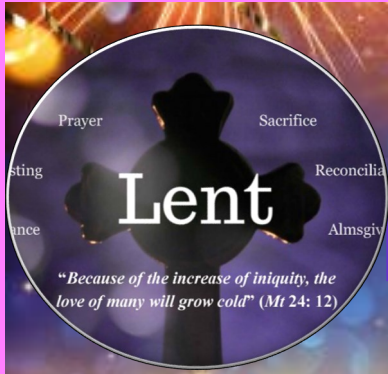




RICE COAL

ASANSOL DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER

March 2022



Sow Seeds of Goodness

Forty days of Lent are special days when we are invited to love Jesus and follow Him by additional prayer, fasting, acts of penance, daily attendance at mass and extra reading of the Bible. This is the time when we try to recognize the invisible hand of the Lord in works of darkness which are plenty in the world. Like the serpent the story of creation in the book of Genesis, lips of Satan often camouflaged with sweet words. Salvation history is a story of light and darkness, holiness and sin, commitment and non commitment. The line between light and darkness, holiness and sin and commitment and non commitment is thin, it is very easy to make mistake. St. Paul reminds us, "It is not surprising, if Satan disguises himself as angel of light, his servants an easily disguise themselves as ministers of salvation. (1 Cor 11-14). This year the Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 02.

Pope Francis has based his Message for Lent 2022 on a passage from St Paul's Letter to the Galatians, "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up. So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all" (6:9-10).

Beginning with the image of sowing and reaping, the Holy Father points out that "Lent invites us to conversion, to a change in mind set, so that life's truth and beauty may be found not so much in possessing as in giving, not so much in accumulating as in sowing and sharing goodness."

God, he explains, is the first to sow, sowing "abundant seeds of goodness in our human family." During the period of Lent, "we are called to respond to God's gift" by listening to His Word, so that it might "bear fruit in our lives." In this way, we become "God's co-workers," which is a grace of sharing in God's own "bountiful goodness."

This, in turn, leads to a harvest. When we sow seeds of goodness and kindness, "no matter how small," in our own lives, we radiate light and carry "the fragrance of Christ to the world." Recalling the Gospel proverb, "one sows, while another reaps," Pope Francis reminds us that "we see only a small portion of the fruits we sow." The Pope explains that "sowing goodness for the benefit of others frees us from narrow self-interest, infuses us our actions with gratuitousness, and makes us part of the magnificent horizon of God's benevolent plan."

The Holy Father goes on to connect Paul's words to the Galatians to the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. "Let us not grow tired of praying," he says, realizing that we need God and others. "Let us not grow tired of uprooting evil from our lives," embracing fasting in order "to fortify our spirit for the battle against sin," especially through the sacrament of Confession and by fighting against concupiscence. "Let us not grow tired of doing good in active charity towards our neighbour," giving joyfully and generously to others, especially those in most need.

Pope Francis says that each year during Lent "we are reminded that 'goodness, together with love, justice, and solidarity, are not achieved once and for all; they have to be realized each day.'"

He concludes his message by reminding us that "the soil is prepared by fasting, watered by prayer, and enriched by charity." He invites us, once again, not to grow tired of doing good, and calls us to "believe firmly that 'if we do not give up, we shall reap our harvest in due time,' and that, with the gift of perseverance, we shall obtain what was promised, for our salvation and the salvation of others."

+ Salvadore Lobo

One Saturday I was asked to go for burial at Ramchandrapur where Fr. Robert was priest in charge, he was well known as Doctor Babu of that area, being Saturday he was nursing the patients and was giving medicine. I went along with Mr. Jiten Tudu, our driver, on a motor bike, people were sitting quietly, they were not ready for burial especially lady's mother. She was a mother whose daughter died leaving behind three children and husband. The old lady said we will bury her the next day. I said all your village people have not taken any food for the whole day, and it is not advisable to keep the entire village without food, so let us bury as early as possible by evening.

They had not prepared coffin box when I mentioned them about it then they found some wooden planks for the box and they went to prepare, further by that time I went with some men to find graveyard pit which was not yet ready so they started to dig the pit. I also told the ladies to wash and give bath to her body for burial.

When everything was ready there was heavy shower of rain with lightning and thunder. We recited the rosary meanwhile the rain stopped. By that time Fr. Robert D'souza also arrived. Then all of us went with petromax lamp to bury the lady, since it rained there was water in the pit. They try to remove the water, as much as they removed so much more water filling the pit. We said looking at the condition put the coffin box into the pit and close it with mud and water used to come out and it used to stay underneath, by the time it was 9pm and we came back from graveyard then we started our bike and little distance we moved, afterwards could not move the bike due to the mud, then we cleansed the wheels which got into the mud and did the same several time till we reached murung road and by that road we reached Kamarchowki, it was 1:00AM in the morning (late midnight). This is our experience as missionaries, it used to be different, adventurous and new.

+Bishop Cyprian Monis

The Day of Consecrated Persons

The Day of Consecrated Persons was celebrated solemnly on Feb. 2, 2022 at St. Maria Goretti Chapel, Asansol. Bishop Salvatore Lobo, presided over the Eucharist with Frs. Devassy, SJ, Tony Lobo, Linus Toppo and Sarto.

Bishop Lobo appreciated the Religious Women and men for their zealous works in the diocese and thanked them for their generous service.

Before the Liturgy the candles were blessed at the school ground and the Religious present entered the Chapel with lighted candles as a sign of Carrying the Light of Christ.

The Daughters of St. Anne Sisters along with Fr. Linus Toppo, PP of Cathedral prepared the Liturgy meaningfully. Bishop Lobo elaborated the charism of Religious in the context of the feast of Presentation of Our Lord and how it becomes meaningful in today's world. He invited all to carry the Gospel message to all in their neighbourhood. Religious from nine communities in Asansol town gathered for the Liturgy and to celebrate the day of Consecrated persons.

DSA Srs. Kamala, Mukta, Deepa and Ashma made all arrangements for the celebration and gave tasty breakfast to all the Religious Sisters, Brothers and Priests present.



Holy Childhood Day celebrations

Holy childhood day Celebration was held at kamarpara on 20th February 2022. Total around 200 children including their parents came for the celebration. Whole community welcomed them by showering flower-petals. Children read the scripture & contributed (offertory) for poor children during the holy Eucharist. Special prayer offered & sweets were distributed to all children & their parents as well. Best students Mina & Srabani were acknowledged and honored.

-Fr Britto



Regional SCC Team Visit

Regional SCC of Bengal & Jharkhand representatives 10 priests, a Sister and a layperson visited Kamarpara SCC units. On 10th February 2022. organized by Fr Sarto & Sr Christin. SCC unit members so beautifully conducted the SCC and set a model for younger ones to lead.

-Fr Britto



Meetings

- ◇ On Feb 2nd, Bishop Lobo and other priests held the meeting with Fr Devassy SJ, the principal of St Xavier's College, Asansol and discussed about the future of the college.
- ◇ On Feb 12, Bishop Lobo moderated a meeting with Fr Arul, Sr Priyanka CSST, Sr Anupama CSST of St Joseph's School, Chittaranjan at Bishop's House to discuss about the upcoming events of the school. Fr Sebastian and Fr Sarto were present.
- ◇ On Feb 13, meeting of Parish Council of St Joseph's Church, Chittaranjan was held to discuss about St Joseph's ICSE and CBSE Schools.
- ◇ On Feb 21, Annual meeting of Sacred Heart Society, Burdwan was held. 17 members were present. Fr Martin Behara presented the annual report and Fr Britto presented the account statements.
- ◇ On Feb 22, Asansol Christian Cemetery committee meeting was held at Asansol Cemetery. The meeting began with a prayer service followed by discussion. Fr Sarto chaired the meeting. 25 pastors and lay people attended.
- ◇ On Feb 23, Sr Divya CSST provincial met Bishop Lobo to discuss about their apostolate in our diocese.

Priest's Annual Meeting

From 16th Feb to 18th Feb, annual priest's meeting was held at Bandel retreat center. The meeting was moderated by Bishop Vincent Aind, the bishop of Bagdogra. Bishop Salvadore Lobo and other priests participated in the meeting and discussed about the future developments of the diocese. Fr Johny Nedungattu SDB, prior of the basilica made all the arrangements for the comfortable stay.



Synod Meetings

Asansol

On 2nd Feb, synod meeting was held at Bishop's House, Asansol. 18 people participated and Bishop Lobo moderated the meeting. They all resolved to read the Bible and praying for all the people, visiting the sick and lonely.

Laghata

On 9th February 2022, the synod meeting was arranged at St Joseph's Church, Laghata by Fr Robert D'souza, the parish priest. Fr. Deepak and Sr. Paulina CTC were the resource persons of the meeting. There were 23 lay people from different villages including village heads. The meeting began with the introduction of the synod and welcome words to the resource persons by Fr Robert and then followed by the Bible procession. Fr Deepak made all participants understand the synod, its meaning, purpose, mission and vision. He also told about its entire process to the ultimate synod which would take place in Rome in 2023.

Sr. Paulina CTC explained about the meaning of the logo of the synod. The meeting was an interactive one. All the participants participated with great curiosity. Fr. Deepak gave them to discuss in the three groups about "what does catholic church want from her faithful?" and "what do we expect from the church?" In response to that they brought out various of answers like unity, faith, loving others, charity, attending church regularly so on and so forth. At the end Fr Robert thanked the resource persons and also appreciated the village leaders saying that they already have been doing the missionary work in their own locality and hence they now need to guide the people in bringing together everyone under one umbrella i.e. the Church.

Bolpur

On 4th Feb, Around 14 people attended the synod meeting at Infant Jesus Church, Bolpur. Bishop Lobo and Fr Sarto were present to moderate the meeting.

Chetana

On 5th Feb, 27 people attended the synod meeting at Chetana. Bishop Lobo moderated the meeting. All decided to visit the sick, assist the lonely and to pray for all the people.

Media and SCC training

From 7th Feb to 11th Feb Media and SCC training was held at chetana. 12 Priests from Bengal and Jharkhand region attended the training. Sr Christin HC guided them on the importance of media, report making, power point preparation and photoshoot.

Visits

- On 31st Jan, Bishop Lobo, Frs Tony, and Sarto visited Joypur SDB community to share the festal greeting to Don Bosco fathers. Frs Thomas marandi, Mongal Tudu, Michael Hansda and other priests from Dumka diocese were also present.
- On 3rd Feb, Bishop Lobo, Fr Sarto and Fr Tony visited Jamshedpur and met Bishop Telepore and discussed about Hatikunda mission.
- On 23rd Feb, Fr Sebastian SJ, from Patna, visited our diocese. He is an expert in Media education.



Synod meeting

On Feb. 6, St. Thomas mission, Ekperere had the synod meeting and it was facilitated by Fr. I. P. Sarto. The meeting started by invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Fr. Sarto started the session by asking the people about who are they? Some of them answered saying that they are children of God and they are called by God. They also said that they are called to serve, they are healed, forgiven and blessed by God.

The session ended with the concluding prayer and then all participated meaningfully in the Holy Eucharist. Frs. Vailankanni, OMI and Christopher, OMI made all the arrangements for the synod meeting.



Birthday

4 - Fr Deva



March

19 - Fr Antony D
19 - Fr S Britto
19 - Fr Avinash Kumar
19 - Fr Aravind Negi
19 - + Salvadore Lobo
30 - Fr Robert

Ordination Anniversary



Bishop Lobo's programs for the Month of March 2022

Date	Day	Place	Subject
02	Wed	Asansol	Blessing of the Ash and Mass in the Cathedral
06	Sun	Asansol	Mass for the 1 st Sunday of Lent
13	Sun	Asansol	Mass for the 2 nd Sunday of Lent
15-31	Tues-Thus		Out of station

Pope's Monthly Prayer Intention - March 2022

For a Christian response to bioethical challenges

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

