

CBCB Newsletter

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Editorial

The family is the place where one can be oneself, take off one's mask without being judged; the place where one learns to have confidence in oneself thanks to the admiring and at the same time lucid look that parents have for their offspring. It is the place where one lives love daily, where one escapes from loneliness, where one learns to share, to grow fully. The family is the place where social life is learned in gentleness and where one has an apprenticeship of differences; the place where one transmits values. Thus the family is 'valuable', the source of joys, deep affection and relations and a school of humanity.

The 253 participants in the Synodal assembly, presided over by the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Francis, Head of the Episcopal College and Pastor of the Universal Church, gathered in Rome for the extraordinary Synod on October 5 – 19, 2014. Synod Fathers were from the five continents who are the heads of the 13 Synods of Bishops of the Eastern Catholic Churches sui iuris, the Presidents of the 114 Episcopal Conferences and the 3 Representatives of the Union of Superiors General. There were also 26 Heads of the Departments of the Roman Curia, the 15 Members of the Thirteenth Ordinary Council and the 26 Members appointed by the Pope. The Pope reminded that Synod of Bishops are called to work for the Lord's vineyard." "Synod assemblies are not meant to discuss beautiful and clever ideas, or to see who is more intelligent. They are meant to better nurture and tend the Lord's vineyard, to help realize his dream, his loving plan for his people. Archbishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC, President of CBCB represented Bangladesh in that Synod on the Family.

On this auspicious occasion our thoughts go to those families that are torn apart and suffering in other parts of the world, also who suffer persistent violence. Let the Lord convert hearts and bring peace and stability to those who are now in need. May the Holy Family of Nazareth, which suffered on 'the painful road to exile', make every family a community of love and reconciliation, a source of hope for the whole world.

The Synod Fathers looked at the great joy of family life and the importance of marriage at its heart. They listened to husbands and wives speaking of the difficulties they had overcome, the struggles they face and the deep joy they experience in their mature marriages and family lives. These were moving moments. A lovely description of the family was offered: the family as 'a sanctuary of holiness' with emphasis always on the sharing of prayer at the heart of family life.

Wish you Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all who are our valued readers of CBCB Newsletter.

Extraordinary Synod of Bishops

Archbishop Patrick D’Rozario CSC left for Rome to attend the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family due to open on Sunday (October 5, 2014). Around 150 Synod Fathers from across the globe will be present for the Synod on October 5 – 19, 2014 meeting to discuss the challenges of the family in the context of evangelization. Archbishop is expected to be back on October 23, 2014. This synodal journey began in November 2013 with the questionnaire sent by the Vatican to dioceses around the world asking for their views on the family life and the Church. This is the first time an investigation has been done from the bottom up, by the people. From the responses received, all the problems of the family in all its reality have clearly emerged. The responses were then summarized in the ‘Instrumentum Laboris’ or the working document that the Synod Fathers will deepen to respond to the challenges of the family. An ordinary Synod, developing on the theme of family, will follow in October 2015.



National Seminar of the Teachers Team

The 10th National Seminar of the Teachers Team was held at Little Flower Seminary, Bandura on July 18 – 20, 2014. Altogether 111 teachers participated from the 14 institutions of three dioceses. The main theme of the seminar was “Moral values in teaching profession for a better world.” Bro. Benoy S. Gomes CSC shared on the main topic the whole day. Teachers were divided in groups to share and to practice the values and to demonstrate in the plenary assembly. Bro. Nirmol Gomes CSC, national Chaplain of the Teachers Team organized the program with the collaboration of other teachers.

Apostolic Nuncio visits Islamic Foundation

Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity and Inter Religious Dialogue organized a meeting with Most Rev. George Kocherry and the leaders of Islamic Foundation on September 23, 2014 at Islamic Foundation Centre, Agargaon. Upon arrival Shamim Mohammad Afzal, Director General of Islamic Foundation welcomed the Nuncio and the team members. He also recalled the visit to Bangladesh of Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, President of Pontifical Council for Inter Religious Dialogue in 2011 who invited him to pray in Assisi for peace in the world. Nuncio in his sharing expressed his joy of being in Bangladesh as the representative of the Holy Father and seeing the co-existence and

harmony among the people of different religions. Fr. Patrick Gomes shared about the importance of dialogue in the light of the document of Vatican Council. Professor Maulana Mohammad Salauddin, Khotib of Baitul Mukarram National mosque stressed the need of dialogue and to work for peace, unity and justice. Mr. Jyoti F. Gomes, former Director of DMD of Caritas Bangladesh moderated the session. Fr. Ajit V. Costa OMI thanked all for their active participation in the meeting with the Islamic leaders and the Nuncio. Members of the delegation: Most Rev. George Kocherry, Fr. Ajit V. Costa OMI, Fr. Mimmo SX, Fr. Patrick Gomes, Fr. George A. Gomes, Fr. Seraphin Sarkar, Mr. Jyoti F. Gomes, Sr. Dipti Costa CSC, Sr. Swapna Gomes CIC, Sr. Rebecca Rozario CIC and Ms. Purnima Hembrom.

Annual Retreat of the Diocesan Priests

Bangladesh Diocesan Priests' Fraternity (BDPF) organized annual retreat for the diocesan priests in Pastoral Centre, Rajshahi in two groups. The theme of the retreat was "Following the Holy Spirit to be of Christ within our local Church in a Missionary Attitude". Fr. Giuseppe Magrin, President of Apostolic Union of Clergy was the retreat preacher. The number of deacons, priests and Bishops were 79 in the first (October 6 – 10) and 85 in the second (October 13 – 17) retreat. The over all atmosphere of the pastoral centre was very conducive for retreat. Fr. Magrin who holds doctorate both in Psychology and Theology and visited more than 100 countries conducting seminars, workshops and retreats shared his wide experiences of the missionary countries. His daily conferences were on the Church, how the Church is missionary, Communion in the Missionary activities, Local Church and Universal Church, the Holy Eucharist, Sin and Repentance. Fr. Kamol A. Corraya, Fr. Mintu L. Palma and Fr. Jyoti F. Costa, President, Vice President and Secretary were among the organizers.

Inter Church Training Program

Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity and Inter Religious Dialogue organized a training program at Caritas Regional Office, Dinajpur on November 13 – 16, 2014. There were 60 participants from seven dioceses of Bangladesh. Upon arrival the participants were given a warm reception with a dance by the children. Bishop Sebastian Tudu of Dinajpur was also present to welcome the participants and Bishop Bejoy D'Cruze OMI of Sylhet Diocese and Chairman of Episcopal Commission for Christian Unity and Inter Religious Dialogue inaugurated the training program. The opening Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Bishop Bejoy D'Cruze OMI. Subject matters and resource persons of the training program were: The Concept of Inter Church Relationship (Bishop Bejoy D'Cruze OMI); Vatican Council II and post Theology (Fr. Patrick Gomes); Short History of the movement of Ecumenism in the Church (Fr. Mimmo SX); Directives of Catholic Church about Inter Church Marriage (Fr. Marcus Murmu); Church of the East and Asian Church (Fr. Ajit V. Costa OMI). Aurobindu Bormon and Pastor Swapon Mardi shared other Churches in Bangladesh in the context of Bangladesh. The training program also included open discussion and evaluation. A singing prayer service was held in the presence of the head of different Churches during the training program. The concluding Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Bishop Sebastian Tudu. In his homily Bishop Tudu reflected on the universal prayer of Jesus on unity: 'I pray that they may all be one.' Fr.

Ajit V. Costa OMI, Sr. Swapona B. Gomes CIC were among the organizers. Fr. George A. Gomes was the Coordinator of the training program.

CAPCHA – V

Participants from 16 countries gathered in Hotel Freedom in Cambodia for the seminar of HIV AIDS organized by Catholic Asia-Pacific Coalition against HIV AIDS (CAPCHA) on November 10 – 14, 2014. Sr. Bernadette Gingdog Health Program Coordinator of Caritas Cambodia welcomed the participants. Bishop Moses Costa CSC and Dr. Edward Pallab Rozario, Chairman and Secretary of Episcopal Commission for Health Care represented Bangladesh in that seminar.



The inaugural Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Bishop Enrique Fiquarigo SJ of Batambang Diocese. In his homily Bishop Fiquarigo invited the participants to be like Good Samaritan extending services to the aids victims. Resource persons and subject matters of the seminar were: HIV AIDS and Asia: Situation, Policy and Challenge (Dr. M. Alina, Asia Pacific Regional Office, Thailand); Go and do the same (Lk 10:37) by Fr. Richard Bayer, Chairman of Catholic HIV AIDS Network. The program also included exposure program, site seeing, sharing of the sex workers. At the closing mass the country representatives signed a joint declaration to eradicate AIDS from Asia- Pacific region. Ms. Lily A. Gomes, Senior Manager of Health was nominated representative of CAPCHA from Bangladesh.

7th World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants

Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People organized the 7th World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants at the Pontifical Urbaniana University, Vatican City from November 17 – 21, 2014 with the theme “Cooperation and Development in the Pastoral Care of Migrations”. There were nearly 300 participants, delegates from Bishops’ Conferences, Commissions and Church structures and partners from over 90 countries. The objective of the Congress was to reflect upon the current migration that so strongly marks modern day society, and to seek and propose a renewed Catholic pastoral approach to the phenomenon within the Church at international, regional and local levels. Bishop Gervas Rozario of Rajshahi Diocese and Fr. Albert T. Rozario, Chairman and Secretary of Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace respectively attended the Congress from Bangladesh.

Presentations, discussions and sharing of experiences helped the participants to address the issue of the migrants' family with all positive aspects that contribute to strengthening and promote fruitful human relationships, which are the basis and the core of all societies. Emphasis has been given on family separation, caused by the lack of adequate migration policies, which is especially challenging in countries with a large diaspora. The participants appealed to the responsibility of the whole international community to contribute to the common good and to the universality of human rights, underlying the need for a positive change in attitude towards migrants.

Archbishop Patrick's visit to Myanmar

Archbishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC upon the invitation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Myanmar (CBCM) attended the 500th Jubilee Year of the Presence of Catholic Church in Myanmar on November 21 – 24, 2014. His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay was the Special Envoy of the Holy Father, Pope Francis in that historic celebration.

Some information of CBCB Meeting

The second meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh (CBCB) of 2014 was held on August 5 – 7, 2014 at CBCB Centre. All the Bishops participated in the meeting. As usual, the meeting began with the Holy Eucharistic celebration on August 5 presided over by Most Rev. Patrick D'Rozario CSC, Archbishop of Dhaka & President of CBCB.

Meeting with the Nuncio: Most Rev. George Kocherry and Msgr. Massimo Catterin met with the Bishops during the CBCB Meeting. The Nuncio thanked the Bishops for their prayers and good wishes for his mother who has been suffering from bone cancer. The Nuncio noted the importance of the two coming Synods on Family, and urged to have prayer at the end of the Mass during the Synod. He also urged to observe the coming Year of the Consecrated Life with relevant programs at various levels

The Bishops invited the Nuncio for a simple reception on the occasion of his 40th Ordination Anniversary on August 5 followed by dinner at the CBCB Centre. As usual the Nuncio invited the Bishops for dinner on August 6 at the Nunciature.

Guidelines for Dealing with cases of Sexual Abuse of Minors perpetrated by Clerics: As per requirement of Rome all Conferences are urged to prepare Guidelines for dealing on matters of sexual abuse of minors by Clerics. This document is in the process.

Order of the Mass: A draft for the Order of the Mass in Bangla (revised edition) has been prepared. The CBCB proposes that a single text jointly with West Bengal be finalized about which Bishop Theotonius Gomes CSC will contact the Archdiocese of Kolkata.

Education Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion: In keeping the wishes of the Congregation for Catholic Education the Bangladesh Catholic Education Board under the Chairmanship of Archbishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC arranged a workshop with experts

and persons involved in education to prepare a report on the Education Apostolate of the Church in Bangladesh, which was subsequently sent to the said Congregation.

World Meeting of Family 2015: The organizers for World Meeting of Family, scheduled for September 22 – 27, 2015 in Philadelphia, USA, has sent an open invitation.

Pay Scale of Church Employees: There is a need of greater consciousness as regards Church employees and pay scale for them. The matter of just and sustainable wage has to be adequately seen within the global non-profit and charitable nature of Church finances. Diocesan, parish and other Church institutions should develop greater consciousness about this, everyone being conscious that these employees are at the service of the diocesan and local community.

Revision of Pastoral Guidelines: Bishop James Romen Boiragi on behalf of the Committee informed that further work is required toward final revision of the text of the 'Pastoral Guidelines and Faculties for the Priests of the Catholic Dioceses in Bangladesh', especially in view of incorporating necessary additions from other documents.

CBCB Centre Construction: Fr. Subroto B. Gomes informed about the present status of funds available for the additional construction on the three-storey building. Construction work can begin after a new director of the Centre has taken charge of his work.

Visit of H. E. Ferdinando Cardinal Filoni: His Eminence F. Cardinal Filoni is expected to visit Bangladesh on the occasion of Silver Jubilee of the Diocese of Rajshahi in September 2015. The Bishops suggest some additional programs, namely, a Family Congress, Mission Congress for the Bishops and Secretaries of Episcopal Commissions, Program for Major Superiors on the occasion of Year of Consecrated Life.

Inter-diocesan Appointment: (a) Fr. Jyoti F. Costa is appointed as Assistant Secretary General of CBCB and Director of CBCB Centre; (b) Fr. Patrick S. Gomes as Prefect of Studies of the Holy Spirit Major Seminary; (c) Fr. Ignatius Bindu Hembrom as Spiritual Director of St. Joseph's Seminary, Ramna.

Education Matters for Major Seminarians: The Bishops invited Fr. James Cruze CSC (Provincial of Holy Cross Priests' Society), Fr. Benjamin Costa CSC (Vice-Chancellor of Notre Dame University Bangladesh), Fr. Hemanto P. Rozario CSC (Principal of Notre Dame College), Fr. Emmanuel K. Rozario (Rector of HSMS) and Fr. Jyoti F. Costa (Prefect of Studies of HSMS) for a consultation of BA program for Seminarians at Notre Dame College and the possibility of studying Philosophy under Notre Dame University Bangladesh. Fr. Emmanuel K. Rozario and Fr. Jyoti F. Costa updated the Bishops about some recent developments in the major seminary curriculum, namely, that Philosophy will be concentrated within the first two years and Theology within the following four years effective from August 2014, and that the academic first semester will be from January to May and second semester from August to December, effective from 2015.

Caritas Personnel: Some new structural rearrangements and new orientations of programs in Caritas have been done. To have good relationship among Caritas personnel and about

their personal formation, day-long seminar at all Regions, especially to reflect on the theme that *the fruit faith is loving service and on the inner growth of the persons* will be conducted. More spiritual programs/retreats are needed for the staff in Caritas.

FABC Programs: (a) Bishop Subrato Lawrence Howlader, CSC, Fr. Stanislaus Gomes, Fr. Paul Gomes and Sr. Mary Bimola SMRA attended BILA-II on SSC, September 25-30, 2014 at Cammillian Pastoral Centre, Bangkok; (b) Fr. David S. Gomes and Fr. Amol C. D' Cruze (Dhaka Archdiocese), Fr. Michael Corraya and Fr. William Murmu (Rajshahi diocese) and Fr. Michael Roy (Chittagong diocese) attended Seminars for Bishops, priests and formators on 'Proclaiming the Joy of the Gospel Renewed Evangelizers in Asia' on November 10-15, 2014, in Pattaya, Thailand. c) Asian Meeting on Laity and Family will be held at CBCB Centre on 2-7, February 2015, organized by FABC Office of Laity and Family in cooperation with CBCB.

Missionary Visa: Archbishop Patrick D' Rozario, CSC informed the Bishops that the updating of the official list of Missionaries and renewal of such visas have been held up for some years. The Holy Cross Fathers through their employee Mr. Sushanto Costa have assisted greatly in this matter for many years. The Archbishop will have a meeting in this regard with Major Superiors of Religious Congregations and Societies involved.

Pastoral Theme for 2015: The Bishops suggest *Family and Evangelization* as the theme for the year 2015. A prayer card for the family has been printed by the Episcopal Commission for Family for use in all our dioceses on the occasion of the Synod on Family. On the occasion of the Year of the Consecrated Life beginning 1st Sunday of Advent 2014 to 2nd of February 2016 a pastoral letter has been issued and published in the Weekly Protibeshi.

Board of Editors:

Fr. Subroto B. Gomes, Fr. Jyoti F. Costa, Fr. Francis Gomes Sima, Mr. Sukumar Mullick
Published by CBCB Secretariat, 24/C Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur, Dhaka – 1207

E mail: cbcbsec@dhaka.net

Web site: www.cbcbsec.org