



AGARTALA

Province Newsletter

VOLUME - 03 / 2024

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PROVINCIAL SPEAKS

Dear Friends and Confreres,

As I reflect on my time as Provincial Superior in this edition of WAVES, our Province Newsletter, my heart overflows with gratitude and joy. Thank you for entrusting me with the privilege of leading our province and allowing me to make a difference in your lives. I acknowledge that my impact, whether positive or not, has been driven by sincerity and diligence, yet my human frailty may not always have met expectations.

First and foremost, I extend my deepest appreciation to Fr. K. J. Abraham for graciously accepting the mantle of leadership as I transition from this role. With his vast experience in this field, I am confident he will navigate the ship of our Province with unwavering commitment and dedication. My prayers and blessings accompany the new administration team.

To all members of our Province, I am profoundly thankful for your steadfast cooperation and dedication over the past six years. It is through your collective efforts that our Province has thrived. I am proud of each member who tirelessly serves without complaint or reservation. Your cooperation has been integral to any success achieved during my term. Let us now rally behind our new Provincial team, offering them our full support as we continue our ministry and religious life in the Congregation of Holy Cross.

As we look ahead to the upcoming Chapter, I am hopeful that it will foster unity, optimism, and renewed fervour among us all. I urge each of the chapter's delegates to actively engage with vision and foresight, recognizing the long road ahead in our mission.

Lastly, let us remember that the work of the Holy Cross transcends mere human effort—it is a divine calling. As our founder, Blessed Basile Moreau, said, "Holy Cross is God's work." May we remain guided by the spirit of our Founder as we embrace our vocation to religious life.

Warm regards,

Fr. Simon

Provincial Superior
Province of Northeast India



Province of Northeast India NEWSLETTER

MAY. 2024

VOLUME # 03

PROVINCE UPDATES



CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

As we embark on the journey of a new academic year, it is with great joy and anticipation that we extend our warmest greetings to each one of you. With the start of this academic cycle, we renew our commitment to the holistic education of our students – educating not just their minds but also their hearts, with the ultimate aim of transformation.

Educating Hearts and Minds

In the spirit of our founder, Blessed Basile Moreau, we are committed to the mission of Information, Formation, and Transformation. We believe that education goes beyond the mere imparting of knowledge; it involves shaping character, nurturing values, and fostering a spirit of



service and compassion. As educators, it is our privilege and responsibility to guide our students towards becoming individuals who contribute meaningfully to society.

With this resolve in mind, let us embrace the challenges and opportunities of the new academic year, striving to create environments that inspire curiosity, critical thinking, and a deep sense of empathy.

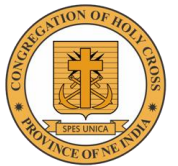
Congratulations to Fr. K. J. Abraham CSC

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Fr. K.J. Abraham, CSC on his election as the new Provincial Superior of our province. As he takes up this leadership role, we are confident that his vision, wisdom, and dedication will guide us towards greater heights. Let us offer our



“Since God alone provides the means for the successful accomplishment of any task, it seems evident that a person needs to be called by God to be an effective teacher. Without this call to teaching, how will anyone be able to put up with everything that teachers face daily?”

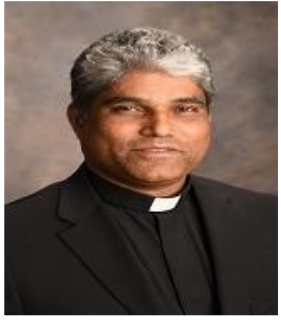
—Bl. Basile Moreau, Christian Education



prayers and support to Fr. Abraham as he leads us with grace and courage.

Gratitude to Fr. Simon Fernandis, CSC and His Council

As we welcome Fr. Abraham into his new position, we also express our gratitude to Fr. Simon Fernandis, CSC and his council for their exemplary leadership over the past years. Their tireless efforts, guidance, and support have been instrumental in the growth and development



of our province. We are especially thankful for their encouragement and support towards WAVES, which serve as vital channel of communication and connection within our community.

As we move forward, let us continue to uphold the values of Holy Cross and work together in unity and harmony for the greater good of all. May WAVES continue to be a beacon of light, illuminating our path with news, insights, and inspiration.

Wishing everyone a fruitful and blessed months ahead.

In Holy Cross Spirit,

- **George Jacob, CSC**

ASHA AGARTALA

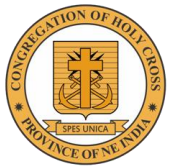
Collaboration between ASHA and IVDP Empowers SHGs in Koloriang, Arunachal Pradesh

For over a decade, the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) of Koloriang, under the auspices of ASHA (Association for Social and Human Advancement), Agartala, have been making significant strides in women's empowerment. Operating in the Kurung Kumey district of Arunachal Pradesh, these SHGs have been actively engaged in projects focused on "Gender Equality and Gender Justice among SHG Women at Koloriang".



Through systematic training in various income-generating activities and public leadership, more than 80 SHGs from remote villages of Arunachal Pradesh have become well-versed in skill-based activities such as documentation and book keeping. This progress is a testament to their journey towards self-reliance and sustainability. ASHA, along with project staff, provides continuous support and guidance to ensure the SHGs' success, a role that has been acknowledged and appreciated by the district administration and the public.

In their efforts to further strengthen the SHGs in Koloriang, ASHA has collaborated with Mr. Kulandai Francis, the founder and president of IVDP, Krishnagiri. Despite the challenges of distance, Mr. Francis has



been a consistent source of inspiration and support to SHG members, providing financial assistance to both them and their children. Through these scholarships for ultra-poor students, 96 students have benefited so far.



Recently, Mr. Francis and his family visited Koloriang to inaugurate SHG tailoring centers and sponsored 25 sewing machines as a revolving fund for the SHG members' sustainable development. His visit served as a source of inspiration and motivation for the women involved in ASHA's initiatives. During the inauguration, Mr. Francis emphasized the importance of empowerment over charity, stating that reliance on charity can lead to dependency rather than dignified self-reliance. ASHA extends its gratitude to Mr. Kulandai Francis and his family for their significant contributions to the students' scholarship program and looks forward to their continued support for SHGs and philanthropic activities in the North East region of India.

- Pappy Valan, CSC

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, BAGBASSA

Teacher Enrichment Programme

Holy Cross School Bagbassa hosted an insightful seminar titled 'Teacher Enrichment Program 2024' on April 20, 2024. The event attracted twenty-one dedicated educators from the school. Serving as the resource person was Rev. Fr. Jilson Tom, CSC, who delivered an enlightening session on the features of the NEW EDUCATION POLICY.

During the seminar, Rev. Fr. Jilson Tom, CSC not only provided an in-depth explanation of the policy but also shared practical tips for effective teaching strategies. His expertise and guidance were immensely beneficial for the attending teachers, offering them valuable insights to improve their teaching methods.



Furthermore, the seminar went beyond theoretical discussions, incorporating various activities aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the teachers. These activities were designed to engage the educators actively and foster practical application of the knowledge shared during the sessions.

Overall, the seminar proved to be a significant learning experience for the teachers, equipping them with valuable tools and techniques to excel in their profession and positively impact the education landscape at Holy Cross School Bagbassa.

- Ajit Philip, CSC



ST. ANDRE, BODHJUNG NAGAR

Investiture Program and Farewell to Fr. Jayaseelan

On April 12th, the school held its investiture ceremony, marking the beginning of new leadership roles. Additionally, the school community bid farewell to Fr.



Jayaseelan CSC, the outgoing parish priest and school secretary, expressing gratitude for his dedicated service to the school and the Catholic community in Bodhjungle. We extend a warm welcome to Rev. Fr. Mariaraj CSC, who has assumed the roles of Parish Priest and School Secretary. A short felicitation program followed by a fellowship meal was organized to commemorate the occasion.

CBSE Training - Financial Literacy and Digital Tools

Understanding finance and financial transparency is crucial in today's professional world. Our teachers attended a seminar organized by CBSE on financial literacy and the effective use of digital tools. The seminar was enriching and inspiring, providing our teachers with valuable insights to enhance their teaching careers.



Ongoing Professional Development

As we embarked on the new academic year 2024-25, our teachers participated in an orientation program on April 6th, focusing on professional development.

Dr. Surojit Sen Gupta, Associate Professor from MBB College Agartala, served



as the resource person, motivating and guiding our 56 teachers. The theme for the academic year, "Asatoma Sadgamaya," emphasizes the rejuvenation of our teachers' spirits.

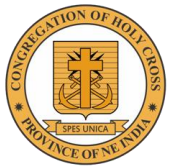
National Curriculum Framework Foundational Stage

On April 16th, we hosted the National Curriculum Framework Foundational Stage seminar, with over 60 teachers attending from various schools. Mr. Swapan Majumder, a national awardee, shared his expertise and empowered our teachers with capacity-building



strategies for the foundational stage. The seminar was instrumental in providing valuable insights and skills to our educators.

- Iswar Happa, CSC



Change of Guard at St. Andre Mission

St. Andre Parish welcomes a new Parish Priest, Fr. Mariaraj Iruthayam, CSC, following the appointment made by Most Rev. Lumen Monteiro, CSC., Bishop of Agartala. Fr. Mariaraj assumed his role on April 14, 2024, succeeding Fr. Jayaseelan as the 10th pastor of the parish.

The Installation Ceremony, held on Sunday, April 14, at the parish church, was conducted amidst the faithful by Fr. Bosco Lathis, Pro-Vicar of the St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, representing Bishop Lumen. Fr. Jayaseelan, the outgoing Parish Priest, presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. Fr. Jilson Tom, CSC represented the Provincial Superior, Rev. Fr. Simon Fernandis, CSC.

Expressing gratitude to all who attended the ceremony, Fr. Mariaraj emphasized the importance of unity and collaboration for the growth of the Mission. He returns to the Parish office for the second time and seeks the prayerful support of the faithful as he embarks on his pastoral ministry.

- **Mariaraj, CSC**



CHALLENGTA MISSION

Keeping in mind the adage "When you focus on the good, the good gets better," I am inspired to contribute to "the Wave", the happenings at the Challengta mission.

St. Joseph Parish

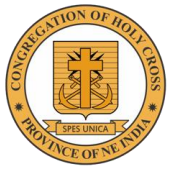
In the pastoral landscape, we've seen many successes in recent past. Notably, in 2023, we erected two new 'mothas' with modest Village Chapels, solely with local assistance. This year, thanks to the generous contribution of the authorities of the erstwhile St. Johannes' School in Hakrai Para, we are nearing the inauguration of another Village Chapel for 12 families. Hakrai Para faithful, especially the elderly and infirm, found it challenging to attend church services due to the distance (about 6 km from the Parish Centre).

Holy Cross School

My heartfelt gratitude goes to our Province Administration for their timely intervention in enhancing the School's infrastructure. Rev. Fr. Binoy John, CSC was empowered to achieve the following facilities: 1) A Composite Laboratory, 2) Computer lab, 3) Smart Class room, 4) A well-furnished Library. Additionally, Fr. Binoy's expertise in school management has brought much-needed order and systems to the school. Personally, I am thankful to the Province Administration and Rev. Fr. Binoy CSC for their remarkable contributions. Along with 'yours truly,' our 600-plus students will forever be grateful for your achievements.

- **Harry Dsilva, CSC**





KATHALCHERRA MISSION

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

INAUGURATION OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR - 2024-2025



Holy Cross Higher Secondary School, Kathalcherra, commenced the academic year on April 16th with a brief inaugural function. The day began with a special prayer service led by the principal, who lit the lamp symbolizing God's blessings upon the school community. Sr. Cicilia Kujur, the headmistress, along with Debashis Sinha (Teacher Representative), Sita Debbarma (Office Staff Representative), and Jennifer Debarma (Student Representative), joined in lighting the lamp.

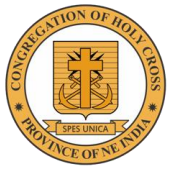
The motto for the academic year, "Rest not, till I give my best," was unveiled during the ceremony. The principal welcomed the staff and students, emphasizing the importance of Holy Cross Education, academic excellence, and character formation. He reiterated the approach of Holy Cross Education as Information, Formation, and Transformation, focusing on core values such as family, prayer, service, and respect for diversity.

Welcoming the new administrative staff, Mr. Utshya Debbarma, to the Holy Cross family, the ceremony marked the beginning of a new chapter for the school.

ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR TEACHERS

A day-long Orientation Programme was conducted for the school staff on April 16, 2024. The programme focused on the core values of Holy Cross Education, the charism of the founder, and the legacy of the Congregation of Holy Cross. In addition to planning for academic excellence and character formation, teachers were encouraged to reflect on their purpose in the school and to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness while maintaining a joyful and reflective approach.





CONGREGATIONAL EDUCATION COMMISSION

I had the privilege to participate in the Congregational Education Commission meeting, from April 4 to 6, 2024, at the Holy Cross Generalate in Rome. The commission focused on devising mechanisms and structures to prepare a guidebook on Holy Cross Education, aligning with the vision of Blessed Basile Moreau and addressing emerging needs in education. Members emphasized fostering greater connectivity among different sectors of the congregation and sharing resources for educational services to the poor and needy. Plans were made to survey key figures engaged in Holy Cross educational ministry worldwide to understand how Holy Cross education is expressed in various contexts today.

- Davis Konuran



GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH

BIBLE CAMPS

Two separate Bible camps were organized at the parish level: one for Bengali medium children in Garo II and Dangacherra for three days, and the other for English medium children at Holy Cross School, Kathalcherra, for two days. The parish Holy Cross Family Ministry unit members and Sr. Gretta conducted the program at Garo II and

Dangacherra, while Fr. Babu Paul SJ, Sr. Cecilia, Sr. Emiliya, Madam Brasila, and KCYM Youth conducted sessions in English at Holy Cross School, Kathalcherra. A total of 261 children participated, ranging from class 1 to 12, showing great enthusiasm.



The focus of the program was to learn the word of God, practice family prayer, and pray the Rosary.

Competitions were held on prayer, knowledge of the Bible, and faith practices. Children made promises to read the Bible daily, have family prayer, and recite the Rosary regularly.



PARISH FEAST CELEBRATION

The Good Shepherd Parish, Kathalcherra, celebrated its parish feast with great devotion and festivity. The nine-day novena and Eucharistic celebrations, starting from April 12th and concluding on April 20th, were marked by prayers for the parish's intentions and the faithful. Each day of the novena was animated by different village communities and lay associations. People from all villages participated in the celebration, thanking God for past blessings and seeking His guidance for the future.



On Good Shepherd Sunday, the feast day, a thanksgiving Holy Eucharist was presided over by Fr. Robert Mathias, CSC, with Frs. C V Jose, Davis Konuran, and Ajit Philip concelebrating. A colourful cultural program followed the mass, and the feast day celebration concluded with a festive meal.

- **Abraham C., CSC**

KUMARGHAT MISSION

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

Leadership Session 2024-25

A dynamic Leadership Session took place on April 29, 2024, at our school hall, aimed at instilling leadership skills among our leaders and enhancing their abilities in team building, communication, decision-making, and self-awareness.



The session commenced at 9:30 am with a warm welcome to our resource person, Fr. Lancy D'Souza CSC, Manager of Holy Cross School, Kumarghat, and all the student leaders. Fr. Lancy led the session with great

enthusiasm, conducting various activities such as listening skills, interaction, and team building exercises. Each activity held significant importance and left a lasting impression on the leaders.

There was also a briefing session on the roles and responsibilities of the leaders, followed by group assignments to implement what they learned. The session concluded with a feedback session, providing valuable insights for improvement. Sir Biswajit delivered the vote of thanks to Fr. Lancy and all the leaders. Overall, it was an enriching session where each leader learned valuable skills in a single day, thanks to the effective facilitation of Fr. Lancy.

- **Jeneth Lalawmpuii Siakeng**

In-house Training Sessions for Teachers

On April 27, 2024, the School conducted in-house training sessions for teachers to enhance their professional skills and knowledge in the ever-evolving landscape of education. The session was divided into three segments:



1. **Characteristics of a Good Teacher:** Fr. J Sahaya Lourdu Raj, Principal of the School, discussed the essential features of a good teacher, emphasizing that effective teaching goes beyond imparting knowledge to embodying qualities that inspire and empower students.
2. **Setting Question Papers:** the Principal conducted a practical session on setting question papers, covering important steps such as font size, line alignment, numbering, and using format painter.
3. **Using Smart Class:** Sir John, office staff of the School, demonstrated the importance of technology in education and practical aspects of connecting projectors and devices to Smart TVs for creating dynamic and engaging learning environments.



These training sessions underscored the school's commitment to professional development, ensuring teachers are equipped to provide quality education. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. J Sahaya Lourdu Raj for his continuous support in advancing the school's educational excellence.

- Sanjoy

ST. PAUL PARISH

STRENGTHENING SCC LEADERSHIP: ONE-DAY TRAINING PROGRAMS:

With the decision of the Parish Council, the SCC Parish Committee organized four one-day SCC training programs for the SCC leaders of the Zones. A total of 196 SCC members attended these training programs aimed at strengthening the SCC and providing them with a deeper understanding of the Church and SCC.

The training sessions were conducted by Mr. Lala Darlong, Mr. Subia D/B, Sr. Vero Antony, MC, and Fr. Lancy, CSC. The focus was on empowering SCC members with the true meaning of the Church and SCC, and the seven-step Bible sharing method was explained to the participants.

The Parish was divided into four Zones for better functioning:

1. Masli Zone: Represented by five villages, with 45 participants on the 10th of March.
2. Kumarghat Zone: Represented by four villages, with 48 participants on the 17th of March.
3. Rajkandi Zone: Represented by four villages, with 35 participants on the 14th of April.
4. Betcherra Zone: Represented by three villages, with 68 participants on the 21st of April.





These training programs assisted SCC units in the villages to become vibrant and knowledgeable, with the Word of God at the center of their lives. The Parish now has 43 SCC units, meeting once a week for Bible sharing and action planning. This new approach to being the Church has brought renewed enthusiasm and life to most of the villages.

- *Lancy, CSC*

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL, PANISAGAR

TEACHERS' SEMINAR



On April 5th, following the distribution of books and study materials, the teaching faculty gathered for a day-long seminar on the topic of 'Pedagogy of Teaching'. Mrs. Tapashi Saha, HOD of the Teachers' Education department, Holy Cross College inspired and motivated the teachers to start the year well. She shared her initial struggles in teaching and emphasized the importance of continuous learning for teachers. Mrs. Saha stressed that teachers should be daily learners to be efficient educators. The seminar concluded with a communal meal and the distribution of the academic year 2024-2025 timetable.

NURSERY INAUGURATION



April 16 marked the inauguration of the nursery for the new academic year 2024-25. It was a joyous occasion welcoming the first-time school-goers to our campus. Just as a new born child is a loving message of God to the family and society, each new child entering our school campus signifies a blessing. Students from classes one to five, with the assistance of teachers, presented a remarkable cultural program to welcome the parents and their children. We welcomed forty-two toddlers to our school for the first time.

The event was graced by the presence of Fr. Sahaya Vandan, the second principal of the school, who visited after a gap of 22 years. He was honored and welcomed amidst parents and students. Sr. Philomena, the Chief Guest, encouraged parents to nurture their children at home as it is the first school.

- *Kanikkai Jeyaraj, CSC*



HOLY CROSS, MAWKYNREW

Inter-School Sports Meet Unites Parish Schools



Holy Cross Parish Mawkynrew hosted an inter-school sport meet for all 32 Parish Schools on April 3rd and 4th, 2024. The event provided students with a break from academics and allowed them to participate in various sports, fostering important life skills and overall well-being. Held on the football ground, the sports meet featured the manager of Mawkynrew Rural Bank as the chief guest on the first day, beginning with flag hoisting and a cultural program.

The sports were divided into different sections. Day one included events for Upper Primary and Secondary sections, such as Long Jump, Relay Race, Tug of War, Kho-Kho, and more. The tug of war



event was a favourite among students. The second day started with a march past from 32 parish schools, judged by Dr. Lamshwa Mawlong and others from NCC. Fr. Anthony, the principal of Good Shepherd Higher Secondary School, Jongksha, was the Chief Guest and encouraged students to learn from others.

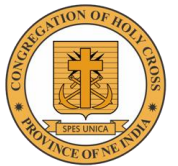
The event concluded with a prize distribution function where Dr. Lamshwa Mawlong and parish school secretary, Fr. John, awarded prizes to all the winners. The Upper Primary section championship trophy was jointly awarded to Holy Cross UP School Mawkynrew and RCUP School Laitmynsang, while RCLP School Pashang won the Lower Primary section trophy. The Chief Guest lowered the flag, symbolizing the end of the successful sports meet.

- *Phlorina*

Inter-School Sports and Cultural Meet

The Holy Cross, Meghalaya region organized an Inter-School Sports and Cultural meet at Holy Cross School, Mawkynrew. Four schools participated: Holy Cross School, Mawkynrew, Good Shepherd School, Jongksha, Holy Cross School, Umkiang, and Holy Cross School, Mawpat.





Students arrived on April 11th, and engaged in ice-breaking activities at 5:00 p.m. The inaugural ceremony followed at 6:00 p.m., with a colorful dancing competition at 8:00 p.m.

On April 12th, the day started with Mass at 6:30 a.m. A rally against drug abuse was held at 8:15 a.m,



through the streets of Mawkynrew Village. The day's highlights were the football matches for boys and girls and tug of war.

The closing ceremony at 5:30 p.m. had Most Rev. Bishop Victor Lyngdoh as the chief guest, where prizes were distributed to the winners.



The meet concluded on April 13th after Holy Eucharist at 6:45 a.m., breakfast, and students departing to their schools.

- Jherden Lyngdoh





HOLY CROSS PARISH, MAWPAT

Empowering Young Hearts with Retreat

Over 300 children recently experienced a transformative retreat led by Bethany Sisters Sr. Balakynthiew and Sr. Jubino, welcomed by Fr. Valerian Serrao, CSC. The two-day retreat, attended by children from 32 villages, provided a nurturing environment for spiritual growth. Through interactive sessions and activities, the sisters imparted wisdom, deepening the children's faith and understanding. The second day focused on spiritual practices, including prayer and reflection, fostering a stronger connection to themselves and the divine. These experiences will guide the children through life's challenges, as they carry the light of the retreat within them. It was a sanctuary where love, faith, and empowerment intertwined, fostering growth and transformation.

- Friny Peter, CSC





GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH, JONGKSHA

Celebrating Unity and Sportsmanship

Good Shepherd Parish, Jongksha organized an exciting Sports Day on April 22 and 23, 2024, bringing together students from all schools within the parish. More than 3000 students from 23 Lower Primary (LP), 7 Upper Primary (UP), and 2 Secondary



schools enthusiastically participated in various athletic events, fostering a spirit of unity and sportsmanship among the students.

The Sports Day was not just an ordinary event; it was a testament to the strength and unity of the parish community. Students, teachers, and parents came together to celebrate the joy of sports and healthy competition. The energy and enthusiasm radiating from the participants were truly remarkable. The event showcased a wide range of sports activities, including track and field events, team games, and



traditional sports. Students displayed their talents and skills, cheered on by the vibrant crowd of spectators.

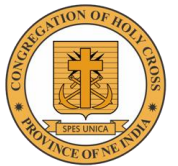


The presence of Rev. Fr. Bernard Laloo, as the Chief Guest, added to the significance of the occasion. His inspiring words encouraged the students to strive for excellence not only in sports but also in every aspect of their lives.



The Sports Day at Good Shepherd Parish, Jongksha was indeed a remarkable event, symbolizing the parish's commitment to holistic development and fostering a sense of community among its youth. It served as a reminder that through unity and collaboration, great things can be achieved.

- **Suresh Kagoo, CSC**



Parish Day Celebration

It was a day filled with joy, unity, and blessings as the parish day celebration kicked off with Morning Prayer, Holy Eucharist, and the installation and renewal of village Church leaders. Rev. Fr. John Valan, CSC, the main celebrant, focused on the theme "Jesus – the Good Shepherd" and our call to serve as shepherds in life, providing meaningful service to all.



The sharing of Agape as one parish highlighted the importance of Christian community. During the noon Adoration, Fr. Billingshar Syiemlieh's reflection on God's Call instilled a desire for vocation in the lives of children.

The day also saw the installation of the newly elected executive committee of the parish youth. Adding to the festivities, the parish presented "Ka Jingshad Paskha" - the Easter Dance, depicting the Khasi traditional dance for the first time.



The unity that brought success to the event made it a memorable day for all involved.

- **Antony Jose, CSC**

GOOD SHEPHERD SCHOOL, JONGKSHA

Inter-House Sports Meet 2024

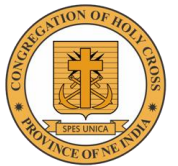


Our school's highly anticipated 4-day sports meet commenced on April 2nd and concluded on April 5th, 2024. The event was inaugurated by Shri Barnabas Nongbah from the Rotary Club Shillong. With participation in 21 sports disciplines, students showcased exceptional performances, reflecting true sportsmanship and unity within their houses.



Each group displayed unique excellence in various sports, honouring their respective houses and their mottos. The sports meet reached its climax on April 5th in the presence of Smt. Alison Sooting, the Branch Manager of SBI, Jongksha.

- **Antony Jose, CSC**



ST. JOHN'S PARISH, KHAWZAWL

Holy Week Celebrations

The Holy Week was solemnly observed throughout the Parish. Palm Sunday processions took place in



Khawzawl and Lungtan villages, drawing large crowds. Good Friday provided an opportunity for witnessing the Passion and death of Jesus Christ through the Way of the Cross and the solemn liturgy. It was a time of spiritual renewal for the faithful, celebrating the victory of Jesus Christ over death and the gift of eternal life. To mark this



significant occasion, Khawzawl Church organized special entertainment programs including Bible quizzes and singing competitions, followed by a communal meal that left everyone satisfied.

Unfortunately, Easter Sunday was marred by a tragic event as a heavy thunderstorm and rain struck Mizoram, causing severe damage to houses and properties, including the residence of our Sisters (SMMI). The faithful came out in numbers the following day to clear the debris. We extend our

heartfelt thanks to them for their generosity and timely support.

Youth Conference

The Parish-level Youth Conference took place from April 12th to 14th, 2024, at Vanchengpui village, approximately 40 km from Khawzawl. A significant



number of youth members from seven villages participated in the program, which included the annual meeting, social work, and house blessings by the Priest, alongside the usual church activities. It was a time of renewal for the youth, with resource persons speaking about the Sacrament of Marriage



and its significance for the present Catholic youth of Mizoram. There was also time set aside for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist, as well as for praise and worship led by talented singers and choir groups from various branches of the Youth.

- John PKC, CSC



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL, KHAWZAWL

School Reopening

After a month-long holiday, St. Joseph's School in Khawzawl reopened its doors on April 8, 2024. Both teachers and students were delighted to return, bringing with them lots of life and enthusiasm to kickstart the new academic year. The official inauguration of the new academic year took place on April 15, 2024. Teachers warmly welcomed all students, especially newcomers, with tokens of love and welcome. Fr. John PKC, CSC, the Principal, extended his wishes for a successful new academic year to everyone. Following the school assembly, students were treated to refreshments, making them feel right at home.



Teachers' Seminar

To refresh and re-energize teachers before the start of classes, a one-day Teachers' Seminar was organized at St. Joseph School, Khawzawl. Approximately 30 teachers from three schools, St. Joseph School Kawkul, St. Joseph School Khawzawl, and Holy Spirit School Khawhai, attended the seminar. Our sincere thanks and gratitude go to the resource persons from DIET-CHAMPHAI who conducted the seminar. The well-organized seminar proved beneficial to all participants, leaving them happy and satisfied. We thank God for this opportunity and all those who contributed to the success of the program.



Annual Sports



St. Joseph School, Khawzawl successfully conducted its Annual Sports from April 17th to 22nd, 2024. The decision to hold the annual sports at the beginning of the academic year was twofold: to allow students to have all textbooks and uniforms complete, and to energize and encourage them with physical activities before engaging in mental and intellectual pursuits for the new year. The concluding ceremony was solemnly organized on April 22, 2024, with our beloved Dr. Albert, a local Catholic doctor at Civil Hospital Khawzawl, graciously accepting the role of Chief Guest. In his speech, he encouraged students to work hard and persevere in their academic studies. He also presented a wonderful gift to the school and distributed prizes to the winners. The staff and students extend their sincere gratitude for his presence.

- John PKC, CSC



HOLY CROSS SCHOOL AGARTALA

A Memorable Leadership Seminar

Holy Cross School continually provides opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills, and the recent two-day leadership seminar for the elected student council members of 2024 was no exception.



One significant lesson that resonated with me from the seminar was the importance of self-awareness in leadership. This program served as a mirror, reflecting my strengths and areas for improvement and guiding me towards a deeper understanding of myself as a leader.

The seminar, led by our respected principal, Fr. Jilson Tom, was not just an event but a transformative journey. It ignited a fire within me, propelling me towards personal growth and transformation. It emphasized effective communication, adaptability, and flexibility—crucial traits for navigating the leadership landscape.

After the seminar, I feel confident in discharging my duties as the sports captain authentically and making decisions aligned with our values. I am grateful to the school administration for providing such a rich and transformative experience.

- *Souhini*

Bulletin Board Presentations: Sowing Seeds of Wisdom

In HCS Agartala, our bulletin boards are more than just displays—they represent our collective creativity and values. Each month, students from different houses work together to create thought-provoking presentations based on a relevant theme.

For February, our theme was “Don’t judge life by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant.” We explored the metaphor of planting seeds as actions, intentions, and efforts that shape our future. We emphasized the importance of focusing on the



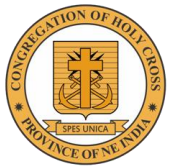
journey and being intentional about the seeds we sow, trusting that they will bear fruit in due time.

This activity is not only meaningful but also joyful and enjoyable. It allows us to discover and learn new things while working together as a team. We look forward to continuing our efforts in the upcoming months.

- *Aarohi Majumder*

Education Down the Ages - 48th Parent's Day Celebration

On April 12, 2024, Holy Cross School Agartala celebrated its 48th Parent's Day on the theme



"Education Down the Ages," echoing the UNICEF theme, "Education for People, Planet, Progress, and Peace." Our Chief Guest, His Excellency Shri Indrasena Reddy Nallu, Governor of Tripura, graced the occasion along with other dignitaries, including Bishop Lumen Monteiro, CSC, DD, and Fr. George Jacob, CSC.



In his message, Governor Nallu urged the audience to leverage the provisions of the New Education Policy 2020 and emphasized a child-centric approach to education. Bishop Monteiro and Fr. Jacob highlighted the uniqueness of Holy Cross education and its journey from France to Agartala with the motto, "Education of Heart and Mind."

Shri. Subrata Chowdhury, Additional Secretary for Home and Transport, Department of Transport, Tripura, represented the Holy Cross parents' family. He highlighted the pioneering contributions of Holy Cross School, Agartala and invited partnership to create road safety awareness among young adults. The event also honoured our revered parents, recognizing their invaluable role in the school community.

After the formal inauguration, our guests embarked on a unique journey through the history of education, exploring ancient Gurukuls, the influence of Buddhism, the Guptas, the Sultanate period, and the evolution of western education. The journey culminated in our school, showcasing its commitment to continuous evolution and the talents of our staff and students.

More than 1,000 children participated in a colourful musical evening, expressing their love and appreciation for their parents. The celebration ended with Holy Cross School, Agartala once again raising the bar.

- **Poonam Rathor**

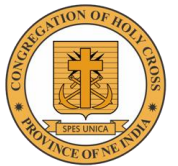
Woman, How Divine Your Mission!

On March 7, 2024, Holy Cross School, Agartala, celebrated Women's Day by honouring the lady teachers and every woman on staff. Due to March 8, 2024, being a holiday, the celebration was pre-poned.



All the lady staffs were presented with beautiful badges and coffee mugs, setting the tone for the day ahead. Through this gesture, they were made to feel appreciated and valued, recognizing their integral role in our community. Women today have reached heights our earlier generations could never have imagined. Their progress in every realm of life is pivotal to the advancement of our society. They are the potters shaping our future, as well as the architects, engineers, and visionaries shaping our world.

In his inspiring speech, our Vice Principal referred to President Murmu's message on empowering women to set new benchmarks in all fields. He highlighted the importance of celebrating women's achievements and encouraged everyone to continue supporting and uplifting them. The celebration concluded with a joyful photo session, capturing the beauty and strength of all the women present.



SACRED HEART STUDY HOUSE, LEMBUCHERRA

Annual Retreat

The community of Sacred Heart Study House, Lembucherra, was blessed with our annual retreat centered on the Word of God, aligning with the Diocese of Agartala's focus for the Year of the Word of God. The retreat, led by Brother Vicky from Calcutta, a seasoned preacher, commenced on Friday, March 22nd, and concluded on Passion Sunday, March 24th.



Each day of the retreat featured three sessions in the morning, afternoon, and evening, emphasizing silence and prayer, especially the Rosary, to deepen our understanding of the Word of God, regardless of our vocation.

Brother Vicky's unique teaching style, guided by the Holy Spirit, focused on delving deeper into Scripture, living a life of holiness, and preparing for future priesthood. He outlined ten steps to holiness, including confession, regular prayer, and obedience.

The retreat culminated with confession, where we surrendered our weaknesses by writing them on paper, and received special blessings. Energized and excited, we step into a new life, enriched by these three fruitful days.

- *Victor Suting and Daniel Suting*

HOLY CROSS PINE VIEW STUDY HOUSE, SUMER

Visit of Bp. Stephen Rotluanga, CSC, DD

We were honoured to host Most Rev. Stephen Rotluanga at our Holy Cross Pine View Study House. His visit brought inspiration and insightful thoughts to our community.

Third Semester Examinations

Last week, our candidates engaged in a three-day reflection period for their third Semester Examinations and Annual self-evaluation. They reviewed their intellectual, spiritual, community, apostolic, and human growth aspects.



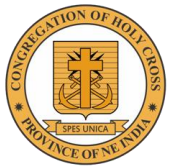
Meghalaya Region – Annual Sports Meet

Our candidates participated in the Regional Sports Meet held at Holy Cross School, Mawkyntew as part of their Mission Experience and exposure program.

Football Match

A friendly football match was played between our candidates and those from Fr. Agnel Apostolic School, Mawlein Mawkhan, fostering camaraderie and sportsmanship.





Reception of Rev. Fr. John Nongphud CSC

We warmly welcomed Fr. John Nongphud to our house and congratulated him on his maiden visit as a priest. He celebrated his first mass in our formation house, surrounded by our would-be Novices.



Birthday Celebrations



We celebrated Fr. Theophilus Sohtun, CSC's 55th birthday, expressing gratitude for the gift of his presence in our community.

- **Jowelson, CSC**

ANNUAL REFRESHER COURSE FOR SCHOLASTICS

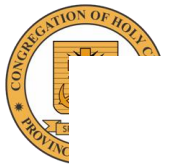
On April 21, 2024, the scholastics from the Province of North East congregated at Moreau Community House for our annual refresher course. This year, we were honoured to have Fr. Royal Nazareth, CSC, as our animator. With his expertise in psychology and counselling, he guided us to become better individuals capable of empathizing with the feelings and emotions of our fellow brothers and sisters. Fr. Nazareth provided a safe space for us to express ourselves without fear of judgment, fostering freedom and deepening our understanding among each other.

Additionally, we were privileged to have enlightening talks from distinguished guests including Fr. Jilson Tom, CSC, Fr. Sahaya Lourdu Raj, CSC, Fr. Benny K. John, CSC, and Fr. Mariaraj, CSC. They shared insights on topics such as Moreau's vision for Holy Cross education, the impact of social media, higher education in the Holy Cross tradition, and the life of St. Andre, the Miracle Man of Montreal. We were also fortunate to have Ma'am Dipsha D'Souza, CA, enlighten us about basic account keeping.

As scholastics, we extend our gratitude to our Provincial and his team for this invaluable opportunity for learning and introspection. These sessions have provided us with an excellent platform to connect, discuss, and deliberate on various topics that will shape our future endeavours. After the sessions, we have moved to different communities for a mission experience before travelling back to Pune.

- **Henry Lalsangzuala, CSC**





TWO NEW PRIESTS ORDAINED

Desing John Nongphud and Francis Gayang

The Congregation of Holy Cross, Province of Northeast India, joyfully welcomed two new priests in April.

Deacon Desing John Nongphud, CSC, was ordained as a priest on April 7th, 2024, at St. John Vianney Parish in Markassa, Meghalaya, by Most Rev. Wilbert Marwein, Bishop of Nongstoin Diocese. Fr. Nongphud celebrated his first mass the following day at his village church, and he has been appointed as Assistant Parish Priest at St. Andre Parish, Nyapin, Arunachal Pradesh.



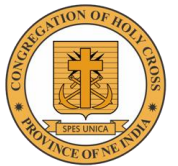
Deacon Francis Gayang, CSC, was ordained as a priest on April 14th, 2024, in his village, Syndai, under 'Ka Syiem Jingsuk Parish Amlarem' in the Diocese of Jowai by Most Rev. Ferdinand Dkhar, Bishop of Jowai Diocese. Fr. Gayang also celebrated his first mass at his village church and has been appointed as Assistant Parish Priest at Holy Cross Parish, Umkiang, Mizoram.



Both priests have followed a similar path to priesthood, joining Holy Cross as candidates in Sumer in 2010, completing their studies, making their first profession in 2019, making their final profession and ordaining as deacons in 2023 before their ordination as priests. We congratulate them and pray for their ministry.

WAVES interviewed them on this occasion:

Waves: *Would you mind sharing about your family, childhood, spiritual upbringing, Vocation, etc?*



Fr. John: I hail from St. John Vianney Parish, Nongstoin District, Meghalaya, India and I am the fourth child in a family of nine siblings. Coming from an agrarian family, my parents, who are farmers, provided me with love, encouragement, and support throughout my journey to priesthood.

I strongly believe that God called me to serve through the Holy Cross family. Inspired by my parents' support and my assistant priest's guidance, I joined Holy Cross after completing my tenth standard in 2010. Despite initial challenges in adjusting to seminary life, I persevered with the guidance of mentors and the support of my family and community.

I completed my schooling at St. Joseph's School in my parish, where I developed a deep love for spirituality and church activities. I faced challenges during my first year in the seminary but received wise counsel from mentors. I completed my studies in philosophy and theology, including a year of novitiate and regency, before my ordination.

Fr. Francis: I come from one of the earliest Christian clans in our parish, which celebrated its centenary jubilee in 2001. The faith instilled in us by the clan's elders is reflected in the number of us who responded to the Lord's invitation, "Come Follow Me."

I am the second of three children. From my family, especially my mother, I learned valuable lessons in faith, compassion, humility, hard work, kindness, generosity, and gentleness. Despite our challenges, we have a close bond as a family. My youngest brother's jovial and humorous nature contrasts with my more serious demeanour.

My mother, though not well-educated, taught us important life lessons through her example. I witnessed her struggles since childhood. I was the most disciplined among my siblings, deeply religious and pious. Regular personal prayer from a young age helped me experience God and drew me closer to the aspiration of serving the Lord and his people as a priest.

My vocation to the priesthood began during my confirmation on March 5, 2005. It was a Godly experience that prompted me to contemplate that mysterious and blissful encounter and gradually respond to the Lord's call.

Waves: *What attracted you to becoming a Religious-Priest in Holy Cross?*

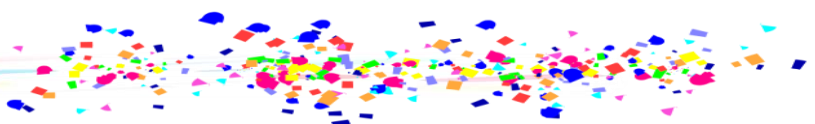
Fr. John: I was drawn to Holy Cross for its strong sense of community and the dedicated service of its members. I felt welcomed and supported from the beginning, and I admire the positive impact Holy Cross members have made in society and church.

Fr. Francis: As a priest, what initially attracted me to the Religious-Priesthood in the Holy Cross Order was the sense of community, service, and devotion to God's mission, along with their commitment to educating both the mind and the heart, and promoting social justice.

During a vocation camp, I had a powerful personal experience with a Holy Cross priest whose simplicity left a lasting impression on me. His ability to connect with people, his modest lifestyle, and his focus on serving others with love and compassion reinforced my desire to join the Order. His example inspired me to pursue my vocation with renewed purpose and dedication.

WAVES: *What would be your contribution to the Mission of Christ in Northeast India?*

Fr. John: My desire is to do my best in every assignment entrusted to me. I prioritize preaching the word of God, teaching youth about faith through music, and administering sacraments faithfully to bring Christ's message of hope and reconciliation to all. I look forward to contributing to the mission of Christ in Northeast India as a proud member of the Holy Cross family.





Fr. Francis: As a Holy Cross priest in Northeast India, my focus would be on building bridges between communities, fostering dialogue, and promoting understanding among diverse cultures and faiths. I prioritize addressing social issues such as poverty, education, and healthcare, by working alongside local communities to implement sustainable solutions. Through preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, I aim to embody Christ's message of love, forgiveness, and compassion, guiding individuals towards spiritual growth and a deeper connection with God. Additionally, I collaborate with other religious congregations, leaders, and organizations to promote peace, justice, and reconciliation in people's hearts.

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE PASTORAL JOURNEY OF THE PROVINCE

St. Dominic Savio Parish, Nongrah

St. Dominic Savio Parish, Nongrah, the first city parish entrusted to Holy Cross Congregation in the capital city, Shillong, Meghalaya, was opened on May 5th, 2024, by His Grace Most Rev. Victor

Lyngdoh, DD., the Archbishop of Shillong.

The Parish was erected and the first parish Priest, Fr. Theophilus Sohtun, CSC., was installed during a Solemn Eucharist presided over by the

Archbishop, concelebrated by the Provincial Superior Fr. Simon Fernandes, CSC., the Provincial elect Fr. Abraham K.J., CSC., Fr. Richard Majaw, the Vicar

General, other Archdiocesan officials, Holy Cross confreres, priests and attended by Shri. Conrad Sangma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Ministers and elected representatives of the government of Meghalaya, religious, and faithful.

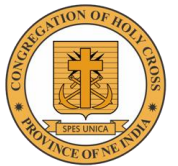


Nongrah parish is situated about 4 Km to the East of Brookdene and has about 1500 Catholic families spread in two adjacent villages; Nongrah



and Mawlenrei. The Parish is very actively involved in the education ministry and administers two High Schools and a Lower primary school with over one thousand students. There is a very active Lay participation in the affairs of the Parish as they take up leadership roles for the overall growth and the spiritual well-being of the faithful.

St. Dominic Savio parish is bifurcated from Divine Saviour Parish, Nongthymmai, administered by the Salesians of Don Bosco. We are indebted to the Salesian Missionaries down the ages for the growth of the faith community at Nongrah. In fact, in the recent re-arrangements, the Archdiocese created three new parishes; Nongrah, Umpling and Madanrything, bifurcating Nongthymmai parish.



Nongrah is the 5th Parish administered by the Congregation of Holy Cross, Province of



Northeast India in Meghalaya. The others are Jongksha and Mawkynrew in the Archdiocese of Shillong, Umkiang in the Diocese of Jowai and Mawpat in the Diocese of Nongstoïn.

While expressing gratitude to Holy Cross for their pastoral care at Nongrah Parish, the Archbishop stated, "The long-awaited desire of the people to have their own Parish has finally been realized." He further emphasized that a Parish is a place where people gather in love and unity to celebrate sacraments, receive instruction about the Christian faith, and ultimately grow in love for God and neighbour.

Fr. Simon Fernandes, the Provincial Superior, expressed his gratitude to the Archdiocese of Shillong for recognizing the contributions of the Holy Cross congregation towards the pastoral



care of the people by entrusting yet another Parish to their care. The newly appointed Parish priest, Fr. Theophilus, sees the inauguration of the new Parish as an opportunity for Holy Cross and himself personally to serve the Local Church.

Mr. Rising Rymbai, the Church Leader at Nongrah, welcomed the Holy Cross to the area and expressed gratitude to the Archdiocese and Holy Cross for their willingness to take on the new Parish.

We offer our congratulations, good wishes and prayers to Fr. Theophilus, the first parish priest and the parishioners as they begin a new Chapter in their faith journey.



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