

From the Hills

The News Bulletin of the Northeast Independent Delegation Vol. XX No. 1 May, 2007



MESSAGE

In the Style of Mary's Visit

With the inauguration of the Northeast Independent Delegation on April 20, 2007, we began to write a new Chapter in the development of our Mission in this region. We raise our hearts in gratitude to the Almighty God for his marvelous guidance and beg him to bless all those who have contributed in one way or other to our life and ministry. We would like to dedicate this News bulletin to the Visit of our Blessed Lady to St Elizabeth, which we celebrate on May 31st. After the visitation of Mary, Zechariah praises God, by saying that God has visited his people (Lk.1:67-68). In a decisive way God in Christ visited his people through the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth precedes the great mystery of Annunciation. In the Annunciation she was filled with the Holy Spirit, Word of God and burning charity, which is translated into the mystery of Visitation to share God's love with Elizabeth, who is in need. This visit of Mary continues at Cana, where they had the shortage of wine, and she visited and encouraged her beloved Son on the way to Calvary and stood at the foot of the Cross. Her visitation continues in gathering the disciples in prayer as they began to come into terms with the reality of Jesus' suffering and death. She visited her people by specially appearing in Lourdes and Fatima, over and above she accompanies the Church, on her pilgrim way.

At the visit of Mary the child in Elizabeth's womb leapt for joy. Today the world is thirsting for the same joy of hearing the Word of God. Pope Paul VI writes in *Evangelii nuntiandi*, "May the world of our time which is searching, now in anguish and in now in hope, receive the gospel not from evangelizers who are dejected or dispirited, but from those who, having received the joy of Christ into their own hearts, are ready to risk their lives so that the kingdom may be proclaimed and the Church established throughout the world" (En. 80).

Today God needs you and me to visit his people and thereby explore the meaning of our existence by exhibiting the joyous living of our vocation. Our Father, St Anthony Mary Claret continued this visitation with burning charity, as he traveled from place to place, preaching the Word of God in the style of Jesus and Mary. He writes in *Autobiography*, "I am ever more deeply impressed at the thought of Jesus moving from town to town, preaching everywhere..." (No. 221). He is inviting his missionaries to offer their lives as a continuous visitation of God in the following way, "A Son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a man on fire with love, who spreads its flames wherever he goes. He desires mightily and strives by all means possible to set everyone on fire with God's love..." (*Autobiography* 494). We shall pray that God may continue to visit the Northeast India through our personal and community life and ministry, as he visited the humanity through Mother Mary, the Patroness of our Congregation.

Fr. Jose Anchupankil, CMF
(Superior Delegate)

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News in General

General Assembly and Erection of North East Independent Delegation

The General assembly and the erection of the North East Independent Delegation were held at St Claret Seminary, Umsning from 16th to 20th of April, 2007. The inaugural function was preceded by the General Assembly from 16th to 19th of April. The General Assembly officially commenced at 8.45 pm on 16th, Monday, prior to which Fr. Superior General has given an animation talk at 4 .30 pm. On 17th Assembly spent time on input sessions by various resource persons. Next two days, the Assembly has taken up reports of various communities for evaluations and deliberations. A working paper on the theme planted by the living waters - A VISION FOR 2020 - was presented and deliberated. After sufficient study and discussions, the assembly drafted a definite action plan for the Delegation for next three years. The Assembly was attended by 39 members.



Participants of the 1st General Assembly

The Formal inauguration of the erection of the new Independent Delegation of Northeast India was held on 20th April, 2007, Friday at 4. 30 pm with a concelebrated Eucharistic celebration by his Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Dominic Jala, Archbishop of Shillong followed by the Inaugural Function presided over by Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Abella, Superior General. Provincial Superiors Rev. Frs. Armin Sixt of Germany, Xavier E. Manavath of Bangalore, Raphael Raj of Chennai and Augustine Mundiath of St. Thomas were present and offered felicitations to the new organism. Decree of Erection was read out by Rev. Fr. Xavier E. Manavath. In his address the Archbishop acknowledged the committed works of Claretians in his diocese as well as to the entire region and appreciated the zealous and vibrant presence of Claretians in the Northeast India.

Rev. Fr. Superior General, during his address wished all the success and God's blessings to the young organism and invited its members to build up the Delegation on three important pillars of Spirituality, Community Life and Mission. The History of Claretian in India "SENT TO SET ABLAZE" was released by the Superior General Rev. Fr. Joseph Abella, and gave the first copy to the Archbishop Dominic. The cultural



Rev. Fr. Superior General inaugurates the General Assembly

entertainments exhibiting the varied rich culture of Northeast India added color and jubilation to the occasion. Claretian confreres, neighbors, friends, benefactors and well-wishers graced the occasion with their prayers and presence.

With Love From Germany: Visit of the Provincial Superior

It was a great privilege to have Rev. Fr. Armin Sixt, CMF, the Provincial Superior of Germany during the inauguration of the Independent Delegation of the Northeast India. He reached the Northeast India on April 18th and celebrated the Holy Eucharist during the General Assembly on the following day. During the homily he said, "...in this part of your country, something has come down from God's heaven to the earth through your solidarity, through your commitment, through your charisma, through your credibility, your warmth



Rev. Fr. Armin sixt, CMF celebrates the Holy Eucharist

and loving kindness towards the people that tells something about God's love... The German Province has always been very concerned about you and we will continue to accompany you in our prayers and friendship". He visited our communities at Balat, Guwahati, Shillong and Umsning. We thank you dear Father for your fraternal visit and thank all the members of

News in General

the Province of Germany and our benefactors there for generously and lovingly building up the Indian branch of the Claretian Congregation.

Hearty Welcome to Rev. Fr. Peter Schuetz, CMF

It is our pleasure to extend a warm welcome to Rev. Fr. Peter Schuetz, CMF., to the Northeast India when he visits us from May 18 to 21, 2007. In the year 1969 he visited Shillong in order to study the possibility of starting the first house of the Claretians in India. He writes to Fr. Joseph Pulickal on March 27, 2007 about that visit. "I went to the Northeast in 1969 together with Fr. Joseph Madhavath. I don't remember many details of that trip. Since it was my first visit to India we wanted to make a certain research how to start our work in

India.... As a whole we had a very positive impression of the bishop and the missionaries.... Naturally I am very happy that after all, the plan to work in the Northeast has come to a reality after almost 40 years. And above all that region has become an independent organism of our Congregation. May God bless you abundantly in the future as he did in the past, so that the Congregation will develop in number and spirit".



From our Mission Centers

Arunachal Pradesh

ST CLARET COLLEGE, ZIRO

St Claret College celebrates Annual Day

St Claret College, Ziro celebrated its 4th Annual Day on 10th March, 2007 in the College Campus where the Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University, Prof. S. C. Saha was the Chief Guest of the function. Many distinguished guests were present on the occasion. The celebration started



The Chief guest with other dignitaries of the day

with the welcome ceremony to the Chief Guest and followed by the different cultural items performed by the *Claretines*.

Rev. Fr. Sabu George, the Principal, presented the Annual Report in which he explained about the motto, values and the various activities of the College. The Chief Guest Prof. S.C.Saha, in his address pointed out the richness of cultural heritage of Arunachal Pradesh. He promised that he will try his best to get the permanent affiliation of the College as early as possible.

Sr. Bindhu Joseph, FCC a 2nd year student was honored by the chief guest for securing the second position at the national level essay competitions for the college students. The chief guest gave away the scholarship to the meritorious students. There was distribution of prizes of the cultural, literary and Sports activities conducted in the year 2006 including the handing over of the certificates to the NSS volunteers who attended the annual camp last January. Fr. Benoy Joseph, the vice principal gave the vote of thanks.

St Claret College celebrates Pre-Christmas, 2006

The College celebrated the Pre-Christmas of the year 2006 on 22nd December. Shri Kemo Lollen, the Deputy Commissioner of Lower Subansiri, was the Chief Guest of the function. The celebration was performed with different meaningful cultural items on the stage including the Skit that exhibited very clearly the birth of Christ and the meaning of Christmas.

Rev. Fr. Sabu George, the Principal, gave a message stressing on the meaning and the importance of Christmas in Christian life and in others as well.

In his speech, the Chief Guest appreciated the activities of the College especially the discipline being observed in the campus. He also assured his support for the institution.

Sincere Thanks & Prayerful Wishes



The Northeast delegation sincerely thanks and appreciates the hard work of **Rev. Frs. Joseph Perumapampil, Thomas Manakuzhiyil and Joseph Ancheril** as they return to the Province of Bangalore after their service in the region.

Photo

From General Assembly...



From the Inaugural Holy Eucharistic Celebration...



Invoking God's Blessings...



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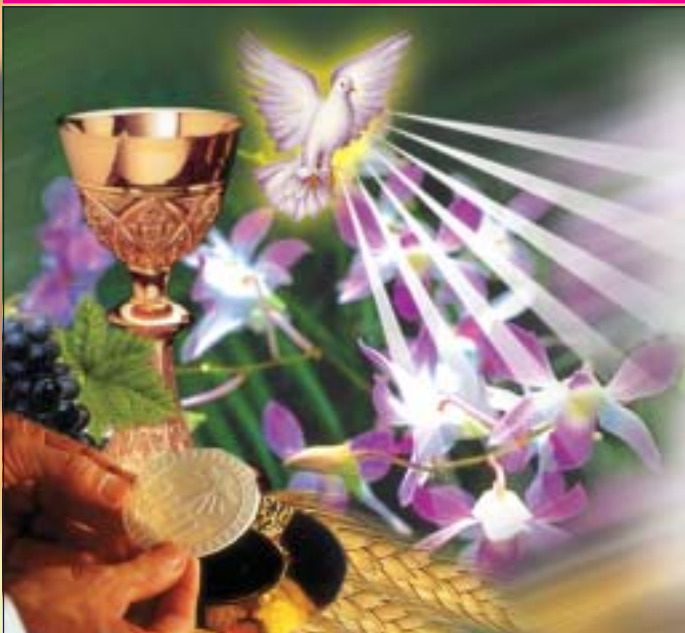
Words of felicitations....



From the cultural richness of Northeast India....



Congratulations and Best Wishes to the New Priests



Allwyn Mendoz



Charles Ekka



Daveedu Bojja



Hahshah Kerophin



Siby Kadamthode



Tharappel Sebastian

**May the Almighty God guide you to lead
His flock to Jesus the Good Shepherd!**

From our Mission Centers

Assam

ST CLARET MISSION, KACHUGAON

Women's Training Programme

In view of encouraging the women leadership in the parish activities, a women's training program was organized in St Mary's Church, Kachugaon on 24th of March 2007. A Seminar on Women's role in the society and the church was also included in the programme, highlighting the aspect of faith formation. Representatives from various villages were selected to form a core group who would take the lead role in organizing various programmes in the parish. This is definitely going to be a platform for these tribal women to come out in public and contribute their due in the church and society at large.

Sports Day

St Claret School has conducted a sports day for students and parents on 7th of April, 2007. It was hilarious as well as enriching to view the participation of both students and parents for the competitions. Fr. Joy Sebastian, Principal, in his message explained that education has to become a joyful experience for children and the pivotal role belongs to Parents and teachers in this regard. The Prize distribution at the end of the Sports meet was recognition of their versatile abilities and a back up to the young minds to prove them better in future.

Meghalaya

ST CLARET MISSION, AMPATI

Marian Sodality

The Marian Sodality convention of Tura diocese was held at St Claret Mission, Ampati from January 12 - 14, 2007. Over 1,500 Catholic women attended the program. Rt. Rev. Dr. Andrew Marak, the Coadjutor bishop of the diocese presided over the Holy Eucharistic celebration and underlined the role of women in the Church and proposed Mother Mary as the best model to be imitated. Mr. Purno A Sngma, the Member of Parliament, was the chief guest. Mrs. Ranu N. Marak, the President of Marian Sodality welcomed the participants and Fr. A. K. Marak, the director of the Movement, guided the program. In honor of Mother Mary, a Marian procession was also organized.



Garo women performing a cultural dance

The Annual Shobba

The annual shobba of the parishes of St Claret Mission, Ampati and Good Shepherd Parish, Chapahati was held at Garagre village in the first week of February 2007. The theme for this annual gathering was the 'Word of God'. The Holy Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Rt. Rev. George Mamalasserry, Bishop of Tura. During the homily he stressed the importance of the Word of God in our daily life. The Shobba is also an occasion to deepen the faith of the people by receiving various sacraments. Various competitions and cultural items were also conducted.

HOLY ROSARY MISSION, BALAT

Teachers' Quarters opened and blessed

The newly constructed Teachers Quarters at Balat was opened and blessed by Rev. Fr. Armin Sixt, CMF, the Provincial Superior of Germany on April 19, 2007. The inauguration was followed by a variety of cultural program staged by the inmates of St Claret Boys Hostel and the Girls from the Holy Rosary Convent. In his message, Rev. Fr. Armin Sixt admired and appreciated the indigenous cultures existing in Northeast India and expressed his happiness over



Rev. Fr. Armin Sixt opening the Teachers' Quarters

visiting Balat during his maiden visit to India. The occasion was graced by Rev. Fr. Augustine Mundiath, the Provincial Superior of St Thomas Province and Rev. Fr. George Pettayil. We sincerely thank the Mission Procure, Germany and Proclade Bettica for extending financial assistance for the construction of the Teachers Quarters.

Dalgipa Sobha held at Delsora, Balat Parish

The Dalgipa Sobha (Gathering) of Balat Parish was held at Delsora village from January 19 - 21, 2007. 'The Word of God' was the main theme for the Sobha, as this year is dedicated to the 'Word of God' in the Northeast India. A large number of people participated in the Sobha from different villages of the Parish. The resource persons for the Sobha were Frs. Tomy Akkapadickal, Joseph Pullolickal, and John Kochupurackal, the parish priests of Balat, Ampati and Nonghyllam respectively. The participants were enlightened, on various topics like Catechism, Evangelization, Marriage, Word of God etc., to enhance quality of Christian life. It was an occasion for the people to renew their life especially by the reception of various sacraments and listening to various talks.

From our Mission Centers

ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CHURCH, MAWSYNRAM

Church Blessing at Mawkasain

Rev. Fr. Varkey Chittoor, a Veteran missionary of the region and the first Parish priest of Mawsynram blessed the newly built village church at Mawkasain village on 4th March 2007. Many Catholics of the parish staying in Shillong and elsewhere joined the celebrations.

Anniversary Celebration of SCC of the Parish

The sixth anniversary celebration of the Small Christian Communities was celebrated on 06th of May, 2007. There was two day training for the SCC leaders prior to the celebrations. Fr. Leo and Sr. Lona From Faith Formation Community (FFC), Shillong rendered their help. Now the SCCs are very lively in the parish with groups active in almost all the villages.

ST CLARET MISSION, PHRAMER

St Claret Feast and the First Holy Communion

The anticipated feast of St Claret was celebrated on October 22, 2006, with the Holy Eucharistic celebration presided over by Rt. Rev. Dr. Vincent Kympat, the Bishop of Jowai. During the celebration 108 children received the first Holy Communion and 183 people were strengthened in their faith with the Sacrament of Confirmation. During the homily the bishop appreciated the active role being played by the laity in the development of the parish community.



First Holy Communants with the Parish Priest

He also invited the people to initiate the Small Christian Communities in every village. Fr. Jose Vengathanam, the Parish priest thanked all those who have worked hard to make the day a meaningful and fruitful one. All the people shared the common meal and enjoyed a cultural extravaganza too.

Career Guidance and Leadership Camp for Youth

A three day parish level youth program was conducted from December 15 - 17, 2006 in Thadmuthlong village. The program began with the hoisting of the flag by Fr. Jose Vengathanam. Rev. Fr. Hilarius Lamare, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Shillong, Rev. Srs. Angelin, Florida and Mr. Francis Lathong conducted classes on various subjects

so as to enable them to become able and good leaders of the society. 80 youth participated in the program.

PRESENTATION MISSION, NONGHYLLAM

Blessing of the Parish Church

The long cherished dream of the parish community of Nonghyllam was realized on February 4, 2007 when the parish church was blessed by Rt. Rev. Dr. Victor Lyngdoh, Bishop of Nongstoin. The Church was



Newly built parish church at Nonghyllam

opened by Rev. Fr. Xavier E. Manavath, CMF., Provincial Superior of Bangalore. During the sacred celebration Deacon Hahshah Kerophine, who hails from the same village was ordained priest. He is the second Claretian priest from the North-east India. During the homily the Bishop Victor appreciated the hard work of the Claretian missionaries and thanked the Congregation for the same. Many priests, religious and the faithful attended the program. Nonghyllam, one of the difficult missions of Meghalaya in terms of transport and communication was entrusted to us in the year 1992 by the Archdiocese of Shillong. Today the parish has over 4,500 Catholics in 38 villages.

ALL SAINTS MISSION, RONGARA

Blessing of the New Extension of the Claretian Residence

On December 17, 2006 the new extension of the Claretian Residence at Rongara was blessed by Rt. Rev. Dr. Andrew Marak, then Coadjutor Bishop of the diocese of Tura. A three day retreat was preached by the bishop to the catechists, leaders and elders of the parish. In his preaching



Rt. Rev. Dr. Andrew Marak with the catechists of the Parish

he highlighted the role of the laity in building up the parish community in collaboration with priest and sisters. All Saints Mission, Rongara is the first mission of Claretians in the Northeast India, started in the year 1989.

From Our Formation Centres

ST CLARET SEMINARY, UMSNING

Opening and Blessing of the Extension of St Claret Seminary

The extension of St Claret Seminary was opened by Rev. Fr. Xavier E. Manavath, CMF, Provincial Superior of Bangalore and was blessed by Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Abella, CMF., the Superior General of the Congregation. The newly built Auditorium is dedicated to the Martyrs of Barbastro. During the ceremony Rev. Fr. Superior General invited the inmates of the Seminary to make the Martyrs of Barbastro as their models and intercessors as most of the Martyrs were seminarians. The ceremony was attended by many Claretians and a few guests from the neighborhood. Fr. Joseph Pulickal welcomed the gathering and Fr. Jose Anchupankil thanked the community for working hard for the extension of the seminary building. We remain very grateful to Referat Weltkirche, Rottenburg, Germany for its generous contribution, which made the extension possible. The Seminary, which was started in the year 1998, is the only Minor Seminary of the Northeast Delegation.



Rev. Fr. Xavier E. Manavath
opening the new Extension

News in Brief

Perpetual Profession and Diaconate

Roshan Kindo, CMF., will make the perpetual profession on May 31st and he will be ordained Deacon by Most Rev. Dr. Dominic Jala, SDB., the Archbishop of Shillong on June 2nd at 6.00 pm at Claret Villa Shillong. We offer him our prayerful wishes and fraternal support.



JPIC Program

Rev. Bro. Arnel, Alcober CMF., JPIC Coordinator, General Curia, Rome (Justice and Peace) will be visiting the Northeast India from June 29 - July 11, 2007 to offer JPIC workshop in two sessions:

Time: June 30th (evening) to July 4th (For the Professed Students)

July 4th (evening) to July 8th (noon) for priests.

Venue: Claret Villa, Shillong

Forge Program in India

The Forge (Claretian Re-initiation Program) will take place from July 1 to August 30, 2007 at Claret Nivas, Carmelaram, Bangalore. A few from outside India are also expected to participate in the program. Frs. George Theruvel and James Perumpalliolickal are expected to participate in the program from the Northeast Delegation.

Inter Provincial Retreat

An Inter Provincial retreat for priests will be arranged this year by St Thomas Province. Those who would like to join the retreat are invited to give their names to the Superior Delegate before June 15, 2007. The details are given below:

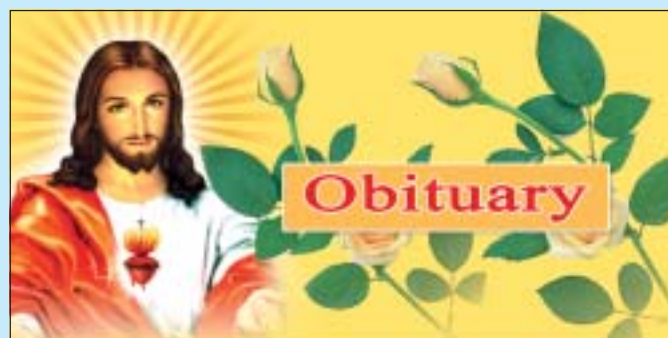
From July 9 (Monday, 8.30 pm) to July 14 (Saturday 12.30 pm)

Venue: Claretian Provincial House, Karukutty, Angamaly, Kerala

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mani Puthiyidam

Quinquennium Program for Priests

The Quinquennium Program for priests in the first five years of ordination will be held from August 5 - 12, 2007 at Claret Niketan, Belgaum, Karnataka.



God has taken away one of the beautiful flowers, **Rev. Fr. George Nedumpalakunnel** from the garden of Claretian Congregation on April 4, 2007. He breathed his last at Caritas Hospital near Kuravilangad after a prolonged illness. He was born on February 3, 1943, made the first profession in the congregation on May 1, 1964 and was ordained priest on June 6, 1974. He took initiative to send the first missionaries to the Northeast India in the year 1984 at the request of Rt. Rev. George Mamalassery, Bishop of Tura. We remain very grateful to him and we pray for his eternal rest.



Mr. Mathai Pullolickal, beloved Father of Rev. Fr. Joseph Pullolickal left for his heavenly abode on January 29 2007 at the age of 84. His mortal remains were laid to rest on the following day at St Joseph's Church, Koodallur. We express our heartfelt condolences to Fr. Joseph and the bereaved family members. May his soul rest in peace.