



Saint Peter Claver, Slave of the Slaves forever

The Editorial of this month is dedicated to St. Peter Claver, Confessor. He was born in 1581. He was the son of a Spanish farmer living near Barcelona, Spain. In 1602, at the age of twenty, he entered the Jesuit novitiate and was sent to study at the Jesuit College of Montesion on the Island of Mallorca in Spain. While finishing his novitiate, he came in contact with Brother Alphonsus Rodriguez, SJ, the seventy-year-old doorkeeper of the college, known for his humility, piety and spiritual insight who later became a saint. Brother Alphonsus served as the college's doorkeeper for forty-six years. He carried out menial tasks, delivered messages, welcomed guests and offered a compassionate ear to all who came to the door with needs. Peter sought his advice. Encouraged by Brother Rodriguez, Peter decided to become a missionary in the Spanish Colonies in South America. In 1610 he started his journey to Cartagena, Colombia in Central America. He was ordained a priest in 1616. On making his vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, he added a fourth one to become a slave of the slaves. He used to wait at the port for a new slave ship to arrive. Each ship carried as many as 500 slaves who had endured like animals, poorly fed once a day, chained naked to each other, abused, threatened and forced. Often, the flesh on the wrists bled and became infected from the metal shackles that held them on the ship tossed in the waves. Half of these died on the three-month long voyage to Central America due to overcrowding, lack of sanitation and improper food. When he entered into the hall, he would find many dead and other lifeless, filled with fear and in need of medical treatment and compassion. As a sign of love for them, he often kissed the sores, sucked out the infection's pus and washed the wounds with his own

handkerchiefs. He would baptize babies if any, provide food to the hungry and show compassion. The miserable condition of the slaves on board caused Peter to declare himself The Slave of the Negros forever. He turned their suffering into a cause for joy. So many hours of a day he used to hear confessions. He became a father, comforter, nurse and evangelizer of the suffering people. He used to tell the already old people, "Go to confession now while you have time and while it's easy." For the next 44 years, he made that port city his headquarters for missionary work among the Negro Slaves. Though there were other Priests in Cartagena, most of them ministered to the Colonizers. Father Peter chose to make the slaves his congregation and their Salvation his mission. When he made his final profession, Father Peter signed it with these words - "Peter Claver, Slave of the slaves, forever." He made himself the slave of the Negros forever, labouring on their behalf for 33, years, attending to both their spiritual and material needs.

Slavery was institutionalized by the time the first civilizations emerged which dates back as far as 3500 BC. It was widespread in the ancient world in Europe, Asia, Middle East and Africa. Even the kings in Africa were selling their subjects and prisoners to the slave traders. Slave trade is capturing, selling and buying of enslaved persons. The slave trade was repeatedly condemned by Popes but it was too profitable to be stopped. Fr. Peter Claver was probably the first white man to take any friendly interest for the good of the black men. He used to go door to door, begging for food for his new flock. Accompanied by a small band of interpreters, he would get on board and lovingly minister to the sick and the dying and hand out fruit and cooling

drinks. During his thirty-eight years as an ordained priest in Cartagena, Father Peter catechized and baptized over 300,000 slaves.

Fr. Peter wanted the Salvation of their souls. He preached the Gospel to the slaves in ways they could understand, in ways that would benefit them for eternity. He told them they were sinners in need of repentance and loving God who died for their sins will forgive them and fill them with joy. He showed the crucifix revealing the God who suffered for them, showing them the way to heaven and how to avoid hell.

The life of St. Peter Claver is itself a homily on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He used to sit for the confession at 3 O'clock in the morning until midday. Again at 2 O'clock till evening. All his efforts were to unburden their souls to God. Like our Lord, he toiled hard in reconciling the last and the least, the deprived and rejected with God. The Catholic Church teaches us that living in sin is a type of slavery. Jesus said in the Gospel of St. John "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin" (Jn 8:34). On the other hand, to live in Christ is a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). Therefore, we should not delay to go for confession. Delaying to receive forgiveness of our sins is allowing ourselves to be reigned by Satan and keeping ourselves deprived from God's mercy and grace.

St. Peter Claver is an epitome of the salvific love of Christ. He followed Christ as the poor, humble, humiliated and abnegated. The reality of incarnation was fully realized in his life. He renounced the comforts of his priestly life and gave himself up as a 'Slave of the slaves forever'. His philosophy of life may be expressed in one sentence "He must increase, I must decrease".

+ Shyamal Bose

Paribar Jyoti

The family commission offered enrichment workshops, seminars and meetings to support families and individuals who were at distress because of social, psychological or financial circumstances. They were strengthened by the trained persons with the ability to deal with issues of families affecting their life. One of those was the husband-wife seminar on August 13, 2023 at Thakurpukur Parish. Most Rev. Salvatore Lobe, the Bishop Emeritus and the resource person, made them aware of the inevitable differences in couple's relationship with the passage of time. Thus, the couples need to accept and cope with the practical dissimilarities that they face in their family life since it has futuristic consequences. The future of their offspring to a great extent is affected based on their positive or negative conjugal life.



- Fr. Uttam Naskar

Inauguration of Khari Church

The renovated church of Khari parish was solemnly inaugurated and blessed by Most Rev. Bishop Shyamal Bose along with his predecessor Most Rev. Salvatore Lobo with a great multitude of Christian faithful on August 15, 2023. The bishops cut the ribbon at the entrance of the church and unveiled the plaque. Then Bishop Shyamal Bose pronounced the prayer for the dedication of the church and consecrated with the oil of Chrism on the walls of the church, while Bishop Salvatore invoked God's blessings on all the new statues. During the solemn Eucharist, fifty-five children received the sacrament of First Holy Communion.



Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council represented by the laity took very active participation in planning and executing the renovation of the church as well as the inauguration of the church. The Parish Finance Council made all its efforts to generate the local contribution from various people.

The work of the renovation of the church was possible because of the generous contributions from Missio, Munich, Germany and Propagazione Fidei and Missionary Sisters of St. Peter Claver. We are also grateful to the parishioners, friends and well-wishers who extended their helping hand.

The effect of the renovated Church on the faithful is that they feel extremely happy and thank God for the gift of the beautiful Church. It remains as a symbol of faith and unity. It helps them to come together to worship the Lord on Sundays and meet one another soon after the Holy Eucharist. They also feel proud to be part of renovating the church by their little contributions. We do hope that this new Church, a visible sign of Christian identity, a home for the faithful, a structure which will remain "a special sign of the pilgrim Church on earth".

- Fr. Panneer Selvam



National Youth Sunday

On August 13, 2023, the National youth Sunday was celebrated in Dishari Pastoral centre, Baruiapur. Youth from all over the diocese joined the celebration beginning with Eucharist presided over by his Lordship, Most Rev. Shyamal Bose. To mark the occasion ICYM and Diocesan flags were hoisted.

The program then continued in Dishari which started with the lighting of the lamps by distinguished guests followed by an animation. The day's significant activities included an input session led by Fr. Tushar Augustine Gomes on the theme, youth and its role in the family, wherein he enlightened the youth to inculcate moral values as life's principles so as to lead an exemplary family life. There was also a quiz competition.

- Mr. Soumyojit D'Costa

Dishari At A Glance



Dishari, the pastoral center of Baruipur Diocese, has organized different programmes for different groups of people at different parishes. The chief purpose of all those programmes was to strengthen the Christian faith in families so as to make them ideal family before all. A Faith Formation Program for parents, training for the altar servers, catechism classes for children and a general SCC meeting were conducted in a series from August 12-20, 2023 in Gosaba, Sabnamaskar, Birajnagar and Rakhashkhali. A total of 228 participants gained the practical guidance on pertinent subjects from two resource persons, Fr. Goutam Naskar and Fr. Prolay Baidya.

- Mr. Sourav Naskar

Palli Unnayan Samiti Baruipur

PUS undertook environmental, vocational, social, nutritional and educational work. In collaboration with Mathurapur Block-II agriculture department 500 saplings of Sonajhuri were planted beside the Ring Bandh at Mundapara under Kankandighi Gram Panchayet to reduce the soil erosion and global warming. It was executed with the help of local women belonging to Self Help Group (SHG).

Beautician course as a part of vocational training plays a pivotal role in empowering marginalized girls economically so as to enable them to stand in their own feet. There were 350 adolescent girls and young women from 10 Beautician Centres who were awarded certificates on August 7 & 10, 2023 for successfully completing three months course.

August 11, 2023, marked a new beginning as a new project, namely, "Alternative Livelihood to Reduce the Unsafe Migration in Disaster Prone Area of Sundarban Island" Supported by Manos Unidas was launched. Fr. Saumen Malik, the Director of Palli Unnayan Samiti Baruipur, said that the objective of the project is to provide effective climate resilient agriculture and alternative livelihood inputs to marginalized farmers in 20 villages of Gosaba and Basanti Blocks. The project will also capacitate the marginalized youth and young women for income generation opportunity through Computer and Beautician course.

Nutritional food, educational material and toiletries were distributed to 365 Students of SAD, Langalberia, to prevent children from malnutrition. The students of all the free learning centers upheld the patriotism with the meaningful celebration of Independence Day of our country on August 15, 2023. They rekindled in all the love for the nation by putting up a patriotic cultural programme.

- Fr. Saumen Malik



Visitors to the Diocese

Visit of Rev. Bro. Pratap Reddy to Baruipur Diocese

Rev. Bro. Pratap Reddy, SG, the Assistant General of Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, Rome, paid a visit to Bishop on Monday, August 28, 2023. He was here on his community visit to St. Montfort Senior Secondary School, Balarampur. It was an occasional meeting to assess the apostolic work of the community in alliance with the vision and mission of the diocese. The courteous visitation was enriching to build up the rapport with the Religious Institute. The diocese gratefully acknowledges his fraternal visit to the diocese in spite of the busy schedule.

Rev. Sr. Elizabeth Mirnada Pays a Visit to Baruipur Diocese

While on her canonical visit to Holy Cross Convent, Baruipur, Rev. Sr. Elizabeth Mirnada, SCC, the Superior General of the Sisters of the Cross of Chavanod visited Bishop on August 31, 2023. The crux of her visit was to find out the collaboration of the sisters with the apostolate of the diocese as there are two convents of Holy Cross Sisters in the diocese. The diocese is grateful to her for sparing some time in discussion with the progress of mission in the diocese. This visit will certainly help to strengthen the relationship between

the diocese and the congregation and reinforce the pursuit of missionary endeavour in the diocese.

FADV Visits to Baruipur Diocese

The president of Fondazione L'Albero Della Vita Onlus (FADV), Italy, Mr. Salvatore Angelico, Ms. Isabella Catapuno, the General Director, Mr. Antonio Bancora, the Head of the International Unit and Mr. Biplab Chakrabarty, the Head of Asia Unit came to meet Bishop on August 30, 2023. They spent two days in the diocese visiting SAD Education and Day Care Centre projects of Palli Unnayan Samiti Baruipur. Besides, they toured to the field at Bamungachi Centre where they could interact with the students and the managing committee as part of their review to the teaching and learning methods. The visitors were happy and content to see the students performing dance and skit. They also spared some time paying a visit to the Day Care Centre on August 31, 2023. They were very much impressed to see the facilities at place for the complete care of the differently able children. They expressed their gratitude to PUS for their effort for the betterment of the children.

- Fr. Deepak Ekka

Happy Birthday!

September

| | |
|----|-------------------------|
| 01 | Fr. Bablu Sardar |
| 05 | Br. Rohit Sharma |
| 05 | Br. Uday Mondal |
| 21 | Fr. Telesphor Aind, CMF |
| 22 | Fr. Aloke Anthony Kanji |
| 23 | Fr. Pradeep Roy |
| 26 | Fr. Augustine E. |

Happy Birthday Dear Fathers & Brothers



29th September
Fr. John Britto

Memorable & Admirable

Month of September

| | |
|----|----------------------------|
| 15 | Fr. Joseph Mani, S.J. |
| 20 | Fr. Fallon Pierre, S.J. |
| 27 | Fr. Alphonse Crasta, S. J. |
| 28 | Fr. Anil Mitra, S.J. |

NOTICE BOARD

- # Marriage Preparation Course from 8th September to 9th September 2023
- # Young Couples Programme from 22nd September to 23rd September 2023

Intentions for the Apostleship of Prayer - Month of Sept. 2023

For people living on the margins :
We pray for those persons living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; may they not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.

News from Basanti

The Parish Community came together in thanking the Lord for the gift of parish clergy on the occasion of the feast of St. John Marie Vianney, the Patron Saint of Priests on August 4, 2023. Parish Priest along with the assistant parish priests celebrated the Holy Eucharist wherein special prayers were offered for them. Thereafter, the youth, sisters of neighbouring convent and faithful felicitated all the clergy of the parish for their selfless service and dedication.



Catholic Church Basanti and CNI Pastorate together brought out a Peace rally from Chowmatha Basanti via Bazar to Catholic Church on August 8, 2023. It was to saw solidarity with the people of Manipur who have been faced with ethnic violence. A good number of people gathered and marched their feet for the sake of suffering humanity. This rally was essentially apolitical and people joined voluntarily and raised their voice for the reign of peace. Fr. Surajit Mitra in his speech underlined restoration of harmony between the two communities.

- Br. Hrittick Hazra

Bishop Shyamal Bose's Programme for the Month of September 2023

| Date | Day | Time | Place | Programme |
|------|-----|------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 01 | Fri | | Dulki, Gosaba | Visit of Bp. Gebhard Fürst from Rottenburg, Germany |
| 02 | Sat | 07.30 a.m. | Medinipur | To see Fr. Henry |
| 05 | Tue | 10.30 a.m. | Boys Town, Gangarampur | Mass in MC Convent |
| 08 | Fri | 06.00 p.m. | Kolkata | Mass in St. Ignatius Church |
| 09 | Sat | 10.00 a.m. | Montfort School, Balarampur | CRI Meeting |
| 11 | Mon | 10.00 a.m. | MSC, Barrackpore | Meeting of the Morning Star Seminary |
| 12 | Tue | 10.00 a.m. | Seva Kendra, Calcutta | Laity Commission workshop |
| | | 03.00 p.m. | PUS, Baruiapur | G. B. Meeting of PUS |
| 13 | Wed | 03.00 p.m. | Bishop's House, Baruiapur | Meeting of the Finance Committee of CDB |
| 14 | Thu | 11.00 a.m. | Baruiapur | Feast day of Holy Cross |
| 15 | Fri | 10.00 a.m. | Bishop's House, Baruiapur | Meeting of the Board of Consultors |
| 19 | Tue | 10.00 a.m. | Dishari - Baruiapur | Meeting of Diocesan Priests |
| 20 | Wed | 11.00 a.m. | Paribar Jyoti - Baruiapur | G. B. Meeting of Paribar Jyoti |
| 21 | Thu | 10.30 a.m. | Dishari - Baruiapur | G. B. Meeting of Dishari Pastoral Commission |
| | | 03.30 p.m. | Dishari - Baruiapur | Proclamation Commission |
| 28 | Thu | | Kalyanpur | Silver Jubilee of Fr. Panneer Selvam & Fr. John Britto |
| 30 | Sat | 04.00 p.m. | Bansdroni | Teacher's Annual Day, De Paul School, Bansdroni |

Bishop Salvadore Lobo's Programme for the Month of September 2023

| Date | Day | Time | Place | Programme |
|-------|---------|------------|---------------|--|
| 02 | Sat | 05.00 p.m. | | Goes to Basanti |
| 03 | Sun | 06.00 a.m. | Basanti | Sunday mass with a novena of Our Lady of Vellankanni |
| 05 | Tue | 06.30 a.m. | Baruiapur | Mass for the feast of St. Teresa of Kolkata at Kachari Bazar |
| 08 | Fri | 06.30 p.m. | Panchamkhanda | Presides over the Mass of Nativity of our Lady |
| 10 | Sun | 11.00 a.m. | | Goes to Shillong |
| 11-16 | Mon-Sat | | Shillong | Preaches a retreat to Diocesan Priests |
| 18-23 | Mon-Sat | | Shillong | Preaches a retreat to the 2nd group of the Diocesan Priests |
| 27 | Wed | 04.00 p.m. | | Returns to Keorapukur |
| 28 | Thu | 10.00 a.m. | Kalyanpur | Attends the Sacredotal Silver Jubilee of Frs. Panneer & Britto |

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