkim. The third session was addressed jointly by Sr. Sabina Pathrose and Bro. Sunil Britto who separately spoke about ecological conversion and the cry of the mother earth.

Sr. Sabina and Br. Sunil continued on the second day and both elaborated the ideas of '*Laudato si'*' by Pope Francis. In the evening, there was a lively group discussion. Before ending the day we heard Dr. Pankaj Chaudhary on the "Culture of Compassion". He highlighted how in today's

family and society "palliative care" is the need of the hour.

The third day was kept for presentation of the reports from the region. The BRBC report was presented by Most. Rev. Thomas D'Souza. Rev. Fr. Vivien Andrew SJ presented the CRI report. Rev. Fr. Anup Mondol presented the CDPI (Bengal) report. Before going for the concluding Eucharistic celebration there took place the evaluation of the entire program. There was much appreciation from the participants and also some suggestions for conducting the program in a better way. The program ended with a vote of thanks by the regional executive committee. All these three days, the Holy Mass was celebrated in the parish church respectively by Bishop Vincent Aind, Archbishop Thomas D'Souza and Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the Nuncio. Krishnagar was proposed as the venue for the next annual meeting, but the theme is yet to be chosen.

-Fr. Anil Kumar Gotivada



BIRTHDAYS AND ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

BIRTHDAYS	ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY
05 JAN: FR. TELESPORE TOPPO	05 JAN: PRADEEP EKKA
10 JAN: FR. RAJEN KUJUR	
11 JAN: FR. SANTOSH MARDI, BRO. AMIT KUJUR	
14 JAN: FR. GEVENIUS KUJUR	
16 JAN: FR. DIPAK C. BECK	

BISHOP'S PROGRAMME FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2023

01	Sunday	10.00 a.m.	:	Blessing of the Church in Titlidangi Parish
02	Monday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
03	Tuesday	05.00 p.m.	:	Departure for Krishnagar
04	Wednesday	04.00 p.m.	:	BRBC Meeting
05	Thursday	06.30 a.m.	:	Eucharist in Amghata Propaedeutic Centre/Meetings
06	Friday	08.30 a.m.	:	GB Meeting in Morning Star Regional Seminary
07	Saturday		:	Return by Darjeeling Mail
08	Sunday	09.30 a.m.	:	Christmas Gathering of Mahila Sangh of the Diocese
09	Monday	06.00 p.m.	:	International Zoom Meeting with Efesini Bishops
10	Tuesday	02.00 p.m.	:	Visit to the Bagdogra parish
11	Wednesday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
12	Thursday	07.00 p.m.	:	Departure for Kolkata
13	Friday		:	Meeting with Seminarians in Morning Star Seminary
14	Saturday	10.00 a.m.	:	Nuptial Blessing of a nephew at Behala Church
15	Sunday		:	Return from Kolkata
16	Monday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
17	Tuesday		:	Reception at Malbazar
18	Wednesday		:	Malbazar / Return to Siliguri
19	Thursday		:	Monthly Recollection
20	Friday		:	Bishop's House, Siliguri
21	Saturday	01.30 p.m.	:	Wedding Mass, Siliguri Don Bosco Shrine
22	Sunday		:	Departure for Kolkata
23	Monday		:	Departure for Bangalore
24-30	January		:	CCBI Meetings, St. John's Medical College, Bangalore
31	Tuesday		:	Return from Bangalore