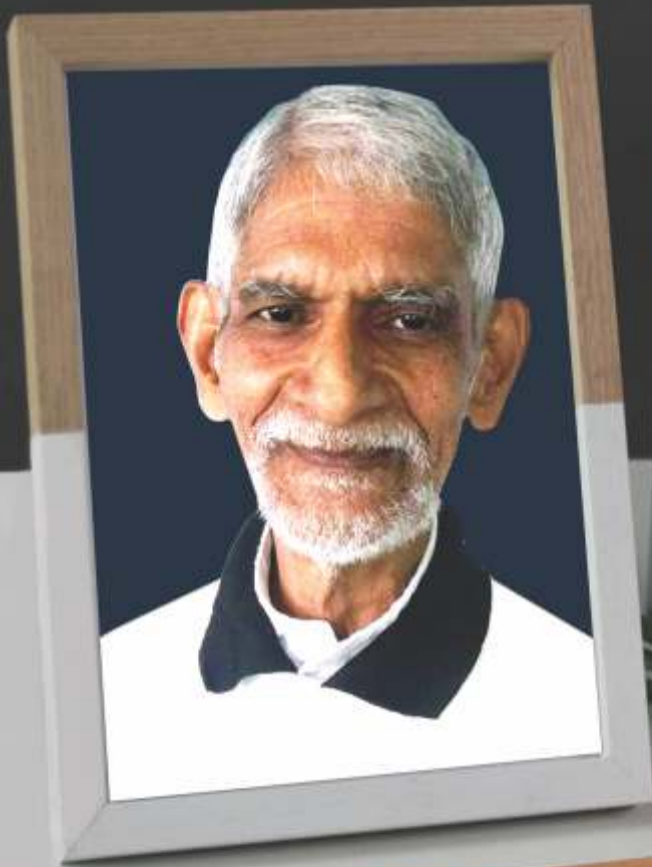




SDB PROVINCE OF GUWAHATI - ING

NEWS *Line*

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Rev. Fr Thomas Kochupurackal, SDB
(1938-2019)



Fr. Jose Thiruthanathy, SDB
(1949-2019)



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Editorial..

Remembrance as Legacy

Dear Readers,

“We are Easter people”, says Pope Francis. We are Easter people to the extend we remember and keep alive and live the memory of Easter event, handed down to us by the Apostles and through their successors about Jesus Christ. This remembrance forms a legacy of Christian Catholic faith which is an incomparable and inestimable treasure to cherish and to pass it on. It is the legacy of wisdom, the legacy of belonging and the legacy of hope for all who believe in the Risen Christ.



Fr. Pojit Marak, sdb
Editor, Newslines

Pope Francis in his address to the elderly gathered at St. Peter's Square on September 28, 2014, called the world to honour the elderly. He affirmed that the elderly are a treasury of wisdom and a gift of love and beauty for both the Church and the world. Pope Francis says, "A people that does not have care for [the elderly], that does not treat them well, has no future: such a people loses its memory and its roots."

Therefore, we ought to remember cherishingly the words and deeds of the past and the present pioneers and elderly confreres as it is one of the privileged channels to pass on a legacy. Remembrance serves to rejoice, relish, and relive their achievements in human, pastoral and salvific services to the humanity they served. In other words, in remembering and sharing the stories of our elderly confreres and pioneers and especially their unique and rich experiences of priestly and consecrated life lived faithfully till the last breath of their life, we pass on a pastoral, salesian and religious wisdom and strengthen our interconnectedness to each other and guarantees the continuity of our charism and consecrated life. That's the reason why in this particular issue, I have highlighted much about the life of our beloved “Confrere”, Rev. Fr. K.A. Thomas who was a vibrant and passionate missionary in Garo Hills, in Assam plains and in Mizoram. He passed away on 25th May 2019 at Bosco Mount, Rongkhon, Tura, immediately after the Solemn Feast of Mary Help of Christians which was celebrated on 24th of May.

The sudden, tragic, and mysterious death of Rev. Fr. Jose Thiruthanathy came as a shocker and a heartbreaking news for all of us. However mysterious and dark his death be, as Christians, we look at death from the light eternity. Jesus is our resurrection, our life and our hope.

In this issue of Newslines, I have also tried to present details concerning Amguri Vocational Training Centre, CARE schools, CFG's Government recognition, number of Churches blessed and inaugurated, interview given by Dr (Fr) George Plathottam of our Province to the editor of South Asia Religious News and some other important events that took place in the Province in the last three months such as the Episcopal Ruby Jubilee of Most Rev. George Mamalassery DD, Bishop Emeritus of Tura Diocese, 9th National Conference on Education for Teachers held at DBI and Professions of our young Salesians – renewal and perpetual. I wish you all happy reading.

Rev. Fr. K.A. Thomas Laid to Rest

Hundreds of Priests and sisters and lay people flocked together to pay their last respects to the mortal remains of “Confreere” - Rev. Fr. K.A. Thomas in the Parish of Rongkhon on 26 May 2019. The funeral Mass and the funeral rites were presided over by Most Rev. Andrew R. Marak, DD, Bishop of Tura and assisted by Rev. Fr. Januarius S Sangma, Salesian Provincial. The Bishop during his homily highlighted the untiring pastoral zeal, tremendous faith in the Providence of God and the many hardships he had endured gracefully. Among those who gave the condolence messages were: the Administrator of Tura Diocese, Vice Provincial of Shillong Province of the Salesians, Fr. Shaji on behalf of the CRI unit of Tura Diocese, Mr. Moses Sangma from Garobadha parish, Mr. Kritish Marak of Rongkhon parish, Wilfred Marak, seminarian from Bosco Mount Community, Fr. Charles Sangma read out Mr. Conrad Sangma’s condolence message, Mr. Tom Abraham and Sr. Sherly Abraham, the nephew and the niece of Fr. K.A. Thomas, Fr. Abilash, Rector, Bosco Mount and lastly Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, the

Salesian Provincial delivered the funeral oration.

I can easily sum up the following points after listening to the moving speeches of all those who spoke. That he was a firm believer in the unfailing providence God in his life. He used to say constantly that ‘God provides’. He was extremely generous in helping out those in need. He used to give away whatever money he received from friends and benefactors. He was a great confessor and a good missionary, always and everywhere seeking out souls to save. He not only took passionate care of the spiritual needs of people but also did social development activities for them. Anyone who came in contact with him were edified with his words of wisdom, spiritual anecdotes, and his deep prayerful life. It was a sheer joy and a great blessing to have him in the community said Fr. Abilash, Rector of Bosco Mount, Rongkhon. He was always grateful for every little acts of kindness done to him. In short he was a shining example of priestly life, pastoral love for people like the Good Shepherd, arduous and tireless seeker of souls, and as a great devotee of the Sacred Heart and Mother Mary, the promoter of the devotion to Divine Mercy Chaplet and Rosary wherever he worked.



There was a Requiem Mass for the departed soul of Rev. Fr. KA Thomas on 25th May, the day of his demise at Bosco Mount chapel which was presided over by Rev. Fr. Joseph Teron, Vice Provincial and concelebrated by over 20 priests. Many religious, lay faithful and boarding children participated in the Holy Mass.

The mortal remains of Fr. KA Thomas were taken to St. Dominic Savio Parish,

Garobadha on 26th morning at 5.30 am where 'Confrere' had spent many years of his priestly ministry. Rev. Fr. Januarius S Sangma, Salesian Provincial was the main celebrant of the Holy Eucharist celebrated at Garobadha Parish. Several priests, religious and laity joined in the Requiem Mass. After a brief condolence meeting, the mortal remains were brought to Rongkhon Parish for funeral rites and burial.

Fr. Pojit Marak

Excerpts from Provincial's Funeral Oration

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

Jesus Christ, our risen Lord
took to himself Fr.

Th o m a s
Kochupurackal

(KA), lovingly
known by all
as "Confrere,"

at 6.00 am on
25th May

2019, at our
Aspirantate

House of Bosco
M o u n t a t

Rongkhon, Tura. He

would have completed 81

years of life on 5th July. He was gradually declining in his health. Last year in the month of February (2018), we received the news that Fr. KA Thomas had a fall while visiting his nephew in North Kerala. Not that a fall was anything new for Fr. Thomas, but this was something very

serious this time. When later he was admitted to Fr. Mueller's Hospital at Mangalore, we learned that he had had a stroke and brain concussion. He was unconscious and admitted into the ICU, and the doctors recommended an immediate surgery to remove the brain clot. Though the surgery was successful, Fr. KA Thomas was never the same again.

He could neither stand nor walk. He needed constant care, and was not able to continue his normal activities without help. After the immediate post-operative treatment at Fr. Mueller's Hospital, he was kept at Mamma Margaret Home, Aluva (attached to the Salesian Philosophate of the Province of Bangalore). He was kept there for his recuperation and further treatment for some time, but he constantly called me up to take him back to the North East. When he returned to the Province last year, we could see that he was weak and needed constant support. Gradually he grew fragile, and was admitted a few times in the hospital. His heart too had become very weak.





On 25th May, early in the morning, just a day after the Feast of Mary Help of Christians, the Lord willed to take Fr. Thomas to Himself, on a Saturday and in the month of May, the month of our Blessed Mother Mary—to whom Fr. Thomas was greatly devoted. Though he was sinking steadily, his death came sooner than expected.

We have lost a veteran missionary, a true “confrere,” a saintly religious and priest, and a charismatic figure for many people. We thank God for the religious and priestly life of Fr. Thomas, through whom God has inspired so many people.

Fr. KA Thomas was born on 5th July 1938, to Mrs. Rose and Mr. Augustine Kochupurackal at Muttuchira, Kerala in the diocese of Palai. Not only was he born in a religious and pious family, but also he was born in a family that provided many religious vocations to the Church, especially in the Salesian Family. He was the 6th of eight children: one sister and seven brothers.



Of the eight siblings, three of them became religious. Besides himself and his younger brother Fr. Cyriac, a Salesian, who passed away at Guwahati in 2006, his sister too became a religious in the Congregation of the Sisters of the Destitute. It is interesting to note that four of his nieces became MSMHC Sisters: Sr. Shirley Mary Abraham, Sr. Rose Mary, Sr. Mercy Augustine, and Sr. Mary Mathew.

Fr. Thomas began his novitiate in April 1958 and professed on 24th April 1959 at Sunnyside, Shillong. Noteworthy among his formation days was his movement for his theological studies from Shillong to Kotagiri and then to Bangalore. He completed his theology in the year 1968 and was ordained a priest on 20th December 1968 in Ernakulam. He worked in various communities especially as Assistant Parish Priest in the states of Mizoram, Assam and Meghalaya, particularly in Garo Hills. His zeal for souls made him endearing to many people.

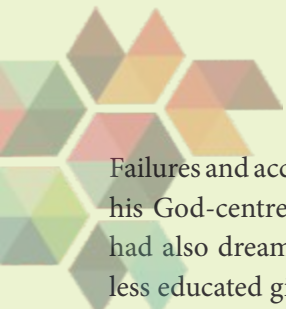
His Masses, homilies, prayer services and even confessions were very long. There was never in a hurry. Everything could be accommodated; everyone was welcome in his life. With his bass and his thunderous voice, he would go on and on with his conversations or with his sacramental celebrations. Order, timetable and structures were not his strong points, but that also showed how strong he was at the heart level. He could relate to any person or every person from his heart.

He was constantly on the move, a true missionary in all the senses. No one could hold him back, nothing could hinder him—not even his ill health. He would limp his way to the villages and remote corners of the various parishes to give them Christ, to instruct them in the faith and administer the sacraments. Thanks to his missionary spirit that Garobadha and Mallangkona were erected into full-fledged parishes in due time. The years that he spent in Mizoram, Boko and Damra were also memorable.

His care for the parishioners was so great, that he would not only take care of them spiritually but also made sure that their day to day living went on smoothly. He would visit their homes to teach them how to preserve food especially for lean seasons. He taught the people how to make chips out of tapioca. In fact he managed to make tapioca chips in a bigger scale. For some time, there were some packets going around marked with the words, “Tapioca chips, made in Garobadha.” Similarly, banana chips, fried groundnuts all packed and sold. He gathered women in the parish and taught them how to do those businesses. He would even bring agricultural experts from Chennai and Kerala to do many types of plantation in the parish's fields.

Fr. KA Thomas was a man of adventures and mishaps, accidents and falls. There are so many jokes and humorous anecdotes of Fr. Confrere that are going around in the Province, especially with his regard to numerous accidents. It is said that there is no bone in his body that has not broken twice.





Failures and accidents were never hindrances in his God-centred life. While at Garobadha, he had also dreamt of starting an association for less educated girls. He had gathered ten young women and instructed them about religious living and also about health care. But he was not able to dedicate sufficient time to guide and accompany them. When individual differences arose, the young women being inexperienced were not able to live together, and the idea of forming them into an association did not take off.

be. He pushed himself to the extremes, and others too.

He always had a broad smile on his face, ever ready to say a word of encouragement or consolation. I wonder if anyone saw in him any overreaction or irritation. He was very kind and compassionate to people.

Fr. KA Thomas was an apostle of devotions. Though he kept changing the forms of devotions, they were all Christ-centred, and manifested his great filial love for our Blessed



Life with Fr. KA Thomas was never easy. Whoever lived with him could vouch to this personality trait of his. He was strict with himself. But he was also equally strict with those under his care. He was a man of conviction. Once he was convinced, he would strive to do it under any circumstances whatever the cost may

Mother. Later years he promoted the devotion of the Divine Mercy, by distributing many pictures or even selling them at subsidized prices.

He found benefactors wherever he went. He had a knack of roping in people for his mission, especially by way of asking them to contribute to his various works. I am not sure if he had

spent any money for himself or his needs. The one pair of shoes that many of you might remember—it had its every part repaired, but he would not give up on it.

Fr. KA Thomas was not just a person who practised radical poverty, he was a man totally for the poor. His love for the poor and marginalized was clearly manifested in his decisions, and in his deeds. His generosity was unmatched. He would see that children got a good meal in the school. The staff and his close associated were provided lunch in the parish

doctor, gave them good food, took them to the nearest hospital and would bring them back to the parish centre and made them stay there till they got better. On one occasion, he brought a very sick woman and made her sleep in the verandah. When the others grumbled and were indifferent, he said, “If you are unhappy, I will keep her in my bed room.”

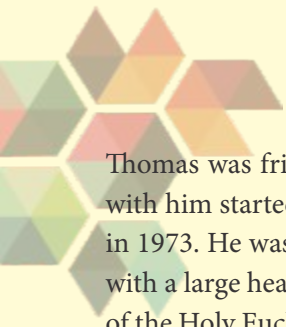
Every place that he went, he made it a home. He made people feel at home wherever he went. He gave his heart to the ordinary persons, and was a consolation to them. The simple people



every day. According to his instructions, church leaders must have breakfast and lunch whenever they come to the parish even in his absence. Every Sunday, after their meetings, the catechists and church leaders were provided meals. When he went for touring and found people who were seriously sick, he would bring them home with him. He attended to them like a

accommodated him easily. His manner of dressing was even shabby at times, that showed he had no time for himself, he was a priest for others, who lived for others.

Fr. Paul Panachikkal, one who had been closely associated with Fr. Thomas, summarizes the life and mission of our dear “confrere” thus: “Fr. KA



Thomas was friend of all. My close association with him started when I was in regency in Tura in 1973. He was a great and zealous missionary with a large heart for all. He was a great devotee of the Holy Eucharist and Mother Mary. He was charismatic and passionate in his belief but occasionally bordering strangeness, it seemed. For me he was an epitome of simplicity and courage. He had an incredible capacity for enduring pain and suffering. I took over from him the parishes of Garobadha and Damra in interesting circumstances but his tenacity and passion for the Lord in challenging circumstances was extraordinary. I am saddened by his demise but gladdened by the thought that we have one more Salesian intercessor in heaven. If his biography is compiled surely I shall contribute very personal and interesting anecdotes. Condolences to Fr. Provincial and the confreres of Guwahati Province. RIP”

Though we are saddened at the passing away of our dear and beloved “confrere,” we hope in the promises of our Divine Saviour who said, “Let not your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and trust in me! In my Father's house there are many rooms. After I have gone and prepared a place for you, I shall come again and take you to me, so that where I am you also may be.”

We truly believe that the life of the faithful departed is changed, not ended. It is our firm hope that we too will be united with Fr. KA Thomas and all the faithful departed. Our death will be a gateway to new life; death will not be the end of us. We will live, but in a transformed state. Death and life will be united. Whatever Fr. KA

did and lived for has not ended. His death is not really an end. It is perhaps a beginning, or rather a continuation of the best that he stood for. Resurrection is going to be the continuation of the best that we can ever think of, and even more! In death, nothing is lost, everything is transformed.

The numerous accidents and ailments in body could not kill him. He had escaped death every time. Even this time, he has escaped death. He was not born for death. He will live forever with Jesus his Saviour, and Mary his beloved Mother.

We entrust Fr. KA Thomas to the Divine Mercy, whose apostle he was while on this earth. In His great and unfailing mercy, may the Lord grant eternal bliss and peace, and also a well deserved rest to His untiring son! Indeed, a valiant son of Don Bosco who fought a good fight till the end and kept the faith. Certainly, the Lord will say to him, “Well done, my good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Master”

(Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial, Guwahati)



Episcopal Ruby Jubilee of Bishop Emeritus George Mamalassery

Bishop George Mamalassery D.D., who retired as the first bishop of Tura in 2007 completed 40 years as bishop this year. The ruby jubilee celebrations were held on 16th March at Walbakgre along with the inauguration and blessing of the new Diocesan pastoral Centre. 17 bishops of the region, priests, religious and lay leaders including Ms Agata Sangma, former union minister participated in the Jubilee celebrations.

The highlights of the day's celebration was the inauguration and blessing of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre followed by the Jubilee Mass and felicitation programme. The Jubilee Mass was presided over by the Jubilarian while an inspiring homily preached by Most Rev. John Moolachira, the archbishop of Guwahati. The Jubilee Mass was followed by a colorful felicitation programme during which seminarians of St. Peter's Seminary and students of St.

Mary's Higher Secondary School, Stephen Memorial School, RSM Nursing school and Montfort Centre of education presented a variety of items. Felicitation messages were given Archbishop Dominic Jala sdb, the Chairman of regional bishops' council and Mr Artius Challang Ch Marak, the president of Garo Hills Catholic Union. During the felicitation, Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial, released the book, "History of the Catholic Church Among the Garos" authored by Dr (Fr) George Plathotham, SDB.

Bishop George was born on April 23rd, 1932 at Kalathoor in Kerala. After his seminary formation at Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonamallee Late Archbishop Louis Mathias D.D ordained him a priest on April 24th 1960.

He then joined the pioneer work of evangelization in the Garo Hills: a remote, hazardous, hilly terrain of Assam infested with Malaria and wild animals. After working at Tura, Baghmara and Dalu for many years as an assistant Priest and later as a Parish priest, the Holy See appointed him as the first Bishop of Tura on February 8th 1979. He was consecrated Bishop on 18th March 1979.





The diocese of Tura, in the state of Meghalaya, progressed much during the 28 years of his leadership in becoming one of the leading dioceses in India in pastoral activities, social and developmental work. He has thus to his credit, more than 30 well established parishes, 57 L.P. schools, 35 M.E. Schools, 16 Secondary Schools, 2 Higher Secondary Schools, 24 Girls' hostels and 23 boys' hostels. Knowing fully well that one of the urgent needs of Garo Hills was to have an excellent college, in 1988 he invited the Salesians to open the Don Bosco College at Tura. Later in his Episcopal ministry, he extended invitation to the Jesuits to open a college at Williamnagar, obtained land for the college and even built the Higher Secondary school building in the college land.

His concern for the sick and the suffering prompted him to establish 30 more dispensaries in the village parishes and the 150 bed Holy Cross Hospital at Tura. During his tenure as Bishop, he financed the

training of dozens of Nurses in Garo Hills so that these in turn could enhance the health of the people living in Villages. The establishment of the Rino Simonetti Nursing School for General Nursing and two Old-age homes for the poor and the destitute, one at Tura and the other at Williamnagar, were major steps in improving the health care in Garo Hills. It was he who invited the Montfort Brothers to establish the Montfort Centre for the Physically challenged at Danakgre. The Diocesan Social Service center (Bakdil) under his patronage grew into being a Major NGO involved in various welfare and people empowerment programmes in Garo Hills. In collaboration with the government, he built a Residential School for Drop-out girl children (KGBV School) at Jengjal, the first of its kind in the whole state of Meghalaya.

Shri M.M. Jacob, the former Governor of Meghalaya, once said: "I bow my head before Bishop George Mamalassery for the

magnificent work he has done in Garo Hills”. On the occasion of the Episcopal Silver Jubilee of Bishop George, the then Governor wrote: “Bishop George Mamalassery is an outstanding spiritual leader and social worker – who worked closely with the people and the government, in implementing several projects – including various educational institutions, medical care centres and the welfare of the weak and the downtrodden. His contributions to the development of the rural areas, and multifarious programmes for the rural poor are widely accepted and appreciated by everyone, irrespective of tribe, religion or community. Above all, his dedication and commitment for the welfare of marginalized and poor, has won him laurels, as a true messenger of peace, goodwill and love”.

Shri P. A. Sangma, the Member of Parliament and former Lok Sabha Speaker, during one of his public speeches emphatically declared: “If I am asked to name a single individual who has done the most for Garo Hills, I would answer without any hesitation whatsoever, that it is Bishop George Mamalassery”. The above statements speak volumes for the unparalleled service Bishop George has rendered to the people of Garo Hills.

After his retirement in 2007, the bishop has been living a quiet and peaceful life. However he continues to help in the

construction works of the diocese, an area in which his expertise is enviable. The new Diocesan Pastoral Centre, which he helped to design and personally supervised, is a living testimony of his dedication and love for Garo Hills.

The Salesians of Guwahati Province offer hearty congratulations to Most Rev. George Mamalassery, Bishop emeritus of Tura on his Ruby Jubilee of Episcopal Ordination and assure him of our prayers. He has been a genuine well wisher of the Salesians and we have experienced and enjoyed his patronage always. Not only the Church in Garo hills grew during his stewardship but also the Salesian works thrived under his patronage and encouragement. Thank you Bishop Mama.



Interview with Fr George Plathottam, Executive Secretary of FABC OSC, on Communication Challenges in Asia



What has RVA contributed to Asia in the past 50 years?

RVA is the only continental radio ministry in the Church and it has been a great

instrument of missionary work in Asia. I do not have accurate data on hand, but I know RVA has impacted many people across this vast continent over the past 50 years. It has reached people who could not be reached by missionaries due to political conditions. I hope some research students will study the impact of RVA on Asia. That would be a good contribution to the Church in Asia and for all those who are in the communication ministry.

What, according to you, is RVA's relevance in Asia?

There is a great yearning for the values of the Gospel. There is also great resistance to the Christian message in some parts of Asia. I believe the founders of RVA were listening to the promptings of the Spirit more than 50 years ago. Today we must continue to listen to what the Spirit is telling us. RVA must continue to remain faithful to the mandate of Christ and announce the Good News. Times have changed, technology has changed dramatically but we must remain faithful to

the mission of making Christ's message known, loved and accepted. In today's world of communication, we must be willing to change, to be challenged, to adapt and adopt new technology, to engage people in dialogue. But our intention and purpose remain unchanged.

What are the future plans of RVA?

One important thing to do still is to help develop good content to meet the growing challenges and the changed technology. It used to be said that the content is king, and it is still so. With lots of fake news around we have much to do to ensure that the voices of the Asian churches are adequately heard by all. There are so many great stories of faith and courage which remain untold, unknown. There are countries where to preach or practice the faith is still a great challenge. But we have so many heroic examples of people who witness to their faith in the face of persecutions.

What are your plans for FABC Office of Social Communications?

FABC-OSC, like other offices, is primarily at the service of the bishops of Asia. More than just doing things, we have to help think, plan, and evolve strategies. We have to help the bishops to bring to their ministry the fruits of social communication. The FABC-OSC has perhaps the greatest number of publications

on communications. It organizes regular annual meetings of the bishops of the member conferences. We hope to offer training for the bishops, especially the newer ones, in social communications, public relations and crisis management, formation of seminarians and clergy and religions in social communications, more effective pastoral plan for social communication, better planning and effective utilization of resources for more effective pastoral ministry, and promote research. We have plans to start a new training institute for communication, which we hope will serve the whole of FABC as well as meet the needs of RVA.

How do you assess the impact of church media on Asia? Do the Church media count in the region?

Social communication has important implications for the Church in Asia. The FABC has with prophetic vision adopted the triple dialogue: dialogue with cultures, religions and poor. These dimensions express the reality of Asia—the continent with some 60 percent of the world's population, majority of them youth.

It is so diverse in cultures and religions; it is the cradle of the world's leading religions; it is also the continent that is least evangelized. Poverty is a grim reality that the church has to deal. The Gospel has something unique to offer to Asia in terms of addressing global concerns like poverty, inequality, migration. Though diverse, Asia has some common

threads that connect it: the quest for God and spirituality, for peace, respect for life, a great sense of family and community values and sharing – to mention just a few.

What is the role of news organizations in the Asian Church?

News organizations are very important in the Church. The events of the Churches and the struggles of the faithful are also the gospels today. We do not know much about the other countries of Asia and the Church situations there. We are better informed about Europe and America than countries next door. We need to improve the quality and extend of news coverage and methods to share them. The news agencies are vital in doing these. We also need to ensure that there are some benchmarks for coverage of Church news. In this age of instant communication truth and accuracy are often casualties.

Church communication must be a model of accuracy and truth. It is unfortunate that often media get bogged down with sleazy scandal stories. Sometimes even the Church media is tempted to go for what is sensational. We need not run down our own house by highlighting sleazy stories and ignore so many other inspiring events. This is happening in the West too where the pre-occupation is with child abuse, and financial irregularities are the dominant news. I am not saying that they should be swept under the carpet.

(Excerpts from the interview to Santosh Digal)



CHILDREN AT RISK EDUCATION (CARE) (*Children of Tomorrow*)

It is truly doubtless that education is the most powerful catalyst for social transformation. But child education cannot be done in isolation. A child will go to school only if the family, particularly the mother, is assured of healthcare and empowered. Moreover, when an elder sibling is relevantly skilled to be employable and begins earning, the journey of empowerment continues beyond the present generation.

Education is both the means as well as the end to a better life: the means because it empowers an individual to earn his/her livelihood and the end because it increases one's awareness on a range of issues – from healthcare to appropriate social behavior to understanding one's rights – and in the process help him/her evolve as a better citizen.

Today, 8 million children in India are out of school – surrounded by poverty, illness and despair; they are fighting a daily battle for their survival. But when projects like CARE intervene to promote Literacy and value based quality education, there emerges a new hope in the horizon for children at risks.

CARE – Children at Risk Education is an educational project initiated by Don Bosco Institute, Guwahati under their outreach

NGO called Don Bosco Youth and Educational Services, (DBYES) Guwahati since the year 2001. In the 1996 ethnic riot between the Bodo's and Adivasi's had left thousands of people homeless. These people had to take shelter in schools and makeshift camps. The project CARE was then started in 2001 to alleviate the pain & suffering of the ethnic affected children of Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon as education for the children had become a distant dream. DBYES was the first organization to start the educational project by opening up tuition centre, The tuition centres have given a ray of hope to the children and has been serving till date as bridge course centres for the young children who do not have a school within walk-able distance. The teachers too benefited from this project as this has enabled them to sustain their family through the monthly allowance that they receive.

From food and nutrition, to education, to livelihoods, CARE is improving education from the grass root level by engaging student, teachers, parents and communities in providing school facilities, training for teachers and leadership opportunities for students.

Over the years CARE has emerged as one of the most renowned humanitarian organization dedicated to the upliftment of child care.

Over the years CARE has emerged as a successful mission spreading light in the lives of many. What began as a literacy centres has now become full-fledged formal schools, providing access to quality education to the deprived and marginalized of the society. Today one can see sunshine on the faces of the children as they proudly walk into the classrooms wearing neat uniforms carrying smart school bags. They now find

Amguri, Joypur, Gaurinagar, Paharpur, Bhudyaguri, Dhunabari, Bhog Amguri & Bhooteachang.

Don Bosco School Amguri is a full-fledged High School equipped with library, computer lab and hostel facilities to accommodate more than 200 children. The efforts of CARE has been to affirmed the



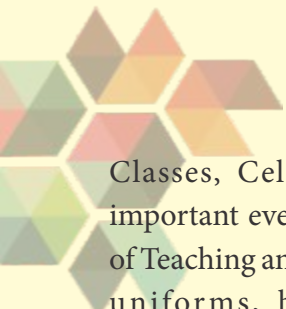
learning meaningful and classrooms learner-friendly. With less than 1000 students in 2001 at 26 CARE centres, CARE at present looks after more than 5500 students at 56 tuition centres. There are 191 teachers out of which 135 are paid from Project fund and the balance 56 by Govt. and village committees. There are also 7 nos of staff fully devoted to CARE project (1 Project Co-ordinator and 6 Cluster Co-ordinators).

Presently in CARE project there are 8 established schools – Don Bosco School

rights of these underprivileged children their rights to an inclusive quality education and preparing them to the future generation leaders.

DBYES has built a recreational park at Amguri and provided the necessary Sports Materials for the physical and mental development of Children of Don Bosco School, Amguri.

Annual activity for Care programme includes a number of classes like Regular



Classes, Celebration of National and important events, Sports Activities, supply of Teaching and Learning Materials (books, uniforms, bags, teaching aids and stationeries), training of Teachers, meeting with parents, exposure programme, repairs and maintenance of schools.

The CARE centres have impacted the students in many ways. Using locally available teaching aids, the organization have always applied creativity in assisting the teachers. Regular visits to families of weak students is one of the main forte to motivate the children to learn and not give up on their studies. In spite of these initiatives exposure trips for the teachers are regularly organized to help and motivate the teacher's as well.

There is also a close monitoring system to keep track of the regularity of each student. Along with the text book knowledge CARE

believes in also improving the health and hygiene of the students. The students are encouraged to maintain neatness while coming to school. They are further boosted to exhibit greater confidence in speaking and expressing their views on various subjects. The centres also have provision for extra curricular activities like games, sports , group activities, musical instruments and so on.

The Parents and Guardians are also inspired to become positive, happy and more participating. It is indeed a great pleasure of them to see their children becoming more smarter, neater and learned.

As a mother Minoti whose daughter has now reached class 7. "I am happy that through DBYES my daughter is getting the best education. It is a big blessing." One of the children from Gaurinagar Care School



is presently pursuing his PhD and is the Principal of a School in Kokrajhar District. Quite many are pursuing their higher studies, including MBA.

The CARE centre's also organize programmes for the Mothers of the children in order to help them understand their rights. Issues like economic independence, problem solving regarding the youth and the society, importance of children education is an importance part of the awareness programs organized for the mothers. DBYES has also helped the mother groups to get registered under DRDA and open bank accounts. With the support from the banks some women have even started small scale business in the locality.

Since the beginning several donor agencies have come forward to support CARE initiative, like Dka Austria, German Doctor's Association, Childaid Network, Germany etc. Today, apart from their own fund management, DBYES was lucky that Child Aid Network, Germany stepped in to support the Care Project since the year 2007 till date. Don Bosco Institute today runs 62 CARE Schools with over 5650 students enrolled in the various schools.

With glimmering lights in their eyes, the children at the CARE centres have found a new hope for their future. As the centre blooms into a bigger flower it continues to devote itself in raising the consciousness of



the poor and helping them to understand their rights in gaining access to needed services. CARE has been a planner, implementer, catalyst, innovator, initiator in mobilizing the local resources to build a self reliant sustainable society for a better future of the marginalized children.

Dr (Fr) P.D. Johnny, Executive Director, said that, "CARE was a good initiative started by DBI at a particular period of ethnic conflict in Assam. Today Government has opened up schools in these areas through SSA. Various Parishes have also opened up schools in these areas which fall directly under their jurisdiction. Today we are facing a lot challenges in maintaining these schools and we need to re-think about the continuity of these schools by DBI."

- Ms Avishka Phukan



The Light in the Dark

Amguri Vocational Training Centre

They say in the midst of all sufferings, there shines a streak of light. Young people by nature are generous, daring and enthusiastic. In today's global knowledge based economy a college education is supposedly a gateway to social mobility and better life long opportunities. But only few have the blessing of getting and availing the opportunities to build and shape their lives.

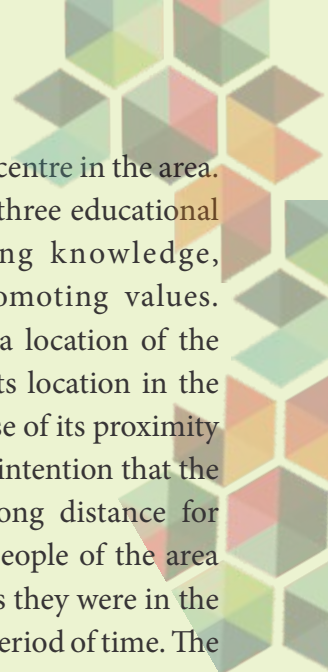
Nearly 40% of India's population consists of youth who play a major role in the development of our Nation. But unfortunately a large segment of the youth population is still deprived of education, empowerment and job opportunities. These features are common in many places for the youth of North East India mostly in the rural areas. In this given scenario, Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre situated in

Amguri has taken huge initiative to train and equip the youth, particularly that of the youth of Kokrajhar, Udalguri and Chirang since the year 2011.

Kokrajhar and its adjoining areas have witnessed riots of various kinds since ages. Due to which few generations have been deprived of any development and growth. But with the mission to upgrade and develop the youth, Don Bosco has been relentlessly working on various sectors with the sole intention of empowering the youth.

Specific skills in today's educational curriculum called soft skills, has become more so important for the overall growth of a youth as it is counted as an asset with other skills. This new addition in one's personality also implies that the soft skills





are an added paraphernalia along with other abilities like the right aptitude, qualities needed for adaptability, planning and organizing abilities and orchestrating change with the use of proper communication tools where as hard skills and so on for the academic and technical competence certified for a job.

The Don Bosco Vocational Training cum Production Centre Amguri, Kokrajhar was built by Don Bosco Institute, Guwahati in partnership with Child Aid Network. It became functional from June 24, 2011 under the charismatic leadership of its founder director Fr V.M Thomas SDB with the sole purpose of reaching out to the most deprived and marginalized youth of the area through vocational training. The prime objective of a vocational training centre was born with the realization that many of the youngsters who were school dropouts within these areas for many reasons were wasting their time loitering around, getting into anti-social activities or going out of Assam in search of a source of income. As there was lack of opportunities and no scope for the youth to understand and develop their skills, the Centre became a hub for them to acquire the bare minimum training to start something of their own, the centre brought a ray of light for the underprivileged youths of the region.

In order to reach out to these young people, and help them lead a dignified life, DBYES felt the need to establish a vocational

training cum production centre in the area. The Centre addresses all three educational objectives of imparting knowledge, teaching skills and promoting values. Amguri was chosen as a location of the centre primarily due to its location in the rural area and also because of its proximity to the market place. The intention that the youth need not travel long distance for training. Moreover, the people of the area were the most deprived as they were in the refugee camps for a long period of time. The idea was to provide the youth with life sustaining skills without displacing them from their rural settings. The Centre has been providing skills in the sectors like Tailoring, Weaving, Driving, Electrical wiremen, Automobile, Hospitality, Carpentry, ISMO, Welding, and to a certain extent in Masonry cum Tiles Making., etc to build a future for themselves.

Amguri Training centre is a centre of life preparation established in a rural setting to train the most underprivileged and marginalized youth in sustainable skills. The DBI team in Kokrajhar was entrusted with the task for preparation of the place and mobilization of the youth. Meetings with villagers and village leaders bore fruit as they came in big numbers to extend possible help in setting up training centres. In addition to theory and practical classes on the domain specific, the centre will offer Basic Computer Knowledge,

Communicative English and Soft Skills to the students.

Situated just around 10kms from the National Highway in Amguri, the centre has a huge infrastructure which is spread out in an area of 17 bighas. Apart from the Centre there is most highly equipped modern facilities which can accommodate around 120 students at a time. The Centre boasts of training around 2500 students since its inception from 2011 till date. The centre has around 12 staffs to cater to the trainees who come for either 3 months or 6 months course. Apart from the course study the centre also offers recreational facilities to the students like organizing cultural events , encouraging sports like football and volleyball. The eligibility criteria for the courses starts from class 8 onwards and within the age group of 18 to 35 years of age. The Centre assures 100% job placements and also support to start up projects.

Today, under the leadership Dr (Fr) P.D. Johny, the present Executive Director of Don Bosco Institute, Amguri is a flourishing centre with several projects in operation including DDUGKY project of the Central Government for BPL candidates. Don Bosco Institute is running similar vocational training cum production



centres in Assam - at Barpeta Road, Bhootechang, Gossaigaon, Boko and Mendal in Meghalaya.

“Through these centres we are reaching out to the unemployed youth, bringing smiles to their faces, getting them skilled, equipped and employable. They are getting employed, earning money, improving their living conditions and bringing hope and succor to their families. Success stories of several youth brings happiness to us too, said Fr. Johny.”

-Ms Avishka Phukan

Government Recognition for Snehalaya



Snehalaya received Government recognition for a period of five years after long struggle. With appreciation and gratitude, Fr. Thaddeus Kujur, Director along with Snehalaya office staff visited several important offices distributing sweets. Few of the offices visited were ASPCR, SCPS, CWC, DCPO, High Court,

and Lawyer Manas Das. The officers were happy for their visits and extended their wishes for a bright future ahead. All the confreres wished the Director of Snehalaya and the community extending their heartiest congratulations for this major milestone for Snehalaya. This recognition was announced on 16th March 2019. The entire Province is grateful to Snehalaya family for having gone through this process successfully.

Holi Celebration - CFG and Snehalaya students

On 17th March 2019 around 2000 children from Snehalaya and CFG children gathered from 40 CFG outreach centres for the Holi Celebrations at Don Bosco Technical School, Maligaon. The day was characterized by drawing competition, playing with Holi Colours, stage performances and a fellowship meal. It was indeed a wonderful and colourful day designed especially for the children. The day was graced by Rev. Fr Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial and well known singer Mr. Pranjal and several invitees. Everyone extended their heartfelt gratitude to the CFG-Snehalaya Team and to Fr. Bhaskaraj,



Rector of DB Maligaon for making this event a grand success. CFG which caters to around 4000 children in and around the city of Guwahati has been actively participating in organizing this event.

Holiday Package at DBI

DBI offers every year a holiday package for IT (Computer) and Spoken English Courses during the months of March, April and May. This year a huge number of Matric and Plus Two students turned up to avail this opportunity. During these three months over 1200 students benefitted either in the various Computer Courses (CCA, Tally, DTP, Hardware and Net working) or Spoken English Classes. They were also given Life Skills and Personality Sessions during the course of their stay. Daily talent search sessions gave them an opportunity to discover and develop their talents. Many of them expressed their gratitude to the Management and Staff for developing in

them timing, punctuality, discipline, work culture, spirituality and self worth. Some of them became emotional recalling their wonderful days in DBI. They said, “we felt loved, cared for, and transformed.” Some of them didn’t want to leave after their prescribed course. More than all the courses it is the family spirit that the Institute creates which makes all the difference. It is wonderful to see the youth gaining confidence, acquiring leadership qualities and taking up responsibilities. As a teacher, I consider myself, truly blessed to be here in this Institute.

-Ms Nancy Yeppo

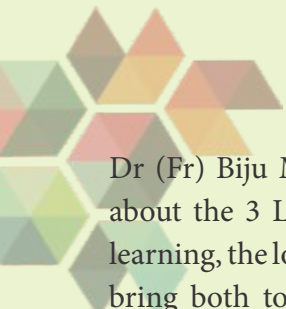




9th National Conference on Education for Teachers

The 9th National Conference on Education for Teachers organized by DBI from May 16-18, 2019 was inaugurated at 9.00 am on May 16, 2019 in the Amphitheatre of Don Bosco Institute, Kharghuli, Guwahati. There were 140 registered participants. The inaugural program was graced by Rev. Fr. Januarius S Sangma, SDB, Salesian Provincial of Guwahati, Dr (Fr) Biju Michael, Registrar, Assam Don Bosco University, Dr (Fr) P. D. John, Chairman of the Conference, Mr. Anand Pillai, the chief resource person and Sr. Magdalene Gonmei FMA, Conference Secretary.

The master of ceremony Ms. Pinky Sarkar began with welcoming the guest and the participants, followed by a prayer dance. A mime was presented by DBI students on the theme of "How a Teacher works in the life of a Student". Dr (Fr) P. D John, Chairman welcomed and felicitated the Chief Guest, Rev. Fr. Januarius S Sangma, Fr. Biju Michael, Mr. Anand Pillai and Sr. Magdalene Gonmei, FMA. After which the lighting of the lamp which signifies the truth, light and justice took place.



Dr (Fr) Biju Michael in his address spoke about the 3 Love of Teachers -the love of learning, the love for learners and the love to bring both together. He also put forward some thought-provoking questions such as: Who are you?, What do you do?, What will you teach? And who do you teach? Fr. Biju concluded by saying that the Teachers hold the future of individuals, families, society and the nation.

Fr. Januarius Sangma said that teachers have to be human, compassionate, committed and dedicated. The heart of the teacher should be like a lamp of knowledge constantly burning bright. Today's teacher should understand today's children in today's context with innovative and effective practices, refine and improve their teaching strategies, skillfully manage and utilize specific teaching situations and resources, show a genuine interest in the subject, have a sincere love, care and concern for students and continually think, reflect and create

most appropriate teaching learning situations, if they are to become relevant today.

Three main resource persons of the conference were Mr. Anand Pillai who spoke on Effective Communication for Impact; Mr. Arup Mukhopadhyay who spoke about 21st Century Classroom and Learning Styles of Students; Dr (Fr) P.D. John took a session on "Educating Today's Generation of Students." In the afternoon of the first day, there was a fruitful panel discussion by teachers and students. The three-day conference was evaluated high by all the participants and said that they look forward to similar conferences every year. The participants profusely thanked the organizers for meticulous planning, effective resource persons and for providing memorable experiences.

-Ms Nancy Yeppo



Intensive Orientation for Pre-Novices

The Intensive Orientation Programme for pre-novices was organized at BBC (Bosco Barefoot College, Boko) by the Provincial and Vice Provincial together with his team on 18th March 2019. It was inaugurated by the provincial in the presence of Fr. PD. Johny, Fr. K.O. Augustine, Fr. Paul Rabha, Fr. Saju Kariyil, sisters and the candidates.

It was an intense training packed with lots of life skills, computer skills, communication

skills, dramatics and others activities. It was a meticulously designed programme to skill the candidates to meet the future demands and challenges in dealing with youth. The province had taken a lot of pains to get the place ready and appoint personnel to give right orientation to the candidates before they begin their pre-novitiate training at Dotma.



Blessing of St. John English UP School

The Garobadha Parish built a new UP School at Bangre and named it St. John English UP School. It was inaugurated and blessed by Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial on 14th March 2019. Hundreds of local people gathered for the inaugural function and blessing. The people are overjoyed with this noble initiative taken up by the Don Bosco missionaries.



Auditorium Inaugurated in Shashipur

Don Bosco Shashipur inaugurated the Magnificent Auditorium on 14th March 2019. Fr MC George, Principal of Shashipur received a lot of appreciation and congratulations from the Confreres and parents for his hard work and initiative. This magnificent auditorium was dedicated to the Youth Shashipur which comes under the jurisdiction of Kumarikata Parish. At the inaugural function, Rev. Fr Augustine Karottupuram expressed his heart felt appreciation to Fr. MC

George, for the completion of the Auditorium at a record time even as we prepare for the Centenary Celebrations of SDBs in North East.



Renewal of Religious Profession

Twenty three young Salesians (22 Clerics and 1 Salesian Brother) renewed their Religious Profession on May 23, 2019 at Inspiration Building, Kharghuli. Rev. Fr. Januarius S Sangma, Salesian Provincial received the vows of confreres. The renewal was preceded by a week-long retreat animated by Sr. Mary Clare, FCC from May 17-23, 2019. Ms Rosily Jose and Sr. Mary Abraham, MSMHC assisted Sr. Mary Clare with Counseling sessions. The theme of the retreat was “Abba

and Fr. P.D. Johny. Rev. Fr. Thomas, Director of Khetri Retreat Centre came on the evening of May 22 for healing and deliverance. The participants expressed heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Provincial, Fr. Vice Provincial, the sisters and all those who



Experience”. Highlights of the retreat included - Inner Healing, Word of God, and various gifts of the Holy Spirit. Rev. Fr. Joseph Teron, Vice Provincial accompanied the participants throughout the retreat. Among the priests who celebrated daily Eucharist were Fr. Vice Provincial, Fr. Maria Anthuvan, Fr Biju Michael, Fr Benny Alex

helped in making the retreat a fruitful one. The DBI community was specially thanked for the ambience and for making all the necessary arrangements like food, accommodation etc.

-Bro. Jecky G Sangma

Perpetual Profession

On the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians, the Patroness of the Salesian Congregation, Four Brothers – Bro. Anmol Soreng, Bro. Jyotish Beck, Bro. Joseph Bara and Bro. Narendra Lakra made their Perpetual Profession at St. Joseph's Co-Cathedral Church, Guwahati on 24th May 2019. Large number of Salesian priests, Salesian clerics, and sisters belonging to the Salesian family and the parents and dear



ones of the perpetually professed brothers were present to offer prayers and to grace the occasion. Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, the Salesian Provincial of Guwahati received the Perpetual vows of the aforementioned brothers. He gave a beautiful homily in which he talked about the fundamentals of Salesian consecrated life. He told them that they should find time for personal and community prayer. He strongly invited all of them to cultivate a fatherly heart and show it especially to the most needy boys and girls. He also told them that the three Evangelical

vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience should not be seen or considered as obstacles but rather as powerful instruments for their sanctification and the growth of the mission. The Heavy showers which accompanied the Eucharistic celebration symbolically seemed to reveal God's abundant blessings upon the celebration. The rituals of the celebration was beautifully and meaningfully

organized and executed by Fr. Joseph Teron, Vice Provincial and the Provincial Secretary Fr. Maria Anthuvan. After the

solemn Eucharistic celebration, the Perpetually Professed brothers were felicitated with a song, a dance, and an address in the parish hall. Brother Joseph Bara on behalf of the other perpetually professed brothers thanked Rev. Fr. Provincial and Vice provincial and all the provincial council members for their love and support. He also thanked everyone who was instrumental in their Christian and religious formation until now. The celebrations concluded with lunch for all invitees and family members.

-Fr. Paulus Guria, SDB

Blessing of Churches



1. St. Josephs Church, Betini (Bengtol Parish)

St. Joseph's Church, Betini (Bengtol Parish) was blessed and inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial on 28th May 2019 in the presence of Fr. Joseph Teron, Fr. Benny Alex, Fr. Damian Basumatary (Sponsor), Fr. Francis Basumatary (Parish Priest) and 5 other priests, sisters and many faithful. Fr. Damian Basumatary was also felicitated on his Silver Jubilee year of Religious Profession.



2. Blessing of Hasraoari Church

Most Rev. Thomas Menamparampil SDB DD, Archbishop Emeritus of Guwahati, blessed and inaugurated a beautifully constructed chapel at Hasraoari (under the parish of Dotma) on 28th April, 2019. We congratulate

the confreres for their hardwork and dedication, and wish them well in guiding the faithful to a deeper faith and commitment to the Lord. May your kingdom come, O Lord.

3. Blessing of New Church at Bongrum Village of Tangla Parish

Most Rev. Akasius Toppo, Bishop of Tezpur and Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Provincial of ING were the main celebrant for the inauguration and blessing of the new Church at Bongrum Village of Tangla

Parish on 30th April, 2019. Rev. Marcus Lakra, the parish Priest received lots of praise and appreciation for this spiritual venture. The Church in Tangla Parish is growing and faithful are truly blessed!



4. Blessing of Sacred Heart Chapel at Ouguri

Most Rev. Thomas Pulloppillil, Bishop of Bongaigaon along with Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial of Guwahati Province, and in the presence of clergy, religious and faithful a new Church under Bengtol Parish was inaugurated and blessed on 4th May 2019. The Church is dedicated to Sacred Heart of Jesus. Fr. Provincial

congratulated the Salesian Community at Bengtol for this great initiative and successful completion. The Church is spacious and beautiful and the faithful at Ouguri are indeed blessed!



5. Inauguration & Blessing of Sacred Heart Church, Doomni Line, Baksa

Rev. Fr. Benny Alex, Provincial Economer inaugurated and blessed the new Church dedicated to Sacred Heart at Doomni Line, Baksa, under Doomni Parish on May 31, 2019. Among those present were Fr. Ethelbert Minj (Parish Priest), Asst. Parish Priests, Sisters, Mr. Bikramjit (Manager, Doomi Tea Estate), other Tea Garden officials and a large number of faithful. The ceremony began at 08:00 p.m. with a Marian Procession from the Parish to



the new village chapel. It was followed by Holy Mass and felicitation at 10:30 p.m.

National Seminar on Indian Constitution

Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial, inaugurated a two-day National Seminar on Ideals of Indian Constitution and the Contemporary Challenges in

Higher Education organised by Don Bosco Higher Education India (DBHEI) at Don Bosco Institute, Guwahati on 27th April 2019.



FR. JOSE THIRUTHANATHY, SDB (1949-2019)

Excerpts from Provincial's Funeral Oration



7th June, 2019 was truly a shocking and heartbreaking day for me as the Provincial of the Salesian Province of Guwahati and all the confreres and Salesian family members and the Church in the North east India as we received the tragic news of the sudden passing away of Rev. Fr. Jose Thiruthanathy

A sudden, tragic, pre-mature death. The circumstances surrounding his death are bizarre and still unclear. It is hard to accept the fact that he is no more, and that we need to bid him farewell from this world. However mysterious and dark his death be, the unfailing light and love of our Lord is our only consolation. "Love is stronger than death" and "The light of the Lord shines even in darkness."

God's goodness is not something abstract. It can be experienced concretely, but only if we are able to put God into this picture. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Rom 8:28) The death of Fr. TO Jose will have its meaning, it will achieve its purpose, or rather God will give meaning and sense to his death. God is good, His doings are all good. This is our firm faith and hope. We will never be deceived if we put our trust in the Lord.

Thiruthanathy Jose was born to Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Mary Thiruthanathy on 8th December, the Feast Day of Immaculate Conception, in the year 1949 at Manjapra, in the diocese of Ernakulam, Kerala. After joining the Salesians in North East India, Fr. Jose made his novitiate at Sunnyside, Shillong and made his first profession there on 24th May 1969. He did his philosophical studies at Sonada, and his theology at Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore. He was ordained a priest on 16th December 1978 at his home parish of Manjapra, Kerala.

After his ordination, Fr. TO Jose was appointed in Tangla as Assistant Parish Priest. Here began his almost lifelong missionary life. He would serve as a



frontline missionary in many mission stations and parishes of the Province. He worked with great commitment and dedication in the parishes of Doomni, Tangla, Bengtol, Dimakuchi, Kumarikatta, Panbazar – Guwahati, and finally at Dotma, in various capacities as Rector, Parish Priest or Assistant Parish Priest. It is no exaggeration to say that he was a valiant, frontline missionary in the Salesian Province of Guwahati.

Besides his service in the parishes, he also served as Prefect of Studies in St. Paul's Seminary, Shillong and Don Bosco Technical School, Shillong, and as Vicar General to the Bishop of Bongaigaon for four years from 2000 to 2004. He was also

Provincial Council member from 1990 to 1993. For a short time, one year, he was the Rector of Salesian Training Centre, Shillong.

Fr. TO Jose was always lively and outspoken, dynamic and full of life. Contrary to all indications with regard to his death, he valued life. He upheld the dignity and preciousness of human life. Those who were close to him certainly know how cheerful and talkative he was. He loved to converse, and he could converse on any topic almost non-stop because he was knowledgeable and kept abreast on various topics by his reading habit. His liveliness and vivacity

make everyone long to be in his company.

He never held back his views or feelings. He was very expressive, and communicated his ideas and opinions clearly to others—whether superiors or others. He was an orator par excellence. All his letters written to the superiors express his outspokenness. He was very frank in his words and his deeds. He had the courage to call a spade a spade but he always did it keeping in mind the dignity and docurum of himself and respecting the other.

His dynamism was also seen in the fact that he would move from place to place tirelessly. Recently, when

the pre-novitiate was started under the parish community of Dotma, we could see him as Rector, he would not miss his conferences or celebration of the Eucharist for the pre-novices. He had so much life and energy within himself.

He was a priest and religious who was committed in preaching the Word of God and celebrating and administering the Sacraments for the people of God. And for all these, he learned the language of the people well.

Fr. TO Jose was always known for his generosity. In one of his letters, he wrote to one of his superiors, “Someone told me that you are planning a few journeys to Garo Hills. If you are in need of a vehicle I can offer you



Doomni Jeep for the month of August. We have very few village programmes during this month.” Fr. Jose shared his time, talents and resources with the Province and with the people whom he served. His last good-night talk day before yesterday to the boarders was on the importance of sharing our things with others, especially the least privileged ones.

His preferential option and love for the poor and the marginalised knew no bounds. Whatever he did he did with his whole heart and spirit. He is remembered for his special love for the poor. He dedicated his life

serving the poorest and marginalised communities of our Province. He prided himself to be a missionary among the people of rural areas, especially in the Assam Plains and Bodoland.

Fr. Jose worked hard to contact his benefactors in order to find funds for the various projects of his mission. He kept constant touch with them, especially with his benefactors and friends in the United States. His initiatives and endeavours for the various missions will always be remembered. He was committed in developing the various mission centres that





were entrusted to his care.

He kept contact not only with his own confreres, but also with many priests of the various dioceses and other religious, especially those who worked in the North East. This showed his vast network of friends and well-wishers, and he maintained his friendship with them.

He was a person who was always available to others. His spirit of obedience is clearly reflected in the following words of his letter, “If there is an urgent need or an emergency situation of any nature and you want me to move from here I am not averse to it. I am ready to go wherever you want me. I can assure you of my full support and cooperation. In a spirit of obedience and faith I am ready and willing to take whatever

comes from the hands of the Lord and Our Blessed Lady.”

Fr. TO Jose was found to be responsible and dedicated in whatever work he was entrusted with. He was chosen to be the Vicar General of Bongaigaon diocese, and earlier he also had been the Provincial Councillor in our Province. In these capacities, he endeared himself through his friendly and warm approach to people.

On 24th May 2019, Fr. TO Jose had completed 50 years of his religious life, and the Province level celebrations was being scheduled for a later date this year. We are going to miss him for the celebrations. Dear Fr. Jose, do intercede for us who have been deeply saddened by your sudden departure. May God grant you eternal bliss and light!

(Rev. Fr. Januarius S. Sangma, Salesian Provincial, Guwahati)





O COR JESU

(Oh Heart of Jesus!)

O Cor Jesu Sacratissimum, ut
bonos et dignos operarios piae
Salesianorum Societati mittere et in
ea conservare digneris.

Te rogamus audi nos!

*(O Sacred Heart of Jesus, that you may send good
and worthy members to our pious Salesian Society
and keep them faithful to it, We humbly pray!)*



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