Bishop’s Message on Vocation Sunday.

I wish you all once again, a Happy and Blessed Easter Octave. Easter is the good news of hope for all. Hence we have a great reason to live life joyfully.

The 55th Day for Vocations was commemorated on 22 April. The fourth Sunday of Easter Octave. Listening, discerning, and living lie at the heart of Pope Francis’ message for this year’s World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

The Holy Father said 2018 is a special year for vocations, because the Synod of Bishops will reflect on young people, especially “the relationship between young people, faith, and vocation.”

Taking cue from the Holy Father’s reflection I would like to reiterate that the Threefold mandate of Jesus, Proclamation, Commemoration and Forgiving is the Ministry of Priesthood.

In order to continue Jesus’ work of Salvation in this world, first He gave his mandate to proclaim the Good news to the whole world and has promised to his disciples that he would be present till the end of the world. “I am with you always until the end of this world.” “Mt.28-20. Joyful proclamation of the good news is the main task of each priest by which Jesus is continuously made known to others. St. John Paul II said, “It is not enough to believe in him but his name should be made known to others.”

He also gave his own mission to his disciple to celebrate the Eucharist in his memory till the end of times. In the last supper “Jesus took the bread said the blessing and broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying “Take and eat. This is my body. Then he took the cup and gave thanks, and passed it to them saying, “Drink this, all of you, for this is my blood, the blood of the Covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.”

Thus it is his disciple, the priest’s primary duty to celebrate the Eucharist and to bring Jesus in the midst of the people at all times and everywhere. When Jesus broke the bread His disciples recognised him at Emmaus. The Priest’s holy duty is to do the same and rejuvenate the faith of the people. The priestly work that many of us are doing today can be replaced by lay people but no one can celebrate the Mass and administer the sacraments and hear Confession.

Jesus also empowered the disciples to forgive the sins of men. After the resurrection from the dead Jesus appeared to his disciples strengthening their faith in different places and different times. On the evening of the first day after Sabbath, Jesus appeared and said “Peace be with you, as the father sent me, so I send you. After saying this he breathed on them and said “Receive the Holy Spirit, for those whose sins you forgive, they will be forgiven, for those whose sins you retain, they are retain.” Only Jesus has the authority to forgive sins because shedding his blood on the cross he instituted the sacrament of Reconciliation through Priest are empowered to forgive sins of mankind. When priests pronounce “I forgive your sins “to the penitent the healing of Jesus takes place.

Let us pray for vocation and encourage our young boys to come forward to embrace this noble vocation of priesthood to continue the work of Jesus joyfully.

+Stephen Lepcha

You are God's masterpiece
On 14th April 2018, Sikkim North East Deanery ICYM conducted one day recollection at St. Peter’s Church, Gaucharan under the leadership of coordinator Rev. Fr. Sukden Marcellino with the help of Rev. Fr. Rocky D’Souza. The programme was a successful one. Members came from all parishes except Khamdong, Mangan and Rango. There were 80 and more youths who attended the recollection. The parish priest Rev. Fr. Rocky D’Souza gave his available resources to make the day. Every attendant felt that the facilities and hospitality that was offered by the parish was outstanding. On this occasion there was the formation of new ZEXCO body after dissolving the former body. Twelve members are elected unanimously as the new ZEXCO members for the North East Sikkim for the period of two years. The house thanked the outgoing members for their generous contribution and sacrifice that they made for the deanery for last two years. The seminar ended with thanks giving Holy Eucharistic celebration by Rev. Fr. Rocky D’Souza. It was followed by delicious meal prepared and sponsored by the Parish Priest and parishioners. Names of the newly elected ZEXCO members:

President : Allen Tshering Lepcha (Lingeepyong)
Anmol Pandey (Pakyong)
1. General Secretary : Monica Rai (Pakyong)
Rosa Das (Rangli)
2. Male Representative : Onden Lepcha (Rangli)
Mihini Gurung (Rhenock)
3. Spoke Person : Lavan Lepcha (Rhenock)
4. Adviser : Priscilla Rai (Tadong)
5. Technician : Angel Lepcha (Pakyong)
6. Treasurer : Emmanuel Darshan Rai (Gaucharan)
Selina Gurung (Rangli)
7. Animator : Alphonse Bishwakarma (Pakyong)

Reported by Miss. Monica Rai (General Secretary)

"Tell the heavens and earth to celebrate and sing! Command every mountain to join in song!"
- Isaiah 49:13

The Diocese of Darjeeling congratulates Fr. Marcel Fernandes, Fr. Edward Baretto and Fr. Joseph Menezes on completing 25 years of priesthood.

Your abiding devotion and faithful service to the Lord has touched countless hearts and inspired so many souls. You are a blessing to all of us.

BIRTHDAYS in May & June 2018

Fr. Baretto Felix - 25 May
Fr. Lepcha David - 25 May
Fr. Singh Michael - 04 June
Fr. D’Souza Rocky - 08 June
Fr. Gurung Alexander - 09 June
Fr. Lepcha Fredrick - 09 June
Fr. D’Souza Felix - 09 June
Fr. Lepcha Clement - 15 June
Fr. Crasta Francis - 17 June
Fr. Lucksom Don Bosco - 19 June
Fr. Lepcha Gregory - 21 June
Fr. D’Souza Paul - 26 June
Fr. Kabo Paul - 28 June
Fr. Darjee Peter - 29 June
Born in a small village named Bantwal in the district of Mangalore, Karnataka, on 14th August, 1963, Fr. Marcel Fernandes is the fourth of the five sons of the Late Ligoury Fernandes and Juliana Lasrado. Fr. Marcel received his primary education up to class 7 in the village government school, then he moved to Mangalore City in pursuance of higher education. It was in Mangalore that he first heard God’s call beckoning him to join his priesthood. The Capuchins ran a home for young boys who aspired to join religious life hence it was during his stay at Assisi House that Fr. Marcel decided to join the Diocesan Clergy and he was sent to Darjeeling for further studies.

After a long journey of four days by train, he reached Siliguri and then travelled the meandering roads upto Darjeeling during the monsoons of 1980. After his early studies in St. Joseph’s North Point he went to Morning Star College for his Philosophy and Theology studies. As a regent he served for six months in Todey and in Maria Busty for another six months. His diaconate ordination took place at St. Teresa’s Church, 8 mile, Kalimpong and he was ordained priest on 25th March, 1993 at Lolay. Since his ordination Fr. Marcel has served the diocese in various capacities. His first appointment was as Asst. Parish priest at Nimbong and in 1994 he went to Pakyong. From Pakyong he looked after Gaucharan too and as the in charge he built the Church there. He stayed at Tadong as priest in charge and when Tadong was made a parish he served as the parish priest. Apart from building the church at Tadong Fr. Marcel also founded Pragati Social Service Society. after staying at Tadong for four and a half years he went to St. Xaviers Pakyong as Treasurer and for a year he looked after the Parish too. Then he was appointed at Mangan where he stayed for 4 years. He also served as the director of Gianora Home for 2 years before he came to Rhenock. After working in so many different parishes and places Fr. Marcel at present is in the Bishop’s House.

He says to have been inspired by priests like the Late Fr. Molomoo and Fr. Peter Lepcha who left no stones unturned to reach Christ to the people by walking for hours on all circumstances to celebrate Mass for the faithful.

A passionate photographer, a humble soul and a benevolent spirit Fr. Marcel himself is an inspiration to young priests to whom he says, “do your duty faithfully. You are called to be a priest...not just a priest but a good priest.”

He urges fervently to the lay faithful to love the priests, to understand them and help them overcome their weaknesses. He says, “don’t put the priests on a pedestal but treat them respectfully.”

As a priest who has always been concerned about his people he insists on the importance of the family in bringing up the children in a proper spiritual environment which he believes is vital for vocation to priesthood and religious life.

Tea leaves congratulates Fr. Marcel on his silver jubilee and wishes him the very best as he continues his work in the Lord’s Vineyard.

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**SCC Training for Priests and Religious**

A two days training on Small Christian Communities was organized for the priests and religious of Darjeeling Diocese on 1st and 2nd May 2018 at Anugyalaya DDSSS. About 200 priests and nuns from the various congregations working across the Diocese participated in this seminar. Sr. Christine and Fr. Sarto were present as resource persons from the National and regional teams respectively. Prior to the seminar Sr. Christine and Fr. Sarto had an interaction session with the members of the Diocesan Resource Team at Pushpika Pastoral Centre on 30th April 2018. It may be noted that Bishop Stephen has declared 2018 as the Year of SCC in the Diocese and a series of trainings are going on in all the deaneries.
Night Vigil for Dexco and Zexco
Diocesan youth Commission

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men keep watch with me for one hour?"-Matthew 26:40

The Diocesan Youth Commission under the leadership of Fr. Michael F. Singh, Diocesan Youth Director, organized a night vigil from 21st to 22nd April 2018 at Sacred heart Church, Lolay. Thirty five Dexco and Zexco members participated in the vigil and made it a successful event. Fr. George Vv, Deacon Moni Clement Lepcha, Deacon Ronee Tikhatir were the resource persons who led the night with inspirational and encouraging bible verses. The intention for organizing this night vigil was to spend the night praying for the peace in the country, Diocese, Darjeeling valley and for success in the forthcoming youth activities. The youth led the praise worship, rosary and empowered each other. The time well spent with the Lord. The Vigil ended with the Holy Mass celebrated by DYD.

Reported by : Fr. Michael F. Singh, DYD

Fondly remembering Bishop Eric Benjamin on his death anniversary.

The pioneer of our Diocese. Without his evangelical zeal and all encompassing love our lives wouldn’t have been the same in so many ways. The Diocese owes it all to Bishop Eric who was the first Bishop of Darjeeling.

Pray for us from Heaven dear Bishop Eric that we may lead a life as worthy as you did. The hope of meeting in the new Jerusalem burns in our hearts.

Bishop Eric Benjamin
Born - 13th May, 1920
Ordained priest - 24th Aug. 1945
Appointed Bishop - 8th Aug. 1962
Ordained Bishop - 7th Oct. 1968
Rested in the Lord - 12th May, 1944

He Only Takes The Best
A heart of gold stopped beating.
Two shining eyes at rest.
God broke our hearts to prove to us
He only takes the best.
God knows you had to leave us,
but you didn’t go alone,
for part of us went with you
the day He took you home.
To some you are forgotten,
to others just part of the past,
but to us who loved and lost you,
the memory will always last.

Kindly Communicate !!!

Tea Leaves is the medium through which the individual parishes, communities and institutions can share with others, about the activities and events of your areas of work. So please send in the reports of your initiatives and programmes to:

Fr. Alex Gurung, Darjeeling Diocese Communication Commission,
Bishop’s House, Darjeeling
E-mail : tealeavesdarjeeling@gmail.com / alexgurung@gmail.com, Mobile : 9641872925

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