



RICE COAL

ASANSOL DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER

December 2021



Jesus Christ – The Best Gift.

In my school days one of the short stories that had impressed me was *'The Gift of the Magi'* by O Henry who tells us how Della and Jim, a poor couple, sacrificed the best they possessed to give a gift to each other. Christmas is a season of gifts and season of remembering people.

For, us believers, each Christmas provides us with special memories. As we build relationships with God and his people on earth, we learn to live as He wants us to live.

Building relationships involves three things – time, concern and sacrifice. Quite often we race a hectic life. This is more in Advent. On the eve of Christmas we keep ourselves busy even till midnight Mass, Then we fall down in exhaustion. In order to communicate love, we need to take time to do things for others, be a gift of ourselves to others. To be a gift to others we need the following:

Time: God carefully planned for Jesus' birth, not at random, but just at the right time. "But when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son. He was born of a woman and subject to law, in order to redeem the subjects of the law that we might receive adoption as children of God". (Gal 4:4-5)

As we ponder on the true meaning of Christmas, we wonder at how the creator in the fullness of time expressed His love for us by giving us the best gift any one could imagine, His only Son, Jesus Christ, and made us all a part of His family. By this gift He adopted us as His children, when we were lost and without hope in the world. He took time "to seek and save" those who are lost.

We have a lot of opportunities to share our time with others, especially the sick, old, the lonely ones and the people in prison. The Bible uses terms like encouragement, fellowship and ministry – prison ministry, hospital ministry etc. Be a gift, a blessing to every one who comes on your way during this month. Even giving a listening ear can help to strengthen a lonely heart.

Concern: Relationships depend on minds. When we really care about one another, we show concern. Family members and community members show their concern away from the family or community. They simply use their home or community as re-fuelling station – a place to get some sleep and take a shower. In our times Reality Television shows us how not to care for one another. Such programmes put unrelated people together and show how they manipulate relationships. In our Christian communities and homes, we have opportunities to form stronger God-given ties that bind us together. If we fail, our peers may not vote us off the programme, but we may miss a great reward. Caring and concern starts with mind. Mindless gifts at Christmas waste money. Good gift-giving requires thinking about the recipient like Della and Jim. Take some time to think about the needs of those around you, then translate those thoughts into actions.

Sacrifice: At Christmas we celebrate Father's gift of his Son Jesus to us. He did so with great sacrifice leaving the glory of heaven to be one with us. St. Paul tells us to have the same mind as Jesus. He made Himself of no reputation, took upon himself the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even death on the cross.

Oh Lord, bless this Christmas season with peace and joy. Grant that each of the Rice-Coal reader may reflect on your goodness. Rid each heart of fear and distress, loneliness and pain, leaving only serenity of resting in your ever lasting love. May each one of the reader become a precious gift to every one who comes in contact with him or her.

+ Salvadore Lobo

From my Memories

On the occasion of Fr. Cyprian Carlo's Birthday he had invited priests for the Celebration. Fr. Owen D'Souza and myself from Kamarchowki parish wanted to go along with Fr. Robert D'souza and Fr. Mariadas Menezes who were at Kearchand. We waited at Hatigedia and then at Salva for Frs Robert and Maria das. Then we went to Sacred Heart Church, Presbytery, Karagpur where the birthday celebration was arranged, they were not found there, then we finished the birthday Party and had good dinner, but still they did not turn up, we were worried about them.

It was already 9 pm, we were going back to Kamarchowki, and on the way close to Kelegai river-let some people stopped us and informed that it is not good to proceed, since there are chances of attacks from the Dacoits at Jungle road ahead of us. We waited little while discussing whether to proceed or not. Then finally, we decided to proceed. By God's grace, the road was clear and we reached back safely. We did not face any robbery on our way.

But it was not so with Fr. Robert and Fr. Mariadas Menezes, they had very Bad experience, as they were coming close to Hatigedia, there was a robbery at the Middle of the forest, they had cut the tree and put it across the road and was waiting for a certain Doctor who supposed to pass that way with lots of money. He had not come as yet at the same time Fr. Robert and Fr. Mariadas were coming. Fr. Robert was also called as Doctor Babu since he used treat the tribal patients at Kearchand and Saturdays at Kamarchowki and give away medicine to the sick people. He was trained at St. Martha's hospital Bangalore. As they were approaching the spot stones were thrown at them. They guessed robbers around so they increased motorbike speed and found a tree was put across the road. Fr. Robert applied sudden break it made big noise, the close villagers heard and ran to the spot, but before they could reach, robbers rushed to spot and put off the light of Bike Fr. Mariadas got shock and shouted please do not beat me take whatever we have, money, chain watch etc. they took and ran away. By that time villagers reached the spot and saw Fr. Robert so called their doctor Babu, who also did social works to empower the tribal people and was distributing bulgor for labour, they helped them. Fr. Robert thanked them and slowly started the motor Bike went back to Kearchand, this was the reason for their absence to the birthday party. They were the great missionaries at Kearchand.

+Bishop Cyprian Monis

BRBC SYNODAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

BRBC regional Synodal training program was held from 12th of November 2021 to 14th of November 2021 at Proggaloy, Barasat, facilitated by Fr Pannerselvam from Panchmari. Twenty two members from our diocese took part in the training program and equipped themselves how to lead the synodal process of our diocese. Asansol synodal team conducted the Bible veneration meaningfully.



Choir Day Celebration

Kamarpara Mission wished parish choir members (seniors & juniors) on their feast of St. Cecilia, in the presence of village leaders & choir master Mr. Mathias. A delightful program was arranged by the parish priest Fr Britto to acknowledge their contributions to the liturgical celebrations of the parish. Fr Brito thanked Bro. Michael for arranging a beautiful event. All shared cake and snacks.

Fr Britto



Altar Servers day Celebration

On 26th November, Kamarpara Mission wished Altar-Servers happy feast on their patron St. John Berchman's Feast. They celebrated Eucharist together & had procession holding picture of Sacred Heart of Jesus to Grotto. Altar-Servers prayed for their parents who are busy in harvesting. The celebration was concluded with the distribution of sweets to the Altar servers.

Fr Britto



Synod committee meeting

On 27th November synod committee meeting was held at Chetana. Twenty five members participated in the meeting. Fr Sebastian Rodrigues blessed the members and handed over a candle each as a sign of Christ's light. Fr Sarto guided the meeting and spoke about the Synodality of the Church and how to make synthesis.



Requiem Mass

On 8th November, DSA sisters organized a special requiem Mass at Maria Goretti Convent, Asansol. Holy Mass was offered by Fr Sarto. During the Holy Mass special prayers were made for the departed sisters, departed teachers and their family members. All the sisters, some teachers and students took part in the service and prayed. Sr Mukta and Sr Kamala organized meaningful prayer service.

Awareness on Synodality at St Martin's Church, Sahebdanga

On 7th November, Fr Sarto offered the Holy Eucharist at St Martin's Church, Sahebdanga. After the Holy mass, Fr Sarto spoke about the synodality of the church, and the role of Christian faithful in the synodal process. Fr Francis and Fr Irudaya Joseph organized the event very meaningfully.

Youth Meeting

On 10th and 11th November, youth meeting was held at Chetana. Fifty Youths from various parishes participated in the meeting. Fr Sarto offered the inaugural Holy Mass. Fr Sarto and Fr Arvind Negi took the sessions on the synodality of the church. The Meeting was concluded with the Holy Eucharist offered by Bishop Monis.

Visit to the District Magistrate

On 3rd November, Fr Sarto along with some priests and sisters visited the DM office and met Ms. Priyanka Singla, the DM of Purba Burdwan and shared the greeting of Diwali festival.

Pastoral Visit

On 21st November, Bishop Lobo had a pastoral visit to the Sacred Heart Parish, Joypur. Bishop Lobo also offered the Mass on the solemnity of Christ the King. During the Eucharist bishop gave First Holy Communion to 178 children. During this pastoral visit bishop visited the religious community and met the village leaders and listened to them. Bishop spoke to them about the synodality of the church.

Synodal Orientation to the children

On 27th November, the synodal committee along with Fr Sarto took a orientation to the Chetana hostel boys at Talit. He spoke to them about the role of children in the church during these synodal period. He exhorted them to pray for the on going synodal process in the universal church and in our diocese. Br Jiji made all the arrangements for the sessions.

Synod committee meeting

On 8th November Synod committee meeting was held at Asansol. Some of the members participated in the meeting and planned for the synod. Fr Sarto chaired the meeting and thanked all the members for their valuable presence, zeal and sharing.

First Holy Communion Sacrament

14th of November was indeed a memorable day for the Sacred Heart Cathedral Asansol. Ten Children of our Cathedral Parish received the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist. The Children were well prepared to receive the Holy Communion by Sr. Anvesha DSA and Miss. Daphnie. On that Day we had one bilingual Mass. The Eucharist was presided over by Bishop Cyprian Monis and concelebrated by Fr. Kulandai Swami and Fr. Linus Toppo. Dn. Martin Rodrigues proclaimed the Gospel and broke the Word of God, in his Homily he highlighted Eucharist is the Sacrament of Love and Sacrifice and it is also food for our Spiritual life, which nourish our soul and he encouraged the Children to become living presence of Jesus Christ.

Children who received Communion for the first time indeed were moved with gratitude to God and they expressed their Joy by singing. Bishop Cyprian Monis Distributed the First Holy Communion certificate to the Children and Blessed them. Fr. Linus Toppo thanked Bishop Monis and Fr. Kulandai Swami and all the Religious and parishioners who came in spite of the Heavy rains in the morning. All the Children who received the First Holy Communion were Given Breakfast. We thank Almighty God for all his love and invoke His Choicest blessings upon all the Children and faithful of Our Cathedral.

Dn. Martin Rodrigues



Sacrament of Confirmation

On 28th of November the first Sunday of Advent, We had Confirmation for 12 Children of our Cathedral. We were indeed glad to have amidst us Our Apostolic Administrator Bishop Salvatore Lobo, who presided over the Holy Eucharist and Confirmed the Sacrament. The Children were all well prepared Spiritually and mentally to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. There were also great number of people in the Cathedral. Bishop Salvatore Lobo lighted the first Candle of Advent which is known as the Candle of Hope and in his Homily he explained how a Christian can grow in Hope and become Hope to the World which is in despair. He also encouraged the candidates of Confirmation that they should be a true Soldiers of Christ and temple of the Holy Spirit and proclaim the Gospel of Christ by producing the Fruits of the Holy Spirit in their life.

At the end of the Holy Eucharist he distributed the Certificate of Confirmation to the Children and Invoked God's Blessings on all who were present in the Cathedral. Rev. Fr Linus the pro-vicar of the Cathedral thanked Apostolic Administrator for accepting the invitation and gracing the occasion by his Presence and he also thanked Deacon Martin Rodrigues and all the Sisters, parish Counsel members, Youth and people for their presence and prayers.

Dn Martin Rodrigues



Meeting at St Joseph's School, Chittaranjan

On 30th November, a meeting was held at Chittaranjan CBSE and ICSE schools. At CBSE School, Fr Sarto, Fr Sebastian Rodrigues, Fr Rahul and Fr Arul had a meeting with Sr Priyanka CSST, the Principal of CBSE. Sister explained about the academic developments in the school. Later Fr Sarto, Fr Sebastian Rodrigues, and Fr Arul had a meeting with Sr Anupama CSST, the principal of ICSE. It was decided to build one floor in CBSE school.

Procession on Christ the King Solemnity

On 21st November, on the day of solemnity of Christ the King, a meaningful procession with the Blessed Sacrament was held at Kusumgram from village street to Kusumgram Market of Talbona parish. Fr Avinash organized the procession with all the parishioners. The Procession was witnessed by the people of other faith and were inspired by looking at the devotion of the people. Good co-operation from people and police personnel was well appreciated by Fr Avinash.



Asansol Christian Cemetery Committee Meeting

On 30th November, Asansol Christian Cemetery committee of all the Christian pastors had a meeting at Asansol. Thirteen of them attended the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Fr Sarto, It was planned to have Christmas carol singing and Christmas celebration on 20th December at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Awareness on Synodality at Holy Family Church, Nuta



On 28th November, Fr Sarto visited Holy Family Church, Nuta and offered the Holy Eucharist. After the Holy Mass, Fr Sarto spoke about the synodality of the church, and the role of Christian faithful in the synodal process. The Parishioners responded well during the talk and resolved to participate actively in the synodality of the Church. Fr Antony D organized the event very meaningfully. Sr Veronica SSAM, Mr. Marcel Mardi, Ms. Priyanka Tudu and Ms. Jovita Murmu facilitated the sessions. All People appreciated the youth who explained about the synod.

Men's Day Celebration

Kamarpara parish of Asansol diocese celebrated Men's day on Nov.6, 2021 in the parish. About 150 men gathered at Kamarpara village to reflect on St Joseph and to emulate his example in their lives.

This is the first time I see so many men in the Church without a single woman, said Fr. IP Sarto who facilitated the sessions for the day. Fr. Sarto elaborated the qualities of St Joseph from the Biblical narratives and asked the men present to choose one each to follow in their family. Many chose to be humble, some chose to be faithful and some to be obedient to God's will always.

Fr D. Anthony, Parish priest of Nuta elaborated to them their call to be holy and loving in the family. The whole day program for men was very enlightening to all. All men assured to promote united family prayer in their homes.



Prayer request

Fr Lawrence Sha, at Chetana, Fr Bernard Murmu at Rampurhut, Fr Godfrey Fernandes at Medinipur are sick and under medication. They have requested our prayers for healing.

Fr Avinash's mother, Mrs Regina, also is sick and under medication in Patna. Fr Avinash has requested our prayers for the speedy recovery of his mother.

Notice: 1. Fr Raymond Besra is appointed as the curate of Holy Family Church, Nuta.

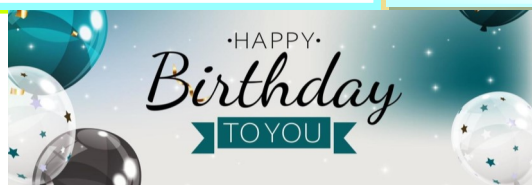
2. All the Priests, Religious and seminarians are invited to take part in the diocesan Christmas celebration at Durgapur St Teresa's Church on 27th December at 10:00 AM.

3. I sincerely express my gratitude to all, for your prayers for the speedy recovery of my right leg fracture. God bless you all.

+Salvadore Lobo

Birthday

20 - Fr Xavier P
25 - Fr Alex
29 - Fr Abraham
25 - Fr Irudaya



December

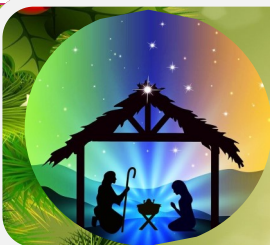
1- Fr Dolphy
2- Fr Martin
3 - Fr Wilson
10 - Fr Gerald
21 - + Bishop Monis
28 - Fr Irudaya

Ordination Anniversary



Bishop Lobo's programs for the month of December 2021

Date	Day	Place	Subject	Date	Day	Place	Subject
01	Wed	Mumbai	AGM- Indian Catholic Press Association	12	Sun	Burdwan	Holy Mass
04	Sat	Burdwan	Meeting at Chetana regarding Synod	13	Mon	Amghata	Mass for the Seminarians
05	Sun	Kalna	Confirmation	14	Tue	Chetana	Catechists and DST members meeting
07	Tue	Chetana	Recollection to the Seminarians	16	Thurs	Burdwan	Golden Jubilee of Sr Sarala MC
08	Fri	Ekpere	Feast day Holy Mass for OMI fathers	17	Fri	Durgapur	Conclusion of Mission Retreat
09	Thu	Burdwan	GB meeting of ABSK followed by Priests' Recollection	19	Sat	Jamuria	Mass of 4 th Sunday of Advent
10	Fri	Chetana	Priests' Recollection followed by Consultants Meeting	25	Sun	Jyotinagar	Vigil Mass
11	Sat	Burdwan	CRI meeting	27	Mon	Durgapur	Christmas Celebration



Bishop Salvadore Lobo and Bishop Cyprian Monis and the Curia of Asansol Diocese wish all the readers of this news letter a joyful Christmas 2021.

Pope's Monthly Prayer Intention - December 2021

Catechists

Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

