



THE BRIDGE

a newsletter from archbishop's house
32, Mother Teresa Sarani (Park Street), Kolkata - 700016

MARCH 2024



Editorial

Happy Easter! The Lord is risen. Alleluia! Crown of victory comes after the painful cross, glory shines after the shadow of Calvary; and resurrection blooms after crucifixion. We rejoice at the dawn of new life - a victory over sin and death. We can ask like St. Paul: "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" (1Cor 15:55) The wounded Nazarene is now the healer of wounds; the victim of violence is now the liberator of victims and the lamb of sacrifice is the Lion of Judah. The sufferer has conquered.

Easter gives us the possibility to hope in the life of truth and love. It gives us the hold in goodness and kindness. It gives us the strength to believe in the power of God. It assures us of the victory over all powers of evil. It opens the door for all to enter the gates of heaven. It offers us faith in the power of truth and humanness.

It might seem impossible to defeat the powerful enemy; it might seem quite unfeasible to pass through the tunnel of darkness; it might look an unachievable task to overcome the forces of evil. However, Easter teaches us that even a candle light is mightier than all darkness put together; life is stronger than the unstoppable death and grace is more prevailing than all the sins bound together.

Easter comes to tell us that we are an Easter People, and the final victory is for those who are doing God's will. Tombs cannot withhold the power of truth. The curtain of the temple will be torn so that every human being can enter the sanctuary of God. The cross becomes the symbol of liberation for those who are oppressed. All those who trust in God can shout together 'Alleluia' for Jesus Christ is Risen !!



- Fr. Rudolf D'Souza

The Day of Consecrated Life Celebrated St. Patrick's Church, Dum Dum



We celebrate the Day of Consecrated men and women every year on 2nd February. Liturgically it is the Feast day of the presentation of Our Lord in the Temple of Jerusalem. St. Patrick's Church, Dum Dum, celebrated this Feast day and the day of Consecrated Life with Seven Religious Communities: SMI sisters, Ursuline sisters, MC brothers and sisters. Auxilium sisters, Sacred Heart Fathers and Christian Brothers who are living in the vicinity of our parish and helping in our parish ministry in various ways. We thank them and the Almighty God for the joy of Consecrated Life.

By: Fr. Michael Debabrata Mukha

CONFIRMATION AT INFANT JESUS CHURCH, BEHALA

On 28th January, 2024, the parishioners, priests and religious of Infant Jesus Church, Behala were happy to have His Grace Archbishop Thomas D'Souza as the main celebrant, along with Fr. Shyam Charan Mandi, Parish priest, and co-pastor Fr. Vanathu Raja, for the Holy Mass celebrated for the sacrament of Confirmation that was conferred upon the nine eligible candidates. It was indeed a very joyous occasion as the three communities, English, Bengali and Hindi came together to be a part of this auspicious event collectively. The Eucharistic celebration was a soul-enriching one as His Grace reflected upon the ultimate qualities and rules of an individual who is a true follower of Christ. A short and sweet cultural programme followed the Mass where some of the Confirmed candidates and the English, Hindi and Bengali communities presented melodious renditions of some Gospel songs in honour of the 26th Episcopal Ordination Anniversary of His Grace and 25th priestly Ordination Anniversary of Parish priest Fr. Shyam Charan Mandi. Shortly after the programme, a fellowship meal satiated everyone's hunger, thereby bringing a pleasant ending to the day's celebrations.

By: Disha Ghosal



KRISTO JYOTI ASHRAM, KAMALSOLE CELEBRATED THE PARISH FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD

It was a fitting time to thank God for his unconditional love to whole universe (Jn.3:16). The Church of Cristo Jyoti Ashram Kamalsole celebrated its feast day on 4th February, 2024 called 'The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple'. As usual the crowd was waiting for a year to celebrate the parish feast. Almost three hundred faithful were present along with 10 religious sisters. The main celebrant for the Mass was Fr. Reginald Fernandes, the Dean of Midnapore. The celebration began at 10.30 am welcoming the guests. In his homily Fr. Reginald spoke about Christ as the light of world. We are called to be God's light to every person whom we meet in our pastoral ministry. Fr. Upendra Nayak thanked all the priests, religious and the faithful for their active participation in the celebration of the Parish Feast.



OBITUARY



(by Fr. Dominic Gomes at the funeral of Fr. Godfrey Fernandes) (18.04.1952 – 06.02.2024)

Fr. Godfrey Egbert Fernandes was the eldest son born on 18th April 1952, to devout and faith-filled parents - the Late Isaac and Magdalene Fernandes – at Muchuru, Gajimat, St. Francis Xavier parish Moodu Ferar, Diocese of Mangalore. Of his 4 younger brothers, Fr. Walter Fernandes is a priest for the Diocese of Darjeeling, and Mr. Francis, Mr. Stany and Mr. Oswald Fernandes have their own families, and are present here today. The two sisters – Sr. Gretta and Sr. Priscilla – are religious Sisters: one in the Congregation of the Little Sisters of Bethany and the other, an Ursuline Franciscan Sister. Thus, of the 7 siblings, four have been serving the Lord as priests and religious, a wonderful expression of faith and the fruit of the exemplary Catholic life of the parents!

After completing his Class 10 in St. Aloysius High School, Mangalore, in 1969, Fr. Godfrey decided to join the Archdiocese of Calcutta, and was sent to St. Joseph's Seminary, Mangalore, and he completed pre-University studies from St. Aloysius College, Mangalore. For Philosophy and B.A. studies, he was sent to Morning Star College, Barrackpore, from 1971 to 1974. After completing his theological studies from Morning Star Regional Seminary, Barrackpore. Fr. Godfrey was ordained a priest on 5th February 1978 at Holy Cross Church, Lower Parel, Mumbai. Fr. Godfrey's missionary spirit and pastoral zeal took him to different parishes in the Archdiocese of Calcutta. 1978: Curate at Sacred heart Church, Dharamtala; 1980: Curate at St. Paul's Church, Kamarchowki; 1984: he was appointed Priest in-charge of Holy family church, Kearchand; 1986: as curate at St. Patrick's church, Dum Dum; 1987 St. Teresa's Church, Moulali, Kolkata; from 1988 to 1993, Fr. Godfrey served as Parish Priest of St. Joseph's Church, Barrackpore. In 1993, he was sent to St. Joseph's Chapel as Priest in-charge at Chittranjan, now the Diocese of Asansol; He became the Parish Priest of the same Parish at Chittranjan in June 1996. In 1999, he was sent to Srikrishnapur – Geonkhali (Haldia) as Priest in-charge.



From 8th May to 18th May 2000, when he had gone home for holidays, to bless the wedding of his brother, after a road accident, Fr. Godfrey was admitted to Father Muller's hospital, Mangalore, on 14th May 2000. This was a testing period for Fr. Godfrey, of his faith, and he endured this suffering patiently, and stayed on in Mangalore attending to his health till December 2000. In 2001, Fr. Godfrey was assigned to Nirmala Mata Girja at Barasat as Priest in-charge. In 2002, he was appointed priest in-charge of Rupantor Community Centre, Barrackpore. In January 2004, Fr. Godfrey was sent to Sacred Heart Church, Chandannagar, as Curate, and in May 2004, he was appointed Curate at Sacred Heart Church, Kharagpur, and also in-charge of St. Aloysius' Orphanage & Boarding, Jholi. In January 2007, Fr. Godfrey was Priest in-charge at Balichak. In January 2013, Fr. Godfrey was sent for Mission work in Ghatal area of Paschim Medinipur District, and he continued to be there till May 2021. Due to health complications, Fr. Godfrey was in Vianney Home, Kolkata, for over two years. Due to high blood sugar his kidneys were badly damaged, and he was prescribed dialysis thrice a week. Started in Kolkata, this treatment was continued in St. Joseph's Hospital, Midnapore, and Fr. Godfrey, passed away there at 7:10 a.m. on 6th February 2024 having received the Sacraments of the Church, and with his priest brother - Fr. Walter Fernandes - present at his side. He had completed 46 years as priest on 5th February 2024, the previous day of his death.

Fr. Godfrey was a zealous pastor and missionary. His love for the Gospel and the people would make him undertake any sacrifice to that end. His final stage of priestly life and ministry at Ghatal brought many to the Catholic Faith through his preaching, teaching and visits. His association with the Neo-Catechumenal Way helped him to form Communities based on solid Catholic faith. This in turn, made him help the poor in any difficult and needy situation. When there were floods in Ghatal, and as himself had to stay on the terrace of the house for over a week, Fr. Godfrey with the help from the Seva Kendra or Missionaries of Charity Sisters from Malancha, Kharagpur, reached out to people helping them with ration etc. His exemplary priestly life and ministry will always be remembered by all who have known him, with love and gratitude.

Fr. Godfrey, being the eldest of the siblings, kept all of them together with good contacts and communication. He loved his family and his brothers and sisters. They in turn loved him too. This was very clearly shown by their visits to him during his illness, and by their prayers. Fr. Walter would come down from Kalimpong regularly to visit his brother and he spent nearly three weeks when Fr. Godfrey was admitted to St. Joseph's Hospital, Midnapore, right till the end. The Archdiocese of Calcutta is grateful to the departed parents of Fr. Godfrey and all his family members, all of whom are present here this morning, for their generosity in giving Fr. Godfrey to the Archdiocese of Calcutta as a missionary priest.

As we entrust Fr. Godfrey to the loving mercy and care of God our Father, may Fr. Godfrey hear the words of the Lord: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Master". May Fr. Godfrey who was a faithful priest and missionary, rest in peace.

SISTERS ADORERS HANDMAIDS OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AND OF CHARITY (AASC) CELEBRATE THEIR XIII PROVINCIAL CHAPTER



Sisters Adorers, Kolkata Province celebrated their XIII Provincial Chapter at their provincial house, Kolkata from 29th January – 02 Feb. 2024. It was presided over by Rev. Sr. Pilar Casas, the newly elected Superior General. The theme of the Chapter was “**Vibrant Communities, that walk in Hope, Open to the Spirit, Conscious of the Reality to accept them as it is, Care for Life and Bring Joy to the Mission.**”

In this Chapter the assembly re-elected Sr. Lissiamma Joseph as the Provincial Superior and Srs. Thresiamma Philip, Mary Abraham, Aparna Singh and Sophiamma Devasia as the provincial councilors. We thank them for their openness to the will of God by accepting to serve Him in the Congregation for the coming three years. Thank you dear Sisters for your availability. God continue to bless you.

By: Sr. Rita Kiro AASC

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH, BARASAT CELEBRATED THE FEAST DAY

The Church dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, Barasat celebrated the feast day on Sunday, Feb 11, 2024. His Grace Archbishop Thomas D'Souza was the main celebrant at the Thanksgiving Mass in the morning.

The concelebrant priests were, Fr. Henry Saldanha (Dean), Fr. F. Sunil Rosario (Parish priest, Fr. Pat Walsh, SJ, (Rector, Arunoday), Fr. Arijit Bar (Rector, JMV Minor Seminary, Taki Road, Fr. Robin P. Banerjee (Director, Proggaloy), the Conventual Fathers and Fr. Leo Parimal Hembrom (Curate). Besides, a few congregations within the parish also took part in the feast day celebration. The First communion was received by six candidates and other six candidates received the Sacrament of Confirmation. They were prepared for the two sacraments by the Sunday School teachers, Sr. Abhaya Teres M.C, Mrs. Asha Daniel and Mrs. Namita D'Costa.

His Grace, Archbishop Thomas spoke on the power of healing touch of Lord Jesus Christ. When a leper approaches Jesus, he stretched out his hand and healed him. He spoke on the dignity of human person and to respect everyone without any discrimination. He applied the similar principle within the parish set up to practice compassion and mercy in all circumstances.

The tri-language liturgy was well organised. There is a sizeable number of parishioners from different ethnic backgrounds. The languages spoken in the parish are Hindi, Bengali and English and regular Masses are held in all three languages.

A short cultural programme was put up to celebrate the feast day. The minor seminarians sang the welcome song. It was followed by a skit on the apparition of Our Lady of Lourdes to St. Bernadette by the aspirants of Auxilium Convent (FMA). The novices of Holy Cross Congregation (FC) presented a song in action and the girls of providence Convent performed a dance and sang a song. Archbishop was invited to cut the feast day cake. He also released a book titled “Migration and Human Trafficking” edited and compiled by Fr. Sunil Rosario.

Soon after the cultural programme, the Archbishop spent some time with the members of Parish Council to know and understand the parish situation. It was obvious from all that was spoken out that all – priests, consecrated men and women and the lay faithful have to live the synodal way - participation, communion and mission within the parish. If they have to give witness to Jesus Christ and be committed to Kingdom values, they should enter into this synodal spirit, in collaboration and active participation.

By: Fr. Sunil F. Rosario





Archbishop Thomas D'Souza wishing Fr. Reginald Fernandes on his 75th birthday at Archbishop's House.

RECOLLECTION - FEBRUARY 2024

The monthly recollection, for priests residing in the Archdiocese of Calcutta was held on Thursday 22nd February 2024, at Archbishop's House. The said recollection was animated by Fr. Sam Thomas VC, presently, Director of Emmaus Prayer Centre, at Sarath Bose Road, Kolkata. He shared his reflection on the meaning of the Holy Season of Lent, viz Lent is a beautiful time to deepen our spiritual roots, in search of Jesus, the Living Water (Jn 7:37-38). At the very outset he insisted that the primary duty of a priest, the chosen one of God is, to thirst for Jesus, the living water and discerning, Jesus, the Lord and Master's holy will in our Priestly ministry. He cited the life example of David, the shepherd boy, chosen one of God, and how he failed in his commitment and yet God loved him, when he sincerely repented and asked for God's forgiveness (2 Sam:11-12; Ps 51:11). He also said that one simple chosen one of God, a Priest, can bring many souls to the Lord. He gave the example of GPS. If GPS stopped showing the direction, one may not reach his/her desired destination, so, how can a priest, lead his people to God, if he stopped showing the right direction of God to people?




A priest could be engaged with a variety of activities and ministries, yet, the priests could miss out very badly, the true purpose or objectives of priestly ministry in leading people to God. Lent is a time to slow down our busy life in order to introspect. Priestly faithfulness means to preserve the Priestly identity as man of God and prayer. The preacher insisted that the Lenten season is a good time for the chosen one of God, to renew and restructure his spiritual life. Lent is also a great time to return to God, nature/creation if needed with interest, what we have borrowed by caring for our common Home. Internal transformation or a change of heart and mind is the need of the hour during this Lenten pilgrimage

By: Fr. Peter Anthony




Happy Birthday
MARCH

05	Fr. Joseph Sudhir Tudu
05	Fr. Martin Boidyanath Singh
05	Fr. Jowakim Dung Dung
06	Fr. Manohar Tirkey
07	Fr. Charles Naren Hembram
11	Fr. Upendra Nayak
15	Fr. George Joy Mondal
16	Fr. A. Soosai Manickam
17	Fr. Anthony Patrick Paul
25	Fr. Peter Tigga




Ordination
MARCH

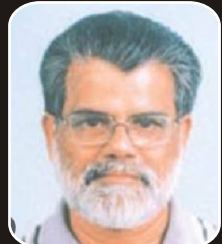
02	Fr. Stephen Shibunath Tudu
11	Fr. Martin Boidyanath Singh
15	Fr. Orson Wells
24	Fr. Joseph Sudhir Tudu
25	Fr. Arun Raj B.
25	Fr. Kishore Dominic Munda




Pray for the deceased



Fr. Godfrey Fernandes (71)
at St. Joseph's Hospital,
Midnapore on 06.02.2024



Fr. P. C. Mathew SJ (84)
at St. Xavier's College,
Kolkata on 11.02.2024



Mr. Mathachen (73)
elder brother of
Fr. Kuriakose T.G.
Muhamma Alleppey, Kerala
on 11.02.2024

ARCHBISHOP'S PROGRAMME: MARCH 2024

01 Fri ABH	
02 Sat 10:30 a.m.	Sacred Heart Chinese School, Kolkata attend Parents' Day Celebration
03 SUN 10:00	Seva Kendra Calcutta Synod 2024 Team Meeting (till 1:00 pm)
04 Mon 10:00 a.m.	ABH Vocation Promoters' Meeting
05 Tue 10:00 a.m.	Seva Kendra Calcutta ABCD Executive Committee Meeting
06 Wed ABH	
07 Thu 09:30 a.m.	ABH Ongoing Formation of Priests : Group I
08 Fri ABH	
09 Sat 09:00 a.m.	Christ the King Parish Pastoral Visit (9 th & 10 th)
10 SUN 09:30 a.m.	Christ the King Church, Park Circus Holy Mass; Women's Day Celebration
11 Mon 04:00 p.m.	Goethals Health Centre, Dharamtala Governing Board Meeting
12 Tue ABH	
13 Wed 04:00 p.m.	ABH CALCUTTA SEED Exec. Committee Meeting
14 Thu 10:00 a.m.	Bishop's House, Baruipur Meeting
05:00 p.m.	ABH Meeting: St. Joseph's Hospital Trust
15 Fri ABH	
16 Sat 10:00 a.m.	Serampore Parish Pastoral Visit (16 th & 17 th)
17 SUN 08:00 a.m.	Imm.Concep.Church, Serampore HolyMass; Installation: new Parish Priest
18 Mon 06:05 a.m.	to Ranchi (from Howrah) Night Halt: Archbishop's House, Ranchi
19 Tue 10:30 a.m.	Loyola Grounds, Ranchi Installation of Archbishop Vincent Aind
10:00 p.m.	Arrival: Kolkata/ABH
20 Wed ABH	
21 Thu 09:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	ABH Priests' Recollection
05:30 p.m.	Cathedral of the Most Holy Rosary CHRISM MASS
22 Fri ABH	Day of Prayer & Fasting
23 Sat ABH	
24 SUN 09:00 a.m.	Cathedral of the Most Holy Rosary Holy Mass: Palm Sunday
06:00p.m.	Sacred Heart Church Hall, Dharamtala: 'The Old Rugged Cross'
25 Mon 09:15 p.m.	to Purnea (from Sealdah)
26 Tue 07:15 a.m.	Arrival: Katihar/ BH Purnea
05:00 p.m.	BH Purnea Recollection to Priests
27 Wed 10:00 a.m.	Purnea Cathedral Chrism Mass
04:35 p.m.	to Howrah (from Katihar)
28 Thu 03:55 a.m.	Arrival: Howrah/ABH
06:00 p.m.	Cathedral of the Holy Rosary Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper
29 FRI 02:00 p.m.	- do - GOOD FRIDAY: Way of the Cross
03:00 p.m.	- do - Liturgy of the Lord's Passion & Death
30 Sat 10:30 p.m.	- do - Easter Vigil
31 SUN ABH	EASTER SUNDAY

Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (PWP): March 2024: For the New Martyrs:
"We pray that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world inflame the Church with their courage and missionary enthusiasm".

I wish all our priests, Consecrated persons and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of Calcutta the graces of Lent, especially Holy Week, and **A HAPPY EASTER! Alleluia, Alleluia!!**

Kindly send in news of programmes within the Archdiocese and in special regard to Archbishop's visits to different parishes, to Fr. Rudolf D'Souza

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