

CBCB Newsletter

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Editorial

Christmas is a feast of joy. It is a solemn feast which appeals to all men, to the young and to the old, to the poor and the rich, to ignorant and learned people alike. The reason behind this joy at Christmas is stated by Prophet Isaiah “For there is a child born for us, a son is given to us” And this child is our Savior, Messiah, Lord. Christmas is also a time of peace as proclaimed by the angels, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors”. But this messenger of peace is a unique person who arrives in the little town of Bethlehem. His rule is marked by love and forgiveness, compassion and freedom. His first appearance to the world was on a feeding trough for animals. The first recipients of the news of his arrival, next to his parents, were shepherds. Jesus in the manger signifies that God became poor for us in order to communicate his treasures to us; a God who became homeless in order to provide a lasting home for us in heaven; a God who bore our rejection in order to accept us in his realm; a God who endured our inhospitality in order to welcome us to his kingdom with his blessings.

Christmas which celebrates the incarnation of the Son of God brings an altogether different kind of peace. It is a peace that comes from weakness, but also from God’s infinite love for his people. Hence our task is to take hold of this gift of peace, share with others, and reach out to them in the same way that God reaches out to humanity in Jesus, in total compassion, total self-giving.

Christmases come and go each year – a reminder that God continues to share his steadfast love through our own lives, our birth, our deaths and resurrection. Christmas belongs to every person, who loves and forgives, heals and restores, dignifies and frees. The qualities that make up the Christmas are humility, faith, obedience to God and hope. If we have these, we will always be able to celebrate Christmas. Without these qualities our Christmas is nothing, something that lasts only for the day.

Three Year (2011 – 2013) Pastoral Plan for the Church in Bangladesh began on the first Sunday of Advent. Now as we journey together to achieve the common objectives of the Pastoral Plan let the spirit of Christmas enlighten and guide each one of us. Wish you Merry Christmas a Prosperous New Year to all our valued readers of CBCB Newsletter.

Coadjutor Archbishop

The Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI has appointed Bishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC of Chittagong as Coadjutor Archbishop of Dhaka Archdiocese. It has been announced on November 25 in Rome and in CBCB Centre. All the Bishops, representatives of Priests and Religious were present on this auspicious occasion at the CBCB Centre. A small reception was arranged to honor the newly appointed Coadjutor Archbishop. Let us praise God and pray for his successful ministry of the Church and for the Archdiocese of Dhaka which has received a gift from God immediately before the beginning of the season of Advent and of three year pastoral plan for the Church in Bangladesh.

Brief life-sketch of Coadjutor Archbishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC

Birth place: Padrishibpur

Date of Birth: October 1, 1943

School: Padrishibpur Primary and High School

College: Notre Dame College

Philosophy & Theology: Christ the King Seminary, Karachi, Pakistan

Final Profession: January 8, 1971

Ordained to Priesthood: October 8, 1972

Higher Studies: University of Louvain, Belgium

Appointment as Bishop of Rajshahi: May 21, 1990

Consecrated Bishop of Rajshahi: September 12, 1990

Appointment as Bishop of Chittagong: February 3, 1995

Installation as Bishop of Chittagong: April 21, 1995

Appointment as Coadjutor Archbishop: November 25, 2010

Before his appointment as Bishop of Rajshahi, Bishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC worked in the parish for a few years (Pastor at Padrishibpur Church and Barisal Catholic Church), Assistant Director at Holy Cross Scholasticate at Notre Dame College (1976 – 1980) and taught Moral Theology at the Holy Spirit Major Seminary (1976 – 1982). Bishop Patrick was the founding Director of Pastoral and Retreat Centre at Barisal. While teaching in the Major Seminary he was the Dean of Studies and founding Editor of Prodigon, theological and pastoral review. Bishop Rozario CSC was installed as Bishop of Chittagong in April 21, 1995.

At present Bishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC is the Vice President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh (CBCB), Chairman of the Catholic Education Board and the Chairman of the Episcopal Commission for Laity.

Congress on Pilgrimages and Shrines

The Second World Congress on the Pastoral Care of the Pilgrimages and Shrines, held in Santiago de Compostela, Spain from September 27 – 30 ended with an invitation to the faithful to take up a ministry of kindness.

The meeting's final document which the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers, states that this ministry enables one to receive with a spirit of openness and fraternity.

There were 250 persons from 70 countries who took part in the Congress stressed that this reception must keep in mind and respond certainly to the variety of motivations that drive pilgrims.

The participants in the meeting expressed the special desire to promote pilgrimages among young people. They also said that the necessary quality reception in shrines implies among other things, on the part of the directors an active and attentive presence and a kind attitude.

Fr. Wilson Jambil, pastor of Baromari Church and Fr. William Murmu, pastor of Andharkota Church represented Bangladesh in the world congress of the Pilgrimages and Shrines. Both the parishes have shrine dedicated to Our Lady.

Canonization of Saints

On 17 October, 80,000 faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square with the Holy Father to joyfully celebrate the Canonization of six saints: St. Andre Bessette (1845 – 1937) of Canada, St. Battista Camilla da Varano (1438 – 1524) of Italy, St. Giulia Salzano (1846 – 1929) of Italy, St. Mary of the Cross Kackillop (1842 – 1909) of Australia, St. Stanislaw Kazimierczyk Soltys (1433 – 1489) of Poland, St. Candida Maria de Jesus Cipitria y Barriala (1845 – 1912) of Spain.

St. Andre, a Brother of the Holy was Cross born on August 9, 1845 in Quebec, Canada. He was orphaned at the age of 12. He suffered from chronic stomach ailment all through his life. He was a very weak student. He was forced to leave the school to learn a trade and to seek work; he could barely write his name and read his prayer book. He joined the Brothers of Holy Cross in Montreal. After his profession he was made a porter at the College of Notre Dame du Sacre-Coeur. In that particular school he did menial tasks and he used to welcome the sick and the broken hearted. He invited them to pray to St. Joseph to obtain favors. He himself visited the sick and earned the reputation of being a miracle-worker. He considered himself as a tool in the hands of Providence, a lowly instrument at the service of St. Joseph.

The Brothers of Holy Cross arrived in Bengal 1853. It was a matter of great joy for the whole Church in Bangladesh as Brother Andre was canonized a saint. A special mass was celebrated in honor of St. Andre Bassette in all parishes in Bangladesh on Monday, October the 18th.

Bishop Patrick D'Rozario CSC, Bishop Theotonius Gomes CSC, Bishop Moses Costa CSC, Bishop Ponen Paul Kubi CSC, Bro. Benoy Stephen Gomes CSC, provincial of the Brothers of Holy Cross, other representing the Brothers, Sisters and Fathers attended the great event held in Rome. From October 28 – 30 the Brothers went on to Canada for the ceremonies at St. Joseph Oratory in Montreal along with 50,000 attending at the Montreal Stadium. Many of the groups visited Lourdes after the canonization.

BILA I & AsIPA

The first Bishops' Institute on the Lay Apostolate (BILA I) focusing on Small Christian Communities or BCCs was held from 18 – 23 October and one week training program for building SCCs (AsIPA) from 25 – 30 October 2010 in Pattaya, Thailand. The theme of the training program was 'Building the New Way of Being Church.' Bishop Subrato L. Howlader CSC and 12 other delegates (two from each diocese) attended the program.

Congress on Catholic Media

Pontifical Council for Social Communications organized Congress on Catholic Media in Vatican City from October 3 – 7, 2010. The theme of the Congress was 'Use of New Media in Pastoral Ministry and Evangelization'. There were 216 participants from 85 countries. Bishop Gervas Rozario of Rajshahi and Chairman of Episcopal Commission for Social Communications, Fr. Joyanto Gomes, Director of Christian Communication Centre and Fr. Kamol Corraya, former director of Christian Communication Centre represented Bangladesh in the Congress.

First Integrated Meeting on the Pastoral Care of the Road/Street

The first Meeting for the Pastoral Care of the Road/Street for the Continents of Asia and Oceania was held at the Baan Waan Pastoral Training Centre at Sampran, Bangkok from October 19 – 23, 2010. The Meeting was promoted by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and organized in collaboration with the Office for Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference. There were 57 participants: bishops, priests, religious and lay socio-pastoral agents, from 17 countries in Asia and Oceania: Australia, Bangladesh, China (Macau), China (Hongkong), India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Srilanka, Taiwan and Thailand. They represented Episcopal Commissions for Justice and Peace, Episcopal Commissions on Socio-human Development, National and Diocesan Caritas and other socio-religious charity institutions in both Continents.

The theme of the Meeting has been fittingly chosen, based on the well known Biblical passage of the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus: "Jesus came up and walked by their side" (Luke 24:15). The Pastoral Care of the Road/Street is indeed "a walk together." The main speakers and 11 panelists contributed to enlighten the participants and broaden their knowledge on the pastoral care of the road/street. They covered areas such as pastoral solidarity towards truck/lorry drivers, road security, prostitution and trafficking in human beings as new forms of slavery. They also reviewed the complexity and pastoral challenges of liberation and integration of street women and street girls, rights and reception of street children/boys, dignity, rights and reception of the homeless and possible collaboration with the States and civil organizations. There were two contributors from Germany and Spain with special reference to lorry drivers and road security. Bishop Gervas Rozario, Chairman of Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace, Bishop Theotonius Gomes, Auxiliary Bishop of Dhaka, Dr. Benedict Alo D'Rozario, Executive Director of Caritas Bangladesh and Fr. Albert T. Rozario, Secretary of Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace attended the Congress from Bangladesh.

Annual Retreat of the Diocesan Priests

The Annual Retreat arranged by the Bangladesh Diocesan Priests Fraternity (BDPF) was held at Pastoral Centre, Rajshahi in two groups (October 4 – 9 and October 11 – 16). Fr. Jacob Gobbi SX was the retreat preacher. Altogether 148 priests and 3 Bishops attended the retreats. Fr. Gobbi shared his life experience and reflection based on the gospel of St. Luke. Special emphasis was given to prophetic role of Jesus, evangelization, Jesus' passion, our day today challenging pastoral and priestly ministries as priests.

Children Animators Training Program

The Pontifical Mission Societies organized a national training program for the children animators at RRF Training Centre, Jessore from October 21 – 23, 2010. The main theme of the program was “Let the Children come to Me.” Altogether 180 attended the program which includes 14 priests, a significant number of Sisters and catechists and the rest were children animators from different parishes of Bangladesh. The program began with the decoration of the stalls of each diocese, lighting of the candles in remembrance of the four founders of Pontifical Mission Societies.

The opening Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Fr. Romen Boiragi, Vicar General of Khulna diocese. In his homily Fr. Romen invited all to take care of the children properly not only by words but also by good deeds. The topics and the resource persons of the program were: ‘Introduction to PMS and activities of Holy Childhood (Fr. Jyoti F. Costa); Catechism and Methods of teaching to the children in the context of Bangladesh (Fr. Bablu L. Sarkar); and directives of functioning of Holy Childhood (Fr. Tapon D’Rozario). The program also included “In Search of Talents”, a rally, distribution of prizes of the Bible Quiz, study tour to Shimulia parish.

National Youth Day Celebration

The 25th National Youth Day Celebration was commenced at the Pastoral Training Centre, Rajshahi from October 21 – 24, 2010. 260 youth delegates from all six dioceses attended this great event. Upon arrival, the delegates were given a hearty welcome by the traditional tribal dance, song and musical instruments. The theme of the celebration was “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Mk. 10:17).

To commemorate the 25th youth day celebration, 25 candles were lit by Most Rev. Moses Costa CSC, Chairman of Episcopal Commission for Youth, National Youth Coordinator, Diocesan Youth Coordinators and youth representatives. The presence of Fr. Benjamin Costa CSC, Principal of Notre Dame College, who was a pioneer of youth ministries in Bangladesh for many years added colour to this celebration. Fr. Costa shared his involvement in youth ministry and some of his experiences with the youth delegates. Bishop Moses Costa CSC installed the symbolic youth cross which was another highlight of the celebration.

The inaugural Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Most Rev. Joseph Marino, Papal Nuncio to Bangladesh. In his homily, the Nuncio invited the youth to be educated completely like Jesus, a model teacher and being filled with the Holy Spirit. The program included a rally, exhibition of the ministries of different religious congregations in Bangladesh, talk in groups by Fr. Subrato Boniface Tolentino CSC, Fr. Bablu L. Sarkar and Mr. Subol L. Rozario; and a skit presented by the delegates of Chittagong and Rajshahi dioceses.

The concluding Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Most Rev. Moses Costa CSC. In his homily Bishop Moses shared his experiences of international and national youth day celebrations. The next national youth day celebration will be held in Dhaka Archdiocese and the youth cross was handed over to the Dhaka Archdiocese.

15th Annual FABC-OSC Bishops' Meet

The Office of the Social Communication of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference organized a seminar on the theme "Communication Formation for Priestly Ministry in Asia" at St. Camillus Rehabilitation Centre, Bangkok on November 15 – 20, 2010. Bishop Gervas Rozario, Chairman of Episcopal Commission for Social Communication and Fr. Joyanto S. Gomes, Secretary of the said Commission attended the seminar. As Archbishop Claudio Celli, Chairman of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication could not be present hence the keynote address was given by Msgr. Paul Tighe, one of the high officials of the Council. The participants are convinced of the importance and pressing need for the formation of priests, seminarians and pastoral leaders in social communications for effective ministry in the context of the Church's mission in Asia. The model for all communication is God's self revelation as expressed in the incarnation, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Communication finds its supreme manifestation in the triune God, in the communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Created in the image and likeness of God, human beings necessarily are communicative beings. One of the recommendations of the seminar was to include Social Communication in the syllabus of the seminary formation.

The seminar also included to express gratitude to Archbishop Lawrence Saldhana (Pakistan), Chairman of the FABC Commission for Social Communication for serving 7 years and Msgr. Frank Joseph Ailers (German) who served the FABC Commission for Social Communication for 15 years as Secretary. They were replaced by Bishop Chaco as President and Fr. Raymond Ambrose as secretary. Both of them are from India.

Inter religious & Inter Cultural Seminar

The second international seminar on inter religious and inter culture was held at Nawab Ali Chowdhury Bhabon of Dhaka University on November 27 – 29, 2010 jointly organized by the inter religious dialogue and inter cultural department of Dhaka University and Education Board of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. 43 scholars of religions from 17 countries of the world and 90 delegates from Bangladesh attended the seminar. The theme of the seminar was "One Creator, One God, One Religion." The Education Minister

was present as chief guest. State Minister for Religious Affairs, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University and other distinguished members were present as special guests. The scholars in their presentations highlighted the main teachings of the religions stating that all religions teach about forgiveness, peace, faith, love, respect, justice, brotherhood, morality and festivals. Besides that, the speakers also shared on family education, moral values and inter personal relationship which each religion emphasize on.

The closing ceremony of the seminar was held at Shilpakola Academy. Fr. Tapon D’Rozario, associate professor of the World Religions of Dhaka University was the master of ceremony for the three days seminar. Fr. James Cruze CSC, Fr. Jacob Swapon Gomes, Fr. Francesco Rapacioli PIME and some Sisters and lay people attended the seminar on behalf of the Catholic Church.

Seminar for Priests and Religious

Episcopal Commission for Clergy and Religious organized a day long seminar for the priests and religious on October 22, 2010 at CBCB Centre. The theme of the seminar was “Our Role in Increasing Solidarity and Brotherhood in Pastoral Ministry”. Fr. Patrick Gomes spoke on the main theme followed by question-answer, group discussion, reporting and Holy Mass. Sr. Dipti SMRA, Secretary of the Commission organized the program.

CBCB Meeting

The third meeting of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Bangladesh 2010 was held on November 23 – 25, 2010 at CBCB Centre, Dhaka. Archbishop Paulinus Costa and all other Bishops were present at the meeting. The main discussions of the meeting were: Code of Conduct for priests and religious, World Youth Day, FABC Matters, Liturgical Matters, Meeting with the Major Superiors, To draw up the Statutes and Complementary Norms in conformity with the new code of Canon Law, and extension of the new building of CBCB Centre etc. A few main points discussed with the Major Superiors were pastoral care of the migrants in the urban areas, Three Year (2011 – 2013) pastoral plan, Promotion of vocation in the priestly and religious life and Religious life in the syllabus of the seminary formation etc.

The climax of the Meeting was on the last day with the announcement of Bishop Patrick D’Rozario CSC as Coadjutor Archbishop of Dhaka at the CBCB Centre. All the Bishops, some priests and religious were present when Archbishop Paulinus Costa announced that the Holy Father has appointed Bishop Patrick D’Rozario CSC as Coadjutor Archbishop of Dhaka. A small reception followed after the announcement.

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