

Com.mission 28

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COMMISSION 28

Newsletter of Northeast India

From the Secretary's Desk...



Joyful messengers of the Good News



Three months of the 'Year of Evangelization' have slipped by, perhaps unnoticed! Six months more and we will be in the Extraordinary Missionary Month!

We are moving towards the greatest of all festivals, Easter, when we too shall share in the resurrection of Christ. Each year, as we celebrate the Paschal mysteries, we are transformed: we do not immediately go to heaven and start enjoying the eschatological joys. But with the resurrection, heaven comes down to earth and we are transformed into joyful missionary disciples who, like the apostles on that first Easter day, experience the immeasurable joy of the master coming back to life and having experienced Him, become His witnesses at every moment to all humanity.

Jesus has conquered every evil power and has given every human being the power to break free from the slavery of sin. The entire world needs this liberation! Millions are waiting to be set free! As joyful missionary disciples who live the life of Easter we proclaim this freedom. We become the message that attracts people to Jesus, the risen Saviour. *Com.mission* 28 wishes everyone a Grace- filled Holy week and Easter and a great life ahead as messengers of His Good news. The Acts of the Apostles, which we will be listening to during the Easter season, depicts the joy with which the disciples proclaimed the risen Christ; at times, even at the cost of their lives! The experience of Easter transformed them and their world changed forever! Let the world around us also be attracted to Jesus because we are truly risen again!

Fr. Joseph Palamthattel SDB (Sunny)
Secretary

Bishop's Message



Dear Friends,

This April is a month of extra ordinary significance. We have the Holy week. Every day beginning with the Palm Sunday, is of such importance to us Catholics that we cannot let even a moment pass by without being a part of the saving mission of Jesus. I wish you a very Happy Easter. The resurrection of Jesus gives meaning to all we say and do and to our life itself.

We are living in an age of emails, e-commerce, everything on line. Easter reminds us to be online with God always and that all our plans and programs, thoughts and desires should lead to Evangelization. I most sincerely invite you to make this the mission of your life.

This April also will see us all approaching the ballot box as dutiful citizens. The process will go on in our region till 18th of April. Let us pray that all these go ahead peacefully. We should also continue to pray that the entire process may go on peacefully in the whole country and that people who respect values embodied in the Constitution rule the country.

Our focus this month is on the Diocese of Kohima. I congratulate all the Catholics, Religious both women and men, the Priests and Bishop James for the vibrant church that is in Nagaland. We join them in thanking God for all the blessings and assure them of our prayers.

A special word of thanks to Fr. Sunny for keeping this alive. The effort he makes to get this newsletter published is really admirable. Thank you Fr. Sunny and May God continue to bless you.

Wishing you the joys and power of the Risen Lord and reminding you of the indisputable fact that "we are an Easter people and alleluia is our song"

In the Risen Lord,

+ Most Rev. George Pallipparambil SDB, DD

Bishop of Miao

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HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIOCESE

Diocese of Kohima



The Diocese of Kohima is situated in Nagaland, one of the Eight Sisters states of Northeast of India sharing the international border with Myanmar. The diocese covers the entire state of Nagaland geographically, the area of 16,579 sq km, with a total population of 1,978,602 (2011 Census), with a literacy rate of 80.11%. The Catholic population at present is 58,101 that consist of 37 parishes and 15 mission centres. There are 16 major tribes speaking their own dialects and the presence of catholic communities in all the tribes is noteworthy. Among them, the Angami and Lotha communities have largest Catholic communities.

Christianity arrived in Nagaland in the early part of 19th Century. The attempt to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ in Nagaland by the Catholic Church goes back to 1908 when Fr. Marcellinus Molz reached Tamlu. But this first visit of a Catholic missionary to Nagaland could not bear the desired fruit. Nagaland had to wait another 40 years more before the next opportunity arrived. That was in December 1948 when a group of Spanish Sisters - Srs. Margaria and Guadalupe belonging to the Missionaries of Christ Jesus and Msgr. Emmanuel Bars, SDB reached Kohima at the request of Sir Akbar Hydari, the then Governor of Assam, to offer their service at the newly established Civil Hospital, Kohima. In fact Sr. Guadalupe (92 years now) is the only living missionary among the pioneers.

When the sisters had to leave the hospital in 1952, Fr. Marocchino, SDB., who by then had replaced Msgr Bars, was allowed to stay in Kohima, but he had to quit the hospital premises. After much wandering about he was able to build a hut of his own in a corner of the Kohima Village and he paved the way for the growth of the Catholic Church in the Angami area.

In the meantime, the Catholic Faith began to take root in another part of Nagaland, among the Lotha tribe, who were close to Assam. In 1950, some Lotha men from Lakhuti village contacted the catholic priests at Golaghat and received Baptism in April 1951. Soon it led to the

establishment of a catholic community in Lakhuti village in spite of stiff opposition from the Baptists. Gradually and steadily the Catholics began to take root in many villages in different parts of Nagaland.

The Catholics of Nagaland were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Dibrugarh, Assam until 1973 when the states of Nagaland and Manipur were separated from the Diocese of Dibrugarh and made into the Diocese of Kohima-Imphal. Bishop Abraham Alangimattathil SDB, was appointed as its first Bishop.

On June 29, 1980 the Diocese of Kohima -Imphal was bifurcated and the Diocese of Imphal was created comprising the State of Manipur. Bishop Abraham Alangimattathil, SDB, continued to be the Bishop of the Diocese of Kohima comprising only the state of Nagaland until his resignation on 11th July 1996 due to ill health. He went to his eternal reward on 18th November, 1997.

Most Rev. Jose Mukala, the then Vicar General of the diocese who succeeded him built the body of Christ till he resigned on 30th October 2009.

The diocese was then placed under the care of the Apostolic Administrator in the person of Archbishop Dominic Lumon until a new Bishop was appointed. At present Most Rev. Dr. James Thoppil shepherds the diocese as the Bishop with the Motto-“Do everything for the Gospel.” There are 107 diocesan priests, 99 religious priests, 3 religious brothers and 361 women religious belonging to 19 congregations actively involved in the evangelization work. The multifaceted pastoral care has laid emphasis on catechesis, education, and social welfare.

It is heartening to note that vocation to priesthood and religious life has taken firm root among the local tribes. Today already we have over 43 priests and over 250 nuns from the various tribes of Nagaland. The diocese is constantly making effort to move forward in the spirit of the first missionaries who brought the Gospel in this part of the world.

Missionary of the Month

Bishop Abraham Alangimattathil SDB

By: Fr. Joseph Puthenpurakal SDB



Born	: 11 July, 1933, at Paika, Kerala
Professed	: 24 May, 1954
Priestly Ordination	: 2 December, 1964
Episcopal Ordination	: Kohima, 14 October, 1973
Died	: 18 November, 1997, at Dimapur

Bishop Abraham Alangimattathil, the first Bishop of Kohima-Imphal dared to do what seemed impossible: He lived his Episcopal motto, “A loving Service to God and Man” with utmost dedication and dared to do the impossible. Two new Centres each year was his resolve. That was no easy task in the hills of Nagaland and Manipur, because each Centre meant “finding the needed personnel, constructing priests' residence, school, boarding for boys, boarding for girls, sisters' quarters, and church building as well as procuring vehicle/s and getting enough money for recurring expenses.” While Catholic Centres were opened year and year, he also saw to the establishment of much needed structures: Bishop's House, Seminaries, Catholic Publication Centre, Pastoral Centre, the Retreat House, the Holy Redeemer Health Centre, St. Joseph's college and above all the Cathedral at Kohima. This last mentioned is a landmark and has become a tourist attraction too. Allow me to keep that word “tourist” and attract people to allow them to come to us and to share with them what is uppermost in our heart, namely, Jesus the Risen Lord and His life-giving message. “It is not by proselytizing”, writes Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*, “that the Church grows, but by attraction” (EG, 15).

Bishop Abraham's attraction stemmed from his relationship with God through thick and thin. His trust in Divine Providence is a marvelous example that exudes attraction. In fact his trust in providence became the matrix in which everything he desired happened.

The organization of the laity and their participation in the various events of the Church go to the credit of their Pastor Bishop Abraham. He had a special place for them in his heart. He encouraged lay associations like the Catholic Union, Catholic Youth Association, Women's Association and the Legion of Mary. The construction of the Laity Centre at Kohima speaks much about his vision for the laity. The setting up of the Diocesan Curia with the Vicar General, the Finance Committee and the Financial Administrator, the Council of priests and the College of Consulters and the Pastoral Council with the representation of the laity as well as Parish Council – are a proof of his efficiency and farsightedness for the administration of the diocese.

Archbishop Thomas Menampampil, who had known him for nearly half a century described him as a “good friend, a zealous apostle, an efficient worker, an energetic Salesian, an inspiring leader and an outstanding Church man”. “Bishop Abraham”, continues the Archbishop, “remained an unsurpassed accomplisher of great tasks to the very end.”

In his Episcopal life Bishop Abraham had his share of dark and lonely days. They were but a prophetic foreshadowing of the Resurrection and only paved the way for missionary dynamism and growth of the Church in Nagaland and Manipur. They proclaim that we are missionaries of the Resurrected Lord in whom we can overcome sin and death. Our message for all times to come is HOPE.

Bishop Abraham had the habit of keeping a journal. Its entries present a fascinating account of the experiences he came across when he, as the Bishop of Kohima-Imphal, pioneered and toured every village and town of Nagaland and Manipur proclaiming the Good News and forging unity among the tribes and sub-tribes of the region. They also reveal a person of extraordinary caliber and grit, a true ambassador of Christ who spared no efforts to spread the Good News of Christ. It is unbelievable how he found the strength and resolve to write a full page each day of his Episcopal years notwithstanding the fact that when traveling, he often reached his destination late into the night, tired and worn out and perhaps with more than one problem claiming his immediate attention.

The fountainhead of his missionary enthusiasm was his union with the Lord. It is beautifully expressed in his own words, “I spent the whole day in reading, reflecting and remaining with the Lord and I have been able to see what I should do ...I asked the Lord to give me the courage to carry out what he tells me...I was able to spend three full hours of adoration and prayer and the rest in reflection and reading.”

Like Abraham of the Old Testament, Bishop Abraham too was a man of strong faith. The more we read into whatever he has accomplished for the good of the peoples of Nagaland and Manipur, the greater shall be our respect for him. He laid the foundation of a strong and vibrant Church on firm Catholic Christian teachings – for instance, think of the care he showed in preparing catechism text books with the help of the Catechetical team in which Sr. Catherine Susngi FMA had an outstanding role. The foundational role that Bishop Abraham played in the well being of the diocese of Kohima-Imphal is etched in the annals of history.

Bishop Abraham had a golden heart. He was a father to all. He would help anyone in need. He worked hard for the welfare of all. Often he was tired, but never lazy. He toiled for the good and growth of the Church in both Nagaland and Manipur. He wanted to unite everyone. As one who worked close to him and who at times disagreed and even quarreled with him, I can affirm with all sincerity, that I cannot think of anyone else who worked so hard as Bishop Abraham did all those years of my association with him. He had no evil habits. His only evil habit was his non-stop work for the good of that portion of the Church that was entrusted to him. And the Lord found him ripe enough to be plucked from this earthly garden at a young age of just 64 years. To cite from my own words as reproduced by Fr. Varghese Palathingal the Provincial, “...When I think of the early years of the diocese with Bishop's House still in Holy Cross Parish in Dimapur (1973-1981) Bishop Abraham springs to my mind as one for whom there was very little difference between day and night. He rested little. He spared no pains to see that things were done well...” In the words of Fr. Hector D'Souza SJ...”Bishop Abraham had 25 hours in his day. He had always time for others and he kept the 25th long hour to himself ... He was an untiring worker and a great and skilful administrator and builder too.”

Bishop Robert Kerketta saw him as a person of great endurance; Fr. Sebastian Karotemprel highlighted Bishop Abraham's leadership qualities ... He was full of initiative. He had innovative ways of doing things. For Archbishop Thomas Menampampil, Bishop Abraham was a man “with unfailing stamina and clear sighted

understanding of possibilities. He moved on and pressed others on to the impossible until every mountain peak was climbed and every mighty endeavour brought to a happy conclusion. He had the imagination and the commitment to bring into existence what ordinary people would have considered impossible.”

I consider it apt to conclude this piece on Bishop Abraham with a brief account of the starting of a historic project that meant a great deal to him, namely, the building of the Cathedral of Mary Help of Christians at Kohima. It was a venture for which Bishop Abraham had to move mountains literally speaking. The Cathedral is the symbol of unity for all the different tribes and cultural communities of Nagaland. I know how much it cost Bishop Abraham.

The first suggestion to acquire some land there where the Cathedral now stands was made by Mr. D'Silva –a fervent Catholic – who at that time was the Chief Secretary to the govt. of Nagaland. That must have been some time towards the end of 1973 or early part of 1974. We then made a payment at that time for a piece of land there with the hope of following it up with measurement and document. We may today consider it a mistake to pay without measuring and having no document. Later on when Mr. John Bosco Jasokie was the Chief Minister we tried to make the proper document and boundary. At that time too another amount was paid to the Kochu clan. In 1982 when the actual decision was being materialized to build the Cathedral, the Bishop was keen on preserving the actual landscape and to have the plan drawn up accordingly. Keeping this desire in mind the engineer who had done some work in Phesama earlier presented a plan to the Bishop. The plan came up several times in the priests meeting.

In the words of Bishop Abraham the total cost at that time was estimated to be some 50 lakhs. Some were for and others against spending such a big sum. In the meantime an agreement had to be signed with the architect. And the plan could not easily be shelved also because the construction of the Cathedral Church was thought to be a centenary memorial of the coming of the Catholic Church to the North East. A committee that was set up to collect funds in the diocese too achieved some tangible results. In the meantime the army was approached to get the ground leveled. After several approaches the army started the work of preparing the site in January 1985. In the midst of some additional land problems, Mr. Jasokie's intervention and talk with the DIG, a fencing too was put up.

As the work was progressing claims to some part of the Cathedral land and problems of encroachment had to be faced and solved. The army bulldozers worked for about two months to cut the hill. Difficulties in the way of building the Cathedral was overcome one by one with the encouragement the Bishop received from different quarters: from Pope St. John Paul II during the Bishop's *ad limina* visit in 1986, visit to Fr. Egdio Vigano', the Rector Major, Fr. John Bennett SDB from England and others. Every time the Bishop came back from these visits he was more and more determined to build the Cathedral in honour of Our Lady. Even my enthusiastic cooperation to build the Cathedral was considered by the Bishop as a special miracle from Our Lady, as we read in one of his diaries!

The Catholic Cathedral Kohima, Nagaland on the internet is considered an architectural landmark: The façade shaped in line with the traditional Naga House, the semi-circular gallery of pews for 3000 seating and 1500 standing capacity, the meeting place for the sacrament of Reconciliation sending the message that the Cathedral is not a mere memorial of World War II, but is a place of healing War memories. The 16 feet tall Crucifix at the Centre inviting every visitor to look deep into oneself and the unique Natural Light System as well as the tomb of Bishop Abraham whose brain child the Cathedral is – make the visit to the Cathedral a satisfying one.

The Resurrection and the Message of the Four Evangelists

Jose Varickasseril, SDB



No one “saw” Jesus as he came out of the tomb on the resurrection morning! However the early community had an experience of the risen Lord. This had a powerful, indelible and unforgettable impact on them. We will examine briefly the message which the four Evangelists give us when speaking of the appearances of the risen Lord to his followers.

1. The risen Lord carries the mark of the crucifixion

Jesus invited Thomas to examine *the marks of the crucifixion* in his risen body (Jn 20:26-29). Similarly he showed his disciples his hands and feet (Lk 24:38-39). En route to Emmaus, Jesus spoke at length about the inescapability of suffering in the life of the Messiah (Lk 24:46). These are ways in which Jesus shows an important dimension of Christian discipleship – there is no resurrection without suffering.



2. The Word of God helps to understand the mystery of the cross

The three-year long public life was not sufficient to understand the implications of the Paschal mystery. Even after rising from the dead, Jesus took time to explain the Scriptures. He interpreted what Moses wrote, what the prophets had said, and what the Psalmists had foretold (Lk 24:13-46). One cannot understand Jesus without the Old Testament Scriptures!

3. Through Proclamation and Catechesis the Gospel is brought to all nations

The evangelists have recorded the instructions of Jesus regarding the duty of his followers to announce the Gospel to *all nations* (Mt 28:19 and Lk 24:47). The proclamation is to be done in *the whole world* and *everywhere* (Mk 16:15, 20). Details on proclamation are given in the fourfold-commissioning (see Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:14-20; Lk 24:47-48; Jn 20:21). When giving the commission to proclaim, Jesus was reiterating what he had told earlier (see Mt 24:14; 26:13). There was great interest in proclaiming to others that Jesus was raised from the dead (Mt 28:8; Mk 16:9-12; Lk 24:34-35; Jn 20:24-25). The angel directed the women *to go and tell* which they did with great joy (Mt 28:7-8). The two disciples returned in the middle of the night *to tell* the others that they had met Jesus (Lk 24:33-35). We gather from the Acts of the Apostles, that the early community took seriously the final exhortation of Jesus regarding the spread of the Gospel (Acts 1-28)!

The proclamation was to go hand in hand with the teaching ministry. Jesus commanded the Eleven to teach all what he had taught (Mt 28:18-20). Peter was given a special mandate to look after the sheep, that is, the members of the community. This would be done through his teaching ministry (Jn 21:15-19).

4. The Sacraments play an important role when making known the Gospel

The resurrection narratives are interspersed with numerous references to the Sacraments. The references are direct or indirect: Baptism (Mt 28:19; Mk 16:16), Anointing of the sick (Mk 18), Eucharist (Lk 24:30-31), Reconciliation (Jn 20:22-23), Priesthood (Jn 20:21; Jn 21:15-19), Confirmation (Lk 24:49; Jn 20:19-23). Jesus empowered the Eleven to do all what he had done as per design of the Father who sent him!

5. A Life together in the Community is of vital significance

The evangelists inform the readers that the disciples were together. Peter, John and Mary went together to the tomb (Jn 20:1-10); the two disciples were going together to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-48); Peter along with six others went together for fishing (Jn 21:1-14); the followers of Jesus were staying together (Lk 24:33; Jn 20:19, 26). After Jesus had left them, they were together in the temple (Lk 24:50-53). The evangelists present the post-resurrection community as a community that is filled with joy. There is no more place for gloom, sadness or distress (Mt 28:8-9; Lk 24:41, 52; Jn 20:20). Sharing meals together was integral to foster a joyful community life (Lk 24:41-42; Jn 21:9-14).

6. Prayer and worship are essential

The resurrection narrative lays emphasis on prayer and worship. Matthew tells his readers that the women worshipped Jesus (Mt 28:9, 17). Eucharist along with the Word of God was the expression par excellence of prayer (Lk 24:28-32). The last verse of the Lukan Gospel is about a community that is constantly in the temple to praise God (Lk 24:53).

7. The presence of the Holy Spirit is required to embark upon proclamation

For Matthew, the baptism is to be administered in the name of the Trinity and as such there is a constant reminder about the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19). Luke attaches great importance to the Holy Spirit when he tells that the Twelve / Eleven are to await the Holy Spirit so that they can be clothed with the power from on high and become effective witnesses (Lk 24:48-49). In the fourth Gospel, the risen Lord already gave the Spirit to empower his chosen disciples (Jn 20:19-23).

8. Jesus is ever present in the community

In Matthew's Gospel, there is no narrative about the Ascension; the Jesus of Matthew is ever present among them – “I am with you always, to the close of the age” (Mt 28:20). According to Mark, Jesus is working with the Eleven and is confirming their message with the miraculous signs that are accompanying the Gospel heralds (Mk 16:20). For John, Jesus is one who is among them to care for them as can be deduced from the breakfast that Jesus prepared for the fishermen (Jn 21:4-14). In the Gospel of John too, there is no narrative regarding an Ascension where Jesus takes leave of the disciples! He is ever present among them!



CAREER PRIESTHOOD AND KENOTIC PRIESTHOOD

Fr. Paul Vadakumpadan SDB

There are priests in most religions. But with due humility, we can claim that Catholic priests enjoy substantial prestige that many others do not. Some of them are hardly known as priests. Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman of the Indian Supreme Court is an ordained priest in his Zoroastrian religious tradition. Not many will know that. I have seen President Pranab Mukherjee performing what we would call priestly functions during Puja. However he was not known as a priest.

The high profile of the Catholic priesthood has advantages and disadvantages. James and John thought only of the advantages. So they asked Jesus, "Can we sit on your right and your left?" When Jesus spoke of kenosis, they thought of career.

The temptation that these two gentlemen faced is the temptation that many priests face also today. Unfortunately, we are witnessing today the emergence of an increasingly career priesthood in the Church. It appears that sometimes the zeal of some vocation promoters tends to ignore this fact. The question of numbers is not to be ignored. Having less does not necessarily mean having better vocations. Nor does it mean that having many necessarily means that quality is suspect. We need both: many and good vocations.

As our modern world becomes more secular in outlook, the challenge of our vocation is to become more religious. Otherwise we run the risk of becoming like salt that has lost its taste. It is good for nothing.

The words of the spiritual writer Henry Nouven are thought provoking: "One of the greatest ironies of the history of Christianity is that its leaders constantly gave in to the temptation of power, even though they continued to speak in the name of Jesus...The temptation to consider power an apt instrument for the proclamation of the Gospel is the greatest of all...We keep hearing ...that having power, provided it is used in the service of God and your fellow human beings, is a good thing. With this rationalization, crusades took place, inquisitions were organized, Indians were enslaved, positions of great influence were desired, Episcopal palaces, splendid cathedrals, and opulent seminaries were built and much moral manipulation of conscience was engaged in."

The priest, called to participate in the kenosis of Christ, will do well to reflect that there is no such thing as a 'career priesthood' in the Church and no scope for power politics. If someone still speaks of priesthood in terms of career, it is simply a mistake. Such mistakes do harm to the Church.

INITIAL PROCLAMATION IN PRACTICE

Dear Friends,

In my last sharing I mentioned that it is not enough that we do great things! It is supremely important that we link what we do with “values that are eternal”. Why to be satisfied with “temporary” values only? Let us go beyond the temporal. And my conviction is that JESUS can help us in this. The reason for it is, that I do not know of anyone else who claims to have overcome sin and death, and has risen from the dead, and who can “put an eternal-value-stamp” on everything we do! Jesus can provide us with values that go beyond sin and death. In other words, with eternal values. This is the only reason why Paul, captivated by Jesus, considered everything else as so much rubbish, compared to possessing Jesus the Risen Lord.

In this connection I had asked you to find out the letter Paul wrote to his friends in Philippi. It is known as Paul’s letter to the Philippians. And it can be found among Paul’s Letters in the New Testament. Anybody can read it. You need not be a Catholic Christian to read it. I had asked you to read especially a part of Chapter 3, namely, verses 1-15. Therein Paul compares the passing joys [of the flesh] with the everlasting joys the Jesus the risen Lord gives. He names the former “rubbish”, and the latter, the power of the resurrection. The one is “temporary”, the other everlasting.

Initial proclamation, in simple words, is to make the everlasting value attractive, by retelling the story of Jesus (explicitly/implicitly). We can do this in a thousand and one way. Be creative. Read everyday a small portion of the Bible, share the joy you feel with others, pray for others, think positive thoughts and just be nice to everyone.

(To be continued...)

BIRTH OF THE BODO CATHOLIC BIBLE

Bible, the Word of God, is unparalleled on several counts. One of them is the way it enriches the language into which it is born. Here is the story of how the Catholic edition of the Bodo Bible was born through the hard work of a few missionaries.



The first Bible in Bodo language was the result of the hard work of Protestant missionaries. The Catholics also used it for many years although at times they missed the 7 Deutero-Canonical Books. There was yet another reason for dissatisfaction: the translation was hardly accurate. Those who read the Bible in English or other languages could make out that meaning differed considerably at times.

Due to these and other reasons the Catholic Church had been looking forward to a Catholic edition of the Bible. The question was who would do it and how. Celebration of the Platinum Jubilee of the arrival of Catholic faith among the Bodos was thought an opportune moment to do something about it. In the course of discussions that followed, it was decided to bring out the 7 Deutero-Canonical books.

As per the modalities worked out in the meeting, the different Deutero-Canonical books were distributed to different people for translation. Fr. Sebastian Ishorary was appointed as the coordinator. Some several months later the translated materials were submitted to Fr. Sebastian Ishorary. It was found that the translation style and the language used greatly differed one from the other. It was because the translators had stuck to their own dialects. Bodo language has different dialects like Bwrdown, Sanjari, Goalparia, Kamrupia etc.

The coordinator met the Bp. Thomas Pulloppillil, the bishop of Bongaigaon, who was the chief patron of the translation committee and the one behind this project, and explained to him the problem. In an effort to standardize the language it was then decided that one person should do it getting help from others. Fr. Sebastian Ishorary was asked by Bp. Thomas Pulloppillil to take up the task of translating not only the Deutero-Canonical books, but also the rest of the Bible.

On the request of the Bishop, the Provincial also freed Fr Sebastian entirely for this work and stationed him at Kokrajhar. At the outset itself Fr. Sebastian noticed that the most important need of the moment was a new Prayer Book, as the old one had run out of stock and there was much demand for one. He therefore first prepared the new Prayer book. The new edition he fine-tuned the translation, and added more hymns.

In an effort to speed up the translation projects, Fr. Sebastian was moved to Bishop's House, Bongaigaon. The new edition of the Prayer book “Gwdan Swrang Lama” was brought out in 2008. It was followed by the 'Pocket Ritual' in Bodo, published 'ad experimentum’. Thus Bodo language got its first Book of Rituals.

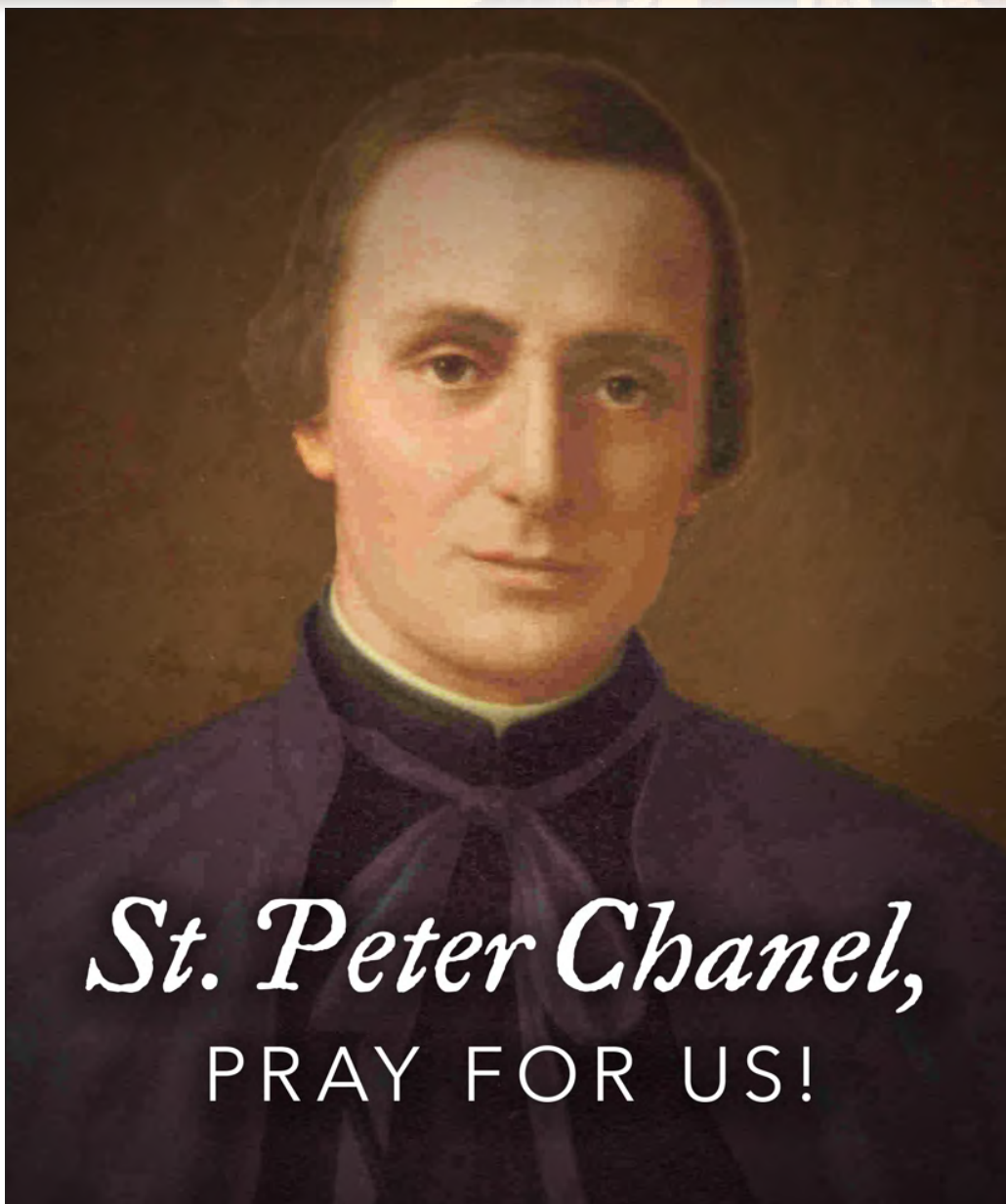
Although these works and the interim two years Fr Sebastian served as Parish priest of Kokrajhar Parish, delayed the Bible project, once he was back at the Bishop's House, the Bible translation was taken up intensely.

He was joined by Fr. Satyajit Basumatary of Tezpur diocese who at that time was also serving as Bishop's secretary. Fr. Sebastian Ishorary was the translator and Fr. Satyajit Basumtary the proof reader. In 2009 the Deutero-Canonical books were published as a separate volume.

Fr. Satyajit Basumtary left after three years and went for higher studies. So Fr. Sebastian Ishorary continued alone. He gave the manuscripts to different people for corrections. Those who helped with corrections and suggestions were: Mr. Albis Moshahary (Bengtol), Fr. Gwmshar Daimary (OFM Cap), Fr. Seberince Islary sdb, Fr. Nathaniel Narzary (Tezpur diocese), Sr. Doyamoni Basumatary (MSMHC), Mr. Anando Moshahary, and Mr. Basil Koikara (computer setting).

The New Testament was published in 2015 (10,000 copies) by FIAT MISSION and the whole Bible was published in 2017 (5,000 copiers) also by FIAT MISSION.

Fr. Sebastian says the feedbacks he gets from those who use the Bible are positive. They say they find the text simple and easy to understand.



Born in France, on July 12th 1803 in the hamlet of La Botiere near Montrevél (Ain) of a small-farming family, Peter Chanel spent part of his schooling at Cras and there was noticed by the parish priest, M. Trompier who took him and a companion into the presbytery and began to teach them Latin. Since the age of 14, Chanel had been intent on the foreign missions and his intention was strengthened by the letters that arrived from missionaries abroad.

From here Peter went on to study at the minor seminary of Meximieux in 1819 and in 1824 after some months at the college in Belley entered the major seminary of the Diocese at Brou, being ordained priest on July 15th 1827.

The following year he applied to the bishop of Belley for permission to go to the missions but was instead appointed parish priest of Crozet, Switzerland, because of his delicate health. But there he found scope for missionary work. The previous priest had alienated his parishioners and he had a hard struggle to win back their confidence and goodwill. Peter revived a parish in this "bad" district by the simple method of showing great devotion to the sick

Saint Peter manifested great solicitude for the poor and the small children, for their instruction making an appeal to his younger sister Mary Frances, then twenty years old. While at Crozet he heard of the newly founded missionary Society of Mary at Lyons. He had always wanted to be a missionary, and believed the call he felt to join this Society was from God. He left his parish, keeping his parishioners in his heart forever, as he said, and at 28 years of age went to Father Colin, Founder of the Marists, and asked permission to enter the Society. Many and varied duties followed for him; in 1834 he became director of the Seminary of Belley. Resigned to remaining in France if God so willed, he nonetheless cherished a hope he would be sent to Oceania, the special mission field entrusted to the Society of Mary by Gregory XVI when he approved the Society in 1836.

In September of that year he was among the first twenty Marists to depart for the Pacific Ocean by way of the Cape of South America, for the Panama

Canal did not yet exist. The journey took almost a year, round the Horn and up to Valparaiso on the Pacific coast of South America. In March 1837, Peter's friend Bret died off the Canary Isles and was buried at sea. The ship and passengers were severely tried by more than one violent tempest, and saved, it seemed, only by prayer to the *Star of the Sea*, Mary, refuge of sailors. Damage to their ship occasioned long delays.

When they reached the Wallis Islands several missionaries were received kindly at the first debarkation. Others, among them Peter Chanel, continued on to Futuna, a volcanic island northeast of Fiji. There, Father Chanel and Brother Marie-Nizier remained, welcomed by the local king of the Polynesian race. The natives already believed in a future immortal life, and the king Niouliki had forbidden cannibalism, but many superstitions still reigned. The two missionaries soon gained the confidence of the natives, struggled to learn the language and mastered it, undertook serious labors to catechize them, making the difficult adjustment to life with whalers, traders, and warring natives. Despite little apparent success and severe want, he maintained a serene and gentle spirit, plus endless patience and courage. A few natives had been baptized, a few more were being instructed. The king came to Mass one day, and others followed.

On the island were also some white English traders and they had the assistance of Thomas Boag an English Protestant and widower of a Futunan woman. Progress was painfully slow and uncertain being mainly a running battle against sickness and malnutrition and later petty persecution. They tried to help the islanders with primitive medicine, to discourage tribal warfare, such practices as abortion and to seize whatever opportunities arose for giving instruction; and administering baptism. Some progress was registered however, but the news that the king's son had been won over proved Chanel's death warrant and the king consented to his murder.

One day the king allowed his idols to be thrown into the fire, and the entire population seemed about to become Christian; however, this tribal chief was still under the empire of the father of lies. During a war with an enemy faction, he found a reason to claim that his gods had battled with him to win the victory. An undercover persecution was brewing for the missionaries, with the pretext they were hindering the influence of the king. One day his envoys arrived at the mission, and it was not long before they had slain the Saint with rude instruments. Brother Marie-Nizier escaped the fate of his superior, having been absent that day. Later it was said that the sky immediately grew dark and a luminous cross was seen amid the thunderclaps that followed. Saint Peter's frightened enemies buried his body in haste.

Brother Marie-Nizier escaped to bring the news to Bishop Pompallier who hastened from New Zealand with his schooner and a French frigate. There they confronted the terrified islanders. In the meantime, however, the atmosphere had changed, for the king and some others had died of a dreadful disease and in hindsight many recognized their debt to the murdered priest. The whole island was converted.

The sacred remains of the martyr were later exhumed and taken to New Zealand, and from there sent in 1851 to Lyons, to the Marist mother house. Within two years after his death, the whole island became Catholic and has remained so. He was canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1954. Peter Chanel is the first martyr of Oceania and its patron.

Anyone who has worked in loneliness, with great adaptation required and with little apparent success, will find a kindred spirit in St Peter Chanel. His feast day is observed on 28th April.

MISSIONARY (ongoing) FORMATION:

Bible, Catechetical, Spiritual and Theological

Introduction:

At the outset let me make clear the context of the topic. On 22 October 2017 Pope Francis announced an Extraordinary Missionary Month for October 2019. This is to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*. The theme proposed for this month is "Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World." Pope also specified four dimensions for this month. One among them is "Missionary Formation: Biblical, Catechetical, Spiritual and Theological. The word 'formation' takes our mind automatically to the seminary formation of the future priests, religious men and women. Though the theme of missionary formation of the seminarians is an important task, this paper however consciously delineates the theme to the *ongoing formation of priests and religious* (men and women) and the *missionary formation of laity*, mainly because of the reason that this group (priests, religious and laity) constitute the big chunk of the faith community and secondly this is a permanent group unlike the seminarians and formees who are only in the transitory state.

The above is the immediate context of this paper, but I would like also to place the remote context or the wider scenario with which this paper can be situated i.e the world of mission. Following the recent developments one can speak of mission in three levels. 1. Missionary activity *ad gentes* 2. Pastoral activity 3. New evangelization of the baptized. In the time of Second Vatican Council, mission was seen in terms of territory. That is establishing the Church where it is not yet present. Latter it was viewed as a continuing activity of the Church wherever it is present. Thus the pastoral activities take prominence. In the recent decades it also includes a process of re-evangelization, second evangelization or new evangelization.

Verbum Domini has clarified again the necessity of *ad gentes*. It says, "In calling upon all the faithful to proclaim God's word, the Synod Fathers restated the need in our day too for a decisive commitment to the *missio ad gentes*. In no way can the Church restrict her pastoral work to the 'ordinary maintenance' of those who already know the Gospel of Christ. Missionary outreach is a clear sign of the maturity of an ecclesial community." (VD 95). Scope and the need of New Evangelization cannot also be denied. The document has this to say about New Evangelization, "At the dawn of the third millennium not only are there still many peoples who have not come to know the Good News, but also a great many Christians who need to have the word of God once more persuasively proclaimed to them, so that they can concretely experience the power of the Gospel. Many of our brothers and sisters are 'baptized, but insufficiently evangelized'. In a number of cases, nations once rich in faith and in vocations are losing their identity under the influence of a secularized culture." (VD 96).

The missionary formation should keep in mind all these three situations and so organize its activities catering to all these three types of missions. These broadened visions and goals make us to think and plan many and creative ways of proclaiming the Gospel.

Before proceeding to discuss about the two groups (priests and religious; laity) and their formation, it would be right to involve in some discussion on the connection between the word of God, Catechetics and Mission.

This article therefore contains the following sections: 1. The word of God and Mission, 2. Relationship between Mission and Catechetics, 3. On-going formation of priests and religious, 4. Formation of the laity, 5. Some practical implications of missionary (ongoing) formation.

I. The word of God and Mission

The missionary command of Jesus is the starting point of the mission in the New Testament: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Mt 28:19-20 also cf. Mk 16:16). At the beginning of Acts Jesus commands them saying, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon

you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8). So making disciples and being witnesses of Jesus are the essence of the missionary command of Jesus. Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, observes that even after two thousand years after the missionary mandate of the Lord, “Various peoples are still waiting for the word of God to be proclaimed in their own language and in their own culture.” (Verbum Domini no. 4).

Basing on these commands a missionary is called to preach the Gospel to all creation. To explain it further, the scripture especially employs two imageries. One is that of fishing model where the disciple is called to “... fish for people” (Mk 1:17) and the net that brings in all kinds of fish is part of this imagery (cf. Mt 13:47-48). This can be termed as *evangelization*. The second model is shepherd. There the shepherd takes care of the sheep and feeds it (cf. Jn 10:1-18; 21:15-19). This refers to taking care of the believers who are already part of the church. In modern theology it is called *catechesis*.

Word of God is the source of the preaching or proclamation and this proclamation brings about the faith in Jesus Christ. St. Paul explains it logically saying, “But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" (Rom 10:14-15). So for Paul, “...faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the *word of Christ*.” (Rom 10:17, emphasis added). Jesus Lopez-Gay is right when he says, “The word is necessary, because the missionary Church continues the mission of Christ, the Word of God, who was sent to proclaim the Good News (Lk 4:18ff).”

The Holy Father in his recent apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, brings out this relationship between the word of God and mission. According to him, “The sacred Scriptures are the very source of evangelization. Consequently, we need to be constantly trained in hearing the word. The Church does not evangelize unless she constantly lets herself be evangelized. It is indispensable that the word of God 'be ever more fully at the heart of every ecclesial activity'” (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 174). So, the Church not only *evangelizes* but is *being evangelized* constantly by hearing the word of God.

The predecessor to the present pope, Benedict XVI too expressed the relation between the two (word of God and mission) saying, “His word engages us not only as *bearers* of divine revelation, but also as its *heralds*. ... We cannot keep to ourselves the words of eternal life given to us in our encounter with Jesus Christ; they are meant for everyone, for every man and woman.” (VD 91, emphasis in the document). Therefore in the word of God we experience God and his message and we are called to herald it to the world.

II. Relationship between Mission and Catechetics

Simon Pinto defines Catechesis as “that which enlightens, forms and strengthens and nourishes faith already received through evangelizing mission of the church.” But today it is given to understand that “catechesis itself is part of the evangelizing mission.” It is therefore proper to discuss the connection between catechesis and mission to establish catechesis itself as mission of the Church today. Evangelii Nuntiandi rightly connects the two (mission and catechesis) saying, “A means of evangelization that must not be neglected is that of catechetical instruction. ... Truly the effort for evangelization will profit greatly- at the level of catechetical instruction given at church, in the schools, where this is possible, and in every case in Christian homes.” (no. 44).

Let us try to put in the right *order and perspective*. The mission (*ad gentes*) should preach the Gospel, which is Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and form believing communities. Then “Catechetical mission moves not only till a Christian community is founded but goes up to seeing to it that the community is developed to its full maturity.” This is expressed in the document Redemptoris Missio as follows, “The mission *ad gentes* has this objective: to found Christian communities and develop churches to their full maturity. This is a central and determining goal of missionary activity, so much so that the mission is not completed until it succeeds in building a new particular church which functions normally in its local setting. ... Here we are speaking of a great and lengthy process, in which it is hard to identify the precise stage at which missionary activity properly so-called comes to an end and is replaced by pastoral activity.” (Redemptoris Missio, 48). So the missionary activity and catechetical works are intermingled or interconnected.

The commonness of both catechesis and evangelization is that they are *founded or based on the Word of God*. Evangelii Gaudium says that “Catechesis is a proclamation of the word and is always centered on that word,” (no. 166). So Catechetics should develop or adopt what is called Kerygmatic approach or kerygmatic in approach which is nothing but preaching and/or teaching the kerygma in and through the Catechetics.

We can conclude this session with Simon Pinto who says, “catechesis is an integral part of Church's evangelizing mission. It is responsible today to create a believing, living and an evangelizing community. Therefore, religious instruction should no more be viewed as mere catechism, where children memorize some formulae and repeat. But it should be a life-centered catechesis that has the Word of God as its centre.”

III. On-going formation of priests and religious

In India, Joe Tauro cautions us about the formation of priests saying, “A formation of some sparse and disparate inputs in the Bible without getting a taste of the fundamentals and that too not personalized and interiorized and made experiential cannot holdfast against the tempests and attractions of the modern day world.” He also laments about the formation of the religious in Biblical studies saying, “Bible Study is given sporadically in unconnected bits and bits and is as good as not done.” So ongoing formation is an imperative for the priests and religious.

The congregation for the clergy defines the on-going formation as follows: “Ongoing formation is a need which begins and develops from the moment of receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders. ... Hence permanent formation springs from a Grace which produces a supernatural force destined to assimilate continually... the gift received: 'I am reminding you' writes St Paul to Timothy, 'to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you.' (2Tim 1:6).” (Congregation for the Clergy, Directory on the Ministry and Life of the Priests, 69). The document Ratio Fundamentalis further emphasizes the importance of ongoing formation of priests in these words: “The priest not only ‘learns to know Christ’ but, under the action of the Holy Spirit, he finds himself within *a process of gradual and continuous configuration to Him*, in his being and his acting, which constantly challenges the person to inner growth” (no.80, emphasis added). Ongoing formation is intended to ensure fidelity to the priestly ministry in a continuing journey of conversion, in order to rekindle the gift received at ordination. (Cf. ratio fundamentalis no. 81).

Basing on this document we can draw some guide lines for the ongoing formation of priests and religious.

- It must be concrete. That is to say, it must incarnate in priestly reality, so that all priests can undertake it effectively; (Cf. ratio fundamentalis no. 82).
- It is the priest himself who is principally and primarily responsible for his own ongoing formation. Priestly fraternity is the first setting in which ongoing formation takes place. (Cf. ratio fundamentalis no. 82).
- It is desirable that this formation be promoted in each diocese by a priest or group of priests (Cf. ratio fundamentalis no. 82).
- Some areas of discussion in the ongoing formation of priests and religious could be: identity of priests and religious as spiritual leaders, disciple missionaries (first being a disciple of Jesus and then go out / sent out to preach), relating the word of God to the daily life situations and Biblical Pastoral Ministry.

IV. Formation of the Laity

The Indian church invests lots of personal and resources for the formation of the priests, religious men and women. When comparing this, the structures of formation, resources and personal set aside for the formation of laity are very minimal and meager. Comparing to the formation houses of priests and religious spread throughout the country how many national or regional formation houses are there for the laity? What are the formation that an average laity gets in our church apart from Sunday

homily, Sunday catechism, preparation for first Holy Communion and Confirmation and the marriage preparation? May be some lay faithful who have time, means and interest get some more formation from some movements and pious association.

The laity are eager and have hunger and thirst for prayer, for the word of God, catechism and for the teaching of the Church. Some dioceses and some individual priests and institutes make some sporadic attempts to supply some formative programs to satisfy it. But the demand is great. There are also some of the laity even interested to involve in the direct evangelization of which many priests and religious are afraid of, even talking and discussing. The protestant and Pentecostal brothers and sisters are very clear and bold in this respect. We need to learn from them. So the question arises *why not open up theological studies and formation to the laity?* Why can't they undertake these according to their speed and space?

The council fathers have articulated about the missionary commitment of the laity saying "The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary." (AG 2; also cf. RM 5). The faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world. (cf. LG 31). *Verbum Domini* makes this point still clear saying, "Since the entire People of God is a people which has been 'sent', ... 'the mission of proclaiming the word of God is the task of all of the disciples of Jesus Christ based on their Baptism.' ... The Church, as a mystery of communion, is thus entirely missionary, and everyone, according to his or her proper state in life, is called to give an incisive contribution to the proclamation of Christ." (VD 94). Therefore every Christian is and should be a missionary. The Synod of Bishops forcefully reaffirmed the need within the Church for a revival of the missionary consciousness present in the People of God from the beginning. (cf. VD 92).

In the area of interpreting the word of God to the laity, the challenge is that they (laity) want a pragmatic and sentimental interpretation of the word of God, an *ad hoc* approach. Literal or allegorical meaning or interpretation of the text seems to be more appealing to them. The life situations and problems stand prior to the reading of the text. Accordingly they read and understand the text. On the other hand there is also the challenge of non availability of copies of Bible for the families and individuals. In some cases people have no time to read, reflect, pray and find meaning and direction from the Bible for life. So for them, Word of God functions not a daily bread but a piece of cake for birthdays and feast days.

In this background I venture to propose some practical implications for the missionary formation concentrating on the biblical, catechetical, spiritual and theological spheres.

V. Some practical implications of Missionary (ongoing) Formation

Bible

i. Lucian Legrand explains one of the reasons for the Catholics leaking to Pentecostal sects. According to him the leaders of these churches achieve in giving Bible to the people. The little that we give, is too intellectual and not emotional, addressing their need and problems. So the priests, either in seminary formation or in the ongoing formation courses are to be trained to *relate the word of God to the daily life situations* of the people, connecting to the emotional problems of the faithful. These formative efforts should emphasize *the power of the word of God*. Many a time the catholic priests are not immersed with the word of God as Pentecostals are. We even do not have enough of contact with the word of God, mean reading, reflecting and updating about the word of God.

ii. There is an urgent need in the Catholic Church to evolve a *life oriented interpretation of the scriptures*. The Bible Study Groups and the BCCs at the grass root can evolve new ways and methods.

iii. *Homily* is an important way of missionary work, new evangelization and catechizing. *Evangelii Gaudium* discusses it extensively. Pope compares the preaching of a pastor to the mother, "It reminds us that the Church is a mother, and that she preaches in the same way that a mother speaks to her child." (EG 139). A good homily therefore should have these elements according to him: "the closeness of the preacher, the warmth of his tone of voice, the unpretentiousness of his manner of speaking,

the joy of his gestures.” (EG140). To deliver such homilies preparation is very important. Pope asks the priests to devote quality time for this precious ministry. He says, “I presume to ask that each week a sufficient portion of personal and community time be dedicated to this task” (EG 145).

iv. *Lectio Divina* is one of the methods where, in the tradition of the church, the word of God was combined with prayer and contemplation. It can be revived today at various levels, at individual, group, family and institutional levels. BCCs can also try this.

Catechetical

i. The children and the youth look for models to imitate. They have to be taught to *admire the person of Jesus* and to be fascinated by his teachings. This must be the first aim and goal of catechesis.

ii. To achieve the above our catechetical lessons should be *Bible based*, as I explained above the kerygamatik approach.

iii. As a result of experiencing Christ through the Bible they are to share this experience of Christ to others. So our catechetical teachings should have missionary thrust. For faith formation and missionary work are inseparable.

iv. Catechetics should not be seen as something related and limited to the children. Now the thinking is gaining ground that it is for all the people of God. So other levels of Catechisms such as adult catechism, family catechism, youth catechism etc, are to be tried and developed.

Spiritual and Theological Aspects

i. Witnesses always speak louder than words. Pope Francis says, “Today too, people prefer to listen to witnesses: they 'thirst for authenticity' and 'call for evangelizers to speak of a God whom they themselves know and are familiar with, as if they were seeing him.” (EG 150 also cf. GS 43). So the gap between proclamation of the good news and the enactment of good news has to be bridged.

ii. The ongoing formation of the priests and religious, apart from updating them in different fields related to their ministry, first foremost, should help them in their *gradual and continual configuration to Christ* and to fan the flame that God gave them through their vocation (cf. 2Tim 1:6).

iii. The theology and biblical studies are not to be seen as the privilege and prerogative of the priests and religious. They have to be open to the laity and the religious sisters too. They in turn have to engage in various ministries of the church including direct evangelization.

iv. SCCs are the best locus of evangelization. In concrete situations and through a constant efforts they can evangelize in their locality. So SCCs have to be strengthened in all the parishes. They must be introduced to reading, reflecting, praying and practicing the word of God. The presence of priest or a teacher of scripture to facilitate the members of SCC is welcome. Such a person should encourage and guide the reflections of the participants and should not silence them.

Conclusion

Pope Francis' words in *Evangelii Gaudium* may well suit as a fitting conclusion to this article. He says, “I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world. We have to regard ourselves as sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising up, healing and freeing.” (EG n.273). So evangelization is the reason of our existence and we should engage in it if we want to realize the purpose of our Christian existence.

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News from Dioceses

HOLY CHILDHOOD SEMINAR, TURA

One Day Seminar for the children of Holy Childhood Association was held on 21st March, 2019 at Sacred Heart Church, Tura. The day was holiday as the nation keeps the feast of Holi, therefore the children of the region could take part in the seminar. The programme was conducted for Tura Zone, which has 9 parishes. The animators of the parishes brought the children.

The programme began with the hoisting of the flag by Rev. Fr. Theodore T. Sangma, the Parish Priest of Sacred Heart Church, Tura. He welcomed all the participants and the animators. Soon after the inauguration, the children prayed the Morning Prayers. Fr. Lyndoh Sangma, the Diocesan PMO director, celebrated the Holy Mass. In his homily he told the children to be generous to one another as the small boy was generous to give his two small fish and 5 loaves of bread to Jesus in order to feed the five thousand men. During the small break snacks were given to the children.

After the break, Fr. Lyndoh took class for all in the Parish Hall on Good Manners. Parish wise Singing competitions were held. Then the sports and games were conducted to make the children happy. After the meals, the winners received the certificates and the prizes as well. Fr. Lyndoh thanked the host parish, animators, and all the participants for their active participation. The programme came to an end with the group photos.

Fr. Lyndoh T. Sangma



United Christian Prayer for India (UCPI)

United Christian Prayer for India (UCPI) is a movement by the church in India, consisting of members from every possible church in India. This has been in existence for over a decade. It got more organized in 2014 as the political climate changed. The main objective of the movement is to pray for India, in small and big groups so that, the constitutional values may be upheld in the country and that every Christian in the country may become a missionary and take the Gospel of Jesus to every Indian. It is not talking about conversion or baptism so much but every person being told about Jesus, taking the Gospel to every person. Unity among Christians is the first condition. Prayer for these two intentions is the main aim if the group.

2017 Regional Pastoral Conference time two people from UCPI had given a presentation. One very noteworthy fact is the very exhaustive study they have made if India. Every state, district, block and village with the population, Religious adherence etc. is available.

We are 5 Catholic Bishops and Bishops and head Pastors from some of the mainline churches are members of the executive committee.

Most Rev. George Pallipparambil SDB DD



News from Dioceses

Bible Convention in Jowai Diocese
organised by Proclamation team and Charismatic renewal team



Quotation: They too belong to my fold

11. Furthermore, the superior of a mission should make it one of his primary concerns to expand and fully develop his mission. The entire region within the boundaries of his mission has been committed to his care. Consequently, he must work for the eternal salvation of every person living there. If, out of an immense populace, he has converted a few thousand people, he has no reason to lapse into complacency. He must become a guide and a protector for these children he has brought forth in Jesus Christ; he must see to their spiritual nourishment and he must not let a single one of them slip away and perish. But he must do more than this. He must not consider that he is properly discharging the duties of his office unless he is working constantly and with all the vigor he can muster to bring the other, far more numerous, inhabitants of the area to partake of the Christian truth and the Christian life.

(Pope Benedict XV, Maximum Ilud)



EXIMIUS MISSIONIS MENSIS OCTOBER 2019

EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH OCTOBER 2019

"Baptized and sent: the Church of Christ on mission in the world"
"Bautizados y enviados: la Iglesia de Cristo en misión en el mundo"
«Baptisés et envoyés: l'Eglise du Christ en mission dans le monde»
"Battezzati e inviati: la chiesa di Cristo in missione nel mondo"

The Theme

The theme of the Mission's Extraordinary Month is "Baptized and Sent: Christ's Church on Mission in the World," states a press release, stressing that "the mission is understood as a proposal of faith that God makes to man."

Cardinal Filoni reaffirmed the implication of the whole Church in the missionary impulse, as the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council desired: "All that is done for love creates a fundamental relationship. The mission, if it's born of a faith that you love, is a relationship," explained the Cardinal. The missionary activity is the paradigm of each work of the Church, continued the Cardinal. In this connection, the Episcopal Conferences, the parishes, the dioceses of the world and also the Movements must be constituted in a permanent missionary state. "There is no aspect of our activity that doesn't make reference to the mission," stressed Cardinal Filoni.

The Logo

A specially conceived logo for the Extraordinary Missionary Month represents “a missionary cross whose traditional colors recall the five Continents.” A press release explained that “The Cross is the instrument and the effective sign of communion between God and men for the mission’s universality: it is luminous, colored, a sign of victory and resurrection.”

The words “Baptized and Sent,” which the “two characteristic elements of proclamation.

The cross’ colors have a particular significance. “The red — read the press release — recalls the blood of the Martyrs of the American Continent, seeds of a new life in the Christian faith. The green is the color of life and symbolizes growth, fertility, youth, and vitality. Green is also the color of hope, one of the three theological virtues. The white is a symbol of joy, the beginning of a new life in Christ . . . The yellow is the color of light . . . The blue is the color of the water of the life that quenches us and restores us on the way of God; it’s the color of our sky, a sign of God’s dwelling with us men.”



accompany the image, point out every Christian: Baptism and

**Baptised
and sent**

significance. “The red — blood of the Martyrs of the the Christian faith. The green is youth, and vitality. Green is also the color of

hope, one of the three theological virtues. The white is a symbol of joy, the beginning of a new life in Christ . . . The yellow is the color of light . . . The blue is the color of the water of the life that quenches us and restores us on the way of God; it’s the color of our



Happy Easter

But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. – Acts 2:24

Com.mission 28



Published at Don Bosco, Agartala