

The
Montfortian Expressions



*St. Francis of Assisi, has been declared as the patron of Religious Brothers.
His feast - 4th October is celebrated as Brotherhood Day in India*

Newsletter of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel
Province of North East India
(For Private Circulation only)

From the Desk of the Provincial...



We are going to begin our 1st retreat in a few days. This year the retreat is going to be different from the annual retreats we usually have. This retreat is going to be an inner journey. *“The longest journey is the journey inward”* says Dag Hemmarskjold, a great writer and diplomat. If you are prepared to undertake this journey, you may discover, that it was worth the trouble because every retreat is a journey into your own inner self. It calls you to recognize your inner struggles, anxieties, helplessness, brokenness and woundedness. Fritz Perls says, “We are all fragmented people. To the extent, we are aware of the fragments or parts, we are real” – awareness of ourselves is a must for this journey to be meaningful.

Life is a great journey that constantly calls us to leave ourselves behind in order to follow God’s will. “It’s very difficult, in geography as in morality, to understand the world without leaving your own house.” – Voltaire. A retreat is a journey to change. It is good to ask oneself, “Am I afraid to make this journey to change?” Every journey requires preparation and a separation. We can’t carry all that we need when we prepare to go on a journey. We have to ‘choose’ to take some things and ‘decide’ to leave behind some. Look at the birds, they carry nothing with them, even when they migrate to a new continent. That makes them fly light and fly high. The less weight we carry the faster and higher we can fly/journey. We also need a separation, a time to detach ourselves from our daily routine and take stock of what is happening to us. This becomes more relevant and meaningful after a year long lockdown.

In December 1983, I went to Chhingchhip to guard the house when Bro. Thomas Plathottam and Bro. Francis Abraham had gone for their home leave. Early one morning, I saw an old lady carrying a big bundle of firewood in a basket hung from her head (in the Mizo style). She was quite old, fragile and thin and the load she was carrying was far heavier than what a person of her age could carry. I stood and watched her carry the heavy load home. As I reflect on the old lady carrying that bundle of firewood on her fragile head, I still remember her smile and the determination on her face.

We carry the unresolved issues in our life as burdens on our backs. Some of what we carry is obvious, some pressures and weights that are hidden within our hearts and minds. We carry afflictions like the secrets of our lives, the long-term regrets, resentments, hurts, histories of shame and the carelessness of sins that pile up within us which we should not have to carry. We all experience many days or even years where these burdens become our only identities.

Retreats are times when we can deal with these heavy burdens on our backs by turning inward. We may fuel the fires of addiction to alcohol, food or pornography when we feel crushed in life. When we do not feel appreciated, when people treat us badly or as a commodity we get hurt and they remain as a deep wound inside us.

Jesus told, “Come and rest a while - my yoke is easy and the burden light”. Come to me all you who labour and are heavy burdened and I will give you rest. (Mt.11:28-30). If we make this inner healing journey seriously our heads will clear, shoulders will be lighter, our hearts at peace and our mouth will sing in joyful exultation.

A Retreat is an invitation and an opportunity to break from whatever is blocking us, whatever is holding us back. And in general, that which drives us to break from our bonds and set out to do His will. The journey continues beyond the boundaries of our everyday life and routines. It is a journey towards our inner self. It can be challenging, frightening or exciting. It can be like Abraham's experience of having been invited by God to leave his father's house behind and set out for an uncertain destiny, and yet, it is precisely there that Abraham's life finally begins. Life continually sends us out. The meaning of it evolves slowly. So, trust in Him, He has a plan for everything. We need to discern his plan for us. The journey of Jesus teaches us that every journey has a purpose and we need to persevere especially when the going gets tough and demanding. Jesus teaches us the pedagogy of the journey! As we journey in His path, we know that He is there with us. He will guide us on the way. This journey is His will, for His mission. Take up your daily crosses and follow me, He said.

Silence is an integral part of such a journey. Marty Nemko, Ph.D., writes in *Psychology Today*, "In conversation, we underestimate the power of silence." A quiet place is another important requirement to listen to Him. The first Christians and Jews went into the desert. Buddhists and Hindus have sought out caves or mountaintops. Philosophers and great thinkers have found basements, labs or a hidden garden. Our founder, St. Montfort, found a place under a staircase.

Today, more than ever, we are living in a fast, busy and noisy world. Mobile phone has smartly invaded all our private places and has taken away our privacy. Unfortunately, the social media has taken away one of the most important part of our consciousness, the part most sensitive to gentleness, caring for others and being alive to those around us. Getting back these qualities is essential for our holistic development and enhancement of our Spiritual Quotient (SQ) which today psychologists consider more important than Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and even Emotional Quotient (EQ).

Silent prayer allows us to get in touch with inner emotions and thoughts, too often camouflaged by a world of noise and activity. When we can embrace silence as a rare opportunity to visit, deal with those issues that are buried deep in us, beneath layers of noise and activity by tuning into the spiritual nudges and inspirations that flow through the peacefulness of silence, we train ourselves to appreciate an inner world that bolsters and enhances our wellness and connections with the world outside of our thoughts. Rather than being afraid of silence, we must use it to gain strength and wisdom.

When you are quiet, you may become uneasily aware of the presence within you, of a stranger; the self that is both "*I*" and *someone else*, within yourselves. The self that is so different from the everyday character you have constructed out of your dealing with others. Let us take the "risk" to meet this stranger; the flawed, fragile, broken, failed part of you, the secretive, insecure you, hurting, grieving you. The part of yourself you wish to avoid and do not dare to meet. When you do that, you begin your healing journey and discover the creative inner child within you. Wish you an adventurous journey during this annual retreat.

So, let us challenge ourselves to encounter silence during the forth coming retreat. Not a dead silence, but a confident privacy that avoids chatter and thoughtless noise. A silence that is creative, sacred and productive which will lead us towards an encounter with self and Jesus.



MONTFORT SCHOOL, RANIR KHAMAR, AGARTALA

Bro. Peter Veda

ACADEMICS

Re-Opening for Teachers.

“All children start their school careers with sparkling imaginations, fertile minds and a willingness to take risks with what they think.”

Montfort School re-opened for the teachers after the Summer Vacation and started preparing for Periodic Assessment-I 2021-22 on 7th June 2021.

Offline Classes

On 25th August 2021, Montfort School, Agartala re-opened for the offline classes for Standards VI to X as per the state Government's directives and SOP's.

First General School Assembly - 2021

The first General Assembly post lockdown was conducted in the school premises on 27th August 2021. Rev. Bro. Principal hoisted the National Flag followed by cultural events conducted by the students. The students were provided face masks and hand sanitizers. They were given some important instructions on staying healthy, fit and fine.

Re-opening for Classes I to X

On 20th September 2021, School which was officially closed due to the spread of corona virus throughout the country, re-opened for Classes I to X after a long span of time. The children were very happy to attend the school after the long unscheduled and unexpected break.

Re-opening for Nursery to KG-II

Students of Nursery to KG-II came to school for an interaction session and regular classes with the teachers on 25th September 2021. It helped all the kids to interact with the school environment which gave them immense enjoyment after a long time.

PTA Meeting of Class X

Three Parent - Teacher meetings were conducted for the parents of class X students in the school premises maintaining all the COVID norms. These meetings were very helpful for both the Institution and the parents to know the status of the students and understanding their weaknesses in studies.

PT and Zumba Session

On 29th September 2021, PT and Zumba session was conducted in the school playground to make the students feel energetic. The session was conducted in morning following the necessary COVID-19 Protocols for the safety of the children.

CELEBRATIONS

Feast Day of St. Peter and St. Paul

Feast Day of St. Peter and St. Paul was celebrated on 29th June 2021 in the school campus paying due respect to St. Peter and St. Paul. The day commemorates the martyrdom of two saints, the two great Apostles, Saint Peter and St. Paul.

A Special Achievement

With the blessings of Almighty God, two of our Students named Antaraj Raj Deb of Class VII and Alinda Raj of class IX were awarded Gold Medals for the achievements in the Summer Olympiad on 30th July 2021. This achievement will inspire other students to take part in the competitions held across the country.

Independence Day 2021

To pay tribute to all the freedom fighters who had contributed a lot and sacrificed their lives for the freedom of our country, Montfort School, Agartala celebrated Independence Day on 15th August 2021 in the school campus with a sense of patriotism for our beloved country India. A short programme was organised in the school campus which included the flag hoisting and a proud rendition of our National Anthem.

Pre-Teachers' Day Celebration

Pre-Teachers' Day was celebrated in the school campus by the students of class IX on 4th September 2021. A memorable programme was organised by the students of Class IX in honour of all the teaching and non-teaching staff which included a Cultural programme, Gift distribution, cake cutting ceremony and many more. Thereafter a grand lunch was served for all those who participated in the celebration.

Teacher's Day celebration by Ex-Students

Some of the Ex- Students of Class X of Batch 2020-21 made a surprise visit to Montfort School, Agartala to celebrate Teacher's Day with Rev. Bro. Principal and all the members of the staff on 8th September 2021. The celebration took place in the new staff room with a cake cutting ceremony and presentation of gifts to Rev. Bro. Principal.

Felicitation Programme

Rev. Bro. Thomas Plathottam took charge as the Director of Montfort School, Agartala on 12th Sept. 2021. A felicitation programme was organized in his honour on the following day in the school campus. He was greeted with a flower Bouquet and a Risha.

Condolence

Montfort School, Agartala, conducted prayer service in honour of the late Fr. Stan Swamy in the school campus on 6th July 2021.

On 15th September 2021, Rev. Bro. Principal along with all the members of the staff attended the funeral ceremony of one of the teachers' late mother as a mark of condolence, respect and much needed support to the bereaved teacher and the distraught family.

Virtual Faculty Enhancement Programme

A four – day virtual training programme was organized on 'Inclusive Education', 'Sign language' and 'Assessment for all' for the teachers to help them to be competent in dealing with students with special needs as the school has become an inclusive one this year. This training helped all the teachers to learn many intricacies of inclusive education, single handed and double handed sign language and the know - how of evaluating students using the AFA tools devised by CBM, an international NGO. The teachers participated whole heartedly to complete the assignments related to the training.

Montfort School Agartala at a Glance...



MY CALL TO BROTHERHOOD



Bro. Udai Kaipeng

Greetings to all my Brothers,

I wish to thank the Almighty God for calling me to serve the people and the church as a member of the Montfort family in the Congregation of the Brothers of saint Gabriel. I feel happy for this opportunity to follow Jesus in the foot steps of St. Montfort our Founder.

I hail from a family of eight, comprising of my late father, my Mother, a home maker and six siblings (four boys and two girls). I am the fourth among the children and my home is at lungkam, a small village in the midst of hills and forest, near Bidhibazar, in west Tripura.

Schooling : I did my schooling at Montfort school, Champaknagar in West Tripura and stayed at the School Hostel during that period. One of our duties was to keeping the campus clean. I still remember the times when my parents used to visit me during the visiting days and how they appreciated the way the school premises were kept neat and clean.

Inspiration: After one month of my stay in the hostel I was asked to be a sacristan in charge of the Chapel . I experienced God who is present everywhere in the goodness of nature and was deeply inspired by the faithfulness to God shown by the Brothers of Montfort at the Champaknagar community. Gradually I began to get a liking for the Brothers way of life, enjoy the Blessings of God and with the guidance and the inspiration I received from the life the Brothers, started spending more time with God. I started to pray whenever I found time and since I was in charge of Chapel there were more opportunity to pray.

Candidature: On 1st - April – 2013, with his soothing voice and an ever smiling face, Brother Joseph Reddy, who was the Vice-Principal of Montfort School, Champaknagar, recruited me and took me under the Brothers’ wings. It was a memorable day which led to the turning point of my life. It influenced me to search for God in the company of Bro. Joseph Reddy and the other community members of the Brothers community. I remember how Brother P.J Jose, whom I trust and stayed close with, often shared with me the intricacies of the mission that the Montfort Brothers of Saint Gabriel have undertaken in the North East which moved me and inspired me.

With my whole heart, I would like to express my gratitude for the many experiences of the work and dedication of Brothers like P.J. Philip, Joseph Reddy, P.J. Jose, David Tirkey and others who interacted with me day in and day out.

The Brothers were faithful to God and devoted themselves to the service of Humanity. They were committed to the their daily prayers and loyal to all their duties. This inspired me to come close with Lord and the community of Brothers. I recall how delighted I was when decided to become a Brother and like those wonderful Brothers who were kind and a gentle.

I made my first Profession on the 19th April 2021 and became a member of the Montfort family. Presently I am serving at Montfort Inclusive school, at Guwahati, Assam. I am so happy that “I am a Montfort Brother” !!!.



MONTFORT VILLA, AIZAWL

Bro. Arulanandam. G

“The crest and crowning of all good is Brotherhood”

Dear Readers of Montfortian Expression!

Prayerful wishes and greetings from Brothers of Montfort Villa. There is a great difference between a stagnate life and the life that moves. Our lives here in the community is crystal clear and ever flowing water wherein you can quench the thirst of love and fraternity all throughout your stay. Here we would like to share some of the major events which occurred during the month of September 2021.

Community Life:

“There is no power for change greater than a Community discovering what it cares about” - MARGARET J. WHEATLEY

As a new flower blooms and gives a ray of hope to the spectators, we, the Brothers of Aizawl Community continue to be a hope in the lives of others through our mission. By God’s grace and honest, dedicated hard work, the life in the Community goes smoothly and without any undue incident.



Teachers’ Day Celebration:

The Role of a teacher in a student’s life is very crucial, right from the time a child joins a Day – Care Centre to the stage when he or she takes a step forward towards establishing a professional career. The teacher lays the foundation for developing their nature, personality and the individual self. To salute the Nation builders a virtual meeting of teacher’s day celebration was conducted in St. Paul’s on 6th September 2021. All the teachers took part actively to honour Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, the second President of India and whose birthday is commemorated as Teachers’ day. During the celebration the teachers were asked to share their views for which they showed great zeal. They expressed that they were feeling proud and privileged to be a teacher at St. Paul’s.

International Literacy day, The Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary & Birthday of Bro. Arulanandam:

The three in one celebration was on 8th September 2021. Literacy is considered to be a human right for every person. It is considered to be an important tool for personal empowerment and the best means for social development. Moreover, literate people can have easy access to many



opportunities. Hence it is necessary for every community to adopt measures for the improvement and growth of literacy.

Mary, Mother of God, our Blessed Mother and Co – Mediatrix, plays a very important role in the life of every Brother. As our Founder, St. Montfort, found Mary, the easiest, surest and the shortest way to reach Jesus let us cling on to Mary our Blessed Mother as we commemorate the Nativity of our Lady of good health and ask her to intercede for each one of us. Let our hearts and minds become that of Mary our Blessed Mother.

It was also an occasion to celebrate the Birthday of Bro. Arulanandam. A special prayer service was conducted by Bro. James in the morning as well as in the evening. The very presence of Bro. Jose Thekkedam & Brothers from Chhingchhip, Kolasib added grace & blessings. It doubled the joy of Bro. Arul. In his speech Bro. Arul said, “The Mother of the Universe remembered this little poor creature to celebrate my birthday along with the significant day of Her Nativity”.

Online classes:

As the situation worsens and the number of active cases are still increasing day by day in the locality, it is not possible to have regular classes. So, the virtual classes are in full swing. Students show real interest on the subjects taught by the teachers virtually. Principals both in St. Paul’s & Melriat observe the classes and give their feedbacks to improve the teachers’ pedagogical skills though some of the students are finding it hard to continue the virtual classes due to internet problems, Over all the students’ attendance and the performance based on the activities are good and quite impressive.

Principal’s meeting with the staff:

Periodical meetings with the subject teachers individually in the school by the Principal pave the ways to focus on the subjects and to find out the areas which needs improvement. Bro. James’ motivational words inspires the teachers to teach well and the students to excel in there exams.

St. Joseph’s Press:

In spite of his ill health Bro. Mathew works hard to get orders from different institutions and with the minimum of the staff at his disposal, delivers the orders on time. It shows his commitment, dedication, determination and above all love for the work.

Renovation work at Melriat:

The renovation work of the Brothers House at Melriat which started on 2nd September 2021 is temporarily stopped due to the unavailability of the carpenter who had other committents. Hopefully the work will resume soon and if everything goes well as per our plan, the Brothers will move from Montfort Villa and start staying in the new community at Melriat.

Sector Meeting:

After the Birthday celebration of Bro. Arulanandam, the Brothers of Mizoram sector gathered together for a short meeting in which the Brothers happily shared their news in a nutshell regarding the online classes, Laudato Si, NEP, a suggestion to establish a college in the new building at Aizawl etc. The next meeting will be at Chhingchip in the second week of October.



Adieu to Bro. Jose Thekkedam:

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it”. To fulfill the words of the author William Arthur Ward, the Ursuline Sisters at Melriat bid adieu to Bro. Jose Thekkedam with a sumptuous dinner for the fruitful service he had

rendered. At the end Bro. Jose also thanked the Sisters for their availability and asked to render the same co – operation to the new Principal to bring up the schools to a higher standard.

Staff Meeting at Melriat:

On 17th September 2021 the staff gathered in the school campus for the first meeting by the new Principal. Bro. James introduced Bro. Arul to the staff present. After which the teachers expressed the difficulties regarding online classes. They opined that since the connectivity is very poor in some of the villages, the only possibility to reach the students is through WhatsApp. The teaching – learning materials and voice messages sent through Whatsapp helps the students to catch up with their teachers. The meeting came to an end with a sumptuous lunch.

B. Ed classes:

Bros. Tyngshain & Daniel have started attending their second year B. Ed classes virtually. They have successfully completed their micro teaching by using all the necessary teaching skills. Now they are fully ready for the classroom teaching. But the situation here doesn't allow them to do so due to the increase in the number of active Covid cases gradually.



WILL SYNOD ON 'SYNODALITY' END THE TOP-DOWN LEADERSHIP STYLE IN THE CHURCH?



On 7th March 2020, Vatican announced that the next ordinary Synod of Bishops will be a synod on *synodality*. In October 2022, Bishops from around the world will meet in Rome to discuss the theme: “For a synodal Church: communion, participation and mission.” A synodal church is a church of participation and co-responsibility. In exercising synodality she is called to give expression to the participation of all, according to each one’s calling. Participation is based on the fact that all the faithful are qualified and called to serve each other through the gifts they have all received from the Holy Spirit.

I always admired the courage of Pope John XXIII to call for the Vatican II with a radical agenda to bring sweeping changes in the Catholic church. It was a game changer, the Church sent out the message that it was part of the modern world. That Church is not against, not above, not apart, but is in the modern world. As a result of Vatican II, the Catholic Church opened its windows onto the modern world, updated the liturgy, gave a larger role to laypeople, introduced the concept of religious freedom and started a dialogue with other religions. I hope and pray that this synod on synodality will be another mile stone in the history of the church and it will accommodate the views of critics like me who are against clericalism and institutionalization of the Church. Unlike in the past, if the lay representation is truly representing the people, and not made up of people who always sing alleluia to the Bishops and priests, and if the hierarchy instead of keeping them as monuments of lay participation, have the patience and generosity to allow them to participate and open their mind to listen and understand their genuine grievances and suggestions, the church will get a new lease of life.

Pope Francis, who was the archbishop of Buenos Aires before he went to Rome, was feted as a rule-breaker when he was unexpectedly elected pope in 2013. He spoke positively about gay people, forgave women for having abortions, called the clergy to shed clericalism and to be with their sheep and called for greater leadership roles for women in the church. After Pope John XXIII who called for drastic changes in the church, Pope Francis has dared to call the leaders of the church to go through a process of listening to one another, make the right discernment and bring about conversion in the way of being the church in the present times.

I personally don’t think that this synod will reform structures and the present top-down hierarchical decision-making process in the church. But I do hope that this synod will improve communicational dynamics, ways of relating with one another and giving the rightful place for the laity in the church. The Synod on synodality should challenge the Bishops and Priests to transform clericalist practices in which an individual or a group in the church makes decisions without listening or consulting the laity, who form almost 98% of the church, as if they do

not exist. Synodality demands that the clergy listen and engage in dialogue with everyone to establish binding relationships that will build a true church.

Pope Francis is increasingly seen pushing his bishops to adopt “synodality,” despite warnings from critics that it could break the Church in two. Will synodality become a new way of being the Church? If the coming synod be less bound by its bureaucracies and protocols, follow the servant leadership of Jesus and can stop looking inward we might have a church that is very close to the early Christian community.

In the Catholic Church, clericalism manifests itself with the belief and practice that only ordained clergy, such as Bishops and priests, have true authority to make decisions without any input from non-priests or non-bishops. Clericalism began in 1054 because of various disputes and actions, and it has never been reversed till date though Pope Francis has been very vocal against it. Throughout his pontificate, Pope Francis has targeted clericalism as an illness in the Church, an ailment that pretends “the Church” means “Priests and Bishops,” that ignores or minimizes the God-given grace and talents of laypeople and that emphasizes the authority of clerics over their obligation of service.

But the question is do the Bishops and priests have the humility and openness to listen. Can the hierarchy in the church put aside fears and prejudices and start talking about more involvement of the laity in the church. Will synodality be understood and practised by religious leaders at all levels?

Like the synodal practice of St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, can church leaders *take advice* from some and *build consensus* with all as people of God. Consensus presupposes a process of consultation, listening, dialogue and discernment done collaboratively. Sadly, during the second millennium, with the Gregorian Reform and the Council of Trent, the attention shifted to uniformity and institutionalization. The synod should achieve new mindset where their decisions



emerge from sincere consultation and seeking consensus, since every exercise of authority in the church is to be at the service of the people of God. More than a numeric representation, it is about including the diversity of cultures, charisms, gifts and ministries in the church. This would entail ending the Church's age-old tradition of top-down leadership and holding open discussions at all levels to decide the future. Autocratic Bishops and clergy would have to be more cooperative, and lay people — many of whom are used to Father knowing best — would assume more responsibility.

Let us pray that this synod on Synodality helps the church authority to rediscover, the spirit of involving all the baptized in discerning God's will and listening to the Holy Spirit, which has been present in the early church. Therefore, the goal should be to find the best way for every baptized person to fulfil the church's mission of proclaiming God's love and salvation in Jesus Christ to the world. Thus, helping the church of today to be more vitally what Jesus intended it to be in the first place. Everyone 'walking together' which has been a key theme of Pope Francis' pontificate, though it has raised questions and even confusion at times. We need to pray for another outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the members of the synod like it did during the II Vatican Council. Otherwise, the churches in other parts of the world also will become empty like in Europe. As they say 'too many Chiefs and not enough Indians'. The writing on the wall is very clear 'Change or Perish'.



LAUDATO SI

Pope Francis' encyclical, **Laudato Si'**, or "Praise Be to You" is an urgent call to tackle the current ecological crisis by making a paradigm shift, a conversion, that will deal with environmental problems such as, global warming, loss of biodiversity, hazardous chemicals and waste, marine pollution, destruction of forests, monoculture plantations, lack of clean drinking water, and social problems such as inequity, greed, and poverty.

Montfortian Action for Total Sustainability (MATS) is a proof of our Congregation's commitment to become a **Laudato Si'** group of Brothers, inviting each one of us individually, institutionally and collectively to embark on a seven-year journey toward Integral Ecology, a holistic perspective and strategy to promote both a flourishing earth and a flourishing human community. A healthy

relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our past mistakes and sins committed against the Earth and have a change of both heart and mind. It is only by healing the human heart that one can hope to heal the world from its social and environmental unrest and



crisis. This conversion is not only about eliminating problems but also restoring relationships. We are called to be stewards –responsible guardians - of the environment, including our own personal talents and other resources.

As Montfortian educators, we need to inculcate in the students a simple life style avoiding things that harm the environment and try his/her level best to **‘Reduce, reuse and recycle’**. The Montfortian Education should bring to life the principles of green institutions in the spirit of the Earth Charter; by educating the beauty of creation in the hearts of the children, young people and adults (staff and families) of our centres and create a desire to take care of our planet and of human beings especially children with disability and their welfare.

Montfort Institutions shall give emphasis on “ecological education” – where the students understand their share of responsibility to care for the earth and the vulnerable human beings and start practicing the same in concrete ways at school, in their families, in the village and in the society. One of the action plans is to cultivate vegetables and to grow fruit trees, in the vacant land available in our centres, that can be used for the community or hostel. This would not only improve our sustainability but also bring about healthy food habits and optimum utilization of available resources.



MONTFORT BROTHERS COLLABORATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF TRIPURA



Montfort Brothers along with NGOs and the Government of Tripura initiated a project **‘Saksham Tripura’** to educate the Children with disabilities in the Government schools. The Department of Education taking into consideration the long experience of the Montfort Brothers in the field of Inclusive Education invited them along with two other NGOs to train and supervise the teachers of selected Government schools in imparting inclusive education. The Province of Northeast India has signed an MoU to this effect through the Heads of Montfort School, Champaknagar and Montfort School, Agartala to train the teachers of 80 schools in Inclusive Education. The Government of Tripura will finance the total expense incurred in the implementation of this project. In accordance with the MoU signed, the Montfort Brothers along with other NGOs have taken the responsibility of providing the Government with special educators and Mentors to implement this project. The Management of this project is undertaken by CBM (INGO) which will work in coordination with the implementing partners.



MONTFORT HR. SEC. SCHOOL, CHAMPAKNAGAR



Grandparents Day Celebrations



World Indigenous Day Celebrations



Independence Day Celebrations

SIT & DRAW COMPETITION, 2021
 VENUE : KHUMPUI ACADEMY SCHOOL

WINNERS

Category : Grade 3 - 5

1st Prize: Aida Debbarma
 3rd Prize: Pallabi Debbarma

Category : Grade 6 - 8

1st Prize: Jeslina Debbarma
 2nd Prize: Twikherong Debbarma

Category : Grade 9 - 12

1st Prize: Hamply Debbarma



MONTFORT ARULUDHAYAM

Gabriel Sangma



Greetings from Montfort Aruludhayam to all my friends. I am very happy to share all the events that happened here in the last few months.

First, I would like to tell you that we (pre-novices), altogether 27 in number, from the seven Provinces of India, reached safe and sound at Montfort Aruludhayam and was received by our Director in July 2021.

Director's Birthday Celebration: Every person has his/her special days. One of the most remembered days in one's Life is the day when he/she comes out of the mother's womb. We celebrated our Director's (Rev. Bro. Binu Mathew) Birthday on 28th July with the Brothers from our neighbouring community (school community). The day was lovely and full of joy for all, especially the celebrant. The pre-novices with the help of two Brothers (Socius and Administrator) organized the celebrations.

Inauguration of the Pre-novitiate: On 31st July, the official inauguration of the pre-novitiate for the new batch took place in the presence of Rev. Bro. Johnson, the Provincial of Yercaud Province and other Brothers. It was a day of joy for us as we got a chance to meet the Brothers. In the meanwhile, we received the study materials like notebooks, pens, pencils, etc. from Rev. Bros. Stephen Xavier and Dominic. We also had a program in the same afternoon to welcome us to the Pre – Novitiate.

English Class: After receiving the study materials, we have started our classes. We are learning the English language with a special focus on improving our speaking skills guided by Bro. Sahaya Raj. In addition, we are also given inputs on Prayer by Bro. Binu Mathew for our spiritual growth. It's a good opportunity to learn all these aspects of life at a young age.

Independence Day: Since 15th Aug 1947, India has been enjoying freedom from British rule. We remember that day as the independence day of our country. We, too, have celebrated the 75th Independence Day of India in Montfort Aruludhayam. The contingent of 26 pre-novices marched in front of the house. The National Flag was hoisted by Rev. Fr. M.C Michael. In the afternoon we played a football match and ended the day with a movie.

Onam Celebration: Onam is one of the major celebrations in Kerala. It's said that the celebration is based on a myth. They say that Mahabali, an ancient ruler, visits his people on that particular day. In addition, it's also considered as the day for the new harvest. We celebrated Onam at Montfort Aruludhayam for the first time. People from the outside came for the celebration and enjoy day together. We also had a prayer service on that day and some indoor games.

I'm thankful to our Director for giving me an opportunity to write these things. Moreover, I'm very glad to share these events with you. I hope all the pre-novices will do their best to reach their goals. *"We can't do great things but at least we can do small things with great love and care"*.



MONTFORT CENTRE FOR EDUCATION, TURA

Bro.P.J.Jose

Bro. K. J. Jose returned to the community after being with his aged and sickly mother for some days. Bro. Sandeep left for CRI, Bangalore and Bro. Devid Tricky joined the community on 21st August.

After the Education Department of Meghalaya permitted to resume offline classes for higher class students, MCE reopend on 1st September for classes from IX to XII with 50% of students class wise. For classes VI to VIII we resumed offline classes with the consent letter from the parents. As the attendance in all classes was quite encouraging, we allowed 100% attendance from VI to XII from 13th September. If the condition continues to show improve, we will go for the rest of the students too. As at MCE, classes for students of Bolchugre too resumed. We have sporadic rains at Tura now.

‘Building Back Better’ – Covid Relief work

“If you can’t feed a hundred people, then feed just one”. Montfort Centre for Education, Danakgre, Tura distributed dry ration kits at West Garo Hills, Gamburgre Block to poor and marginalized people with a special focus on families of persons with disabilities. Also hygiene kits were handed over to the people in need. 600 families are supported in West Garo Hills district.

Besides dry ration kits, electronic tablets were also distributed to children with disabilities in order for them to continue their education attending their online classes. 100 children with disabilities will benefit from the smart phones.

Around 2000 families will be benefitting from this humanitarian gesture shown by the Institute of Brothers of St. Gabriel, Montfort Brothers of North East Province supported by CBM. Besides west Garo Hills, 500 each families will be supported in Guwahati Rural district and in villages around Agartala, Tripura.

Shri. Ram Singh, IAS, Deputy Commissioner West Garo Hills, Tura inaugurated the distribution programme on 13th August 2021 in the presence of Sir. Tyrone D. Brass, Principal, Sherwood School, Tura at the premises of Montfort Centre for Education. It was a pleasing moment to see so many smiling faces at the end of the programme, especially Children with Disabilities.

The beneficiaries were overwhelmed and thanked Montfort and CBM for this timely help and support during this time of pandemic.





MONTH OF THE ROSARY



The month of October is specially dedicated to praying the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditionally observed as the month of the Holy Rosary, which is celebrated in many parts of the world with special acts of devotion in honour of the Blessed Mother including the holding of prayer vigils, novenas, and the praying of the holy rosary in parish communities and families. The feast of the Holy Rosary was instituted to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary for the Christian victory over the Turks at Lepanto on October 7, 1751. It was Pope Pius V along with all the Christians who had prayed the Rosary for the victory, and Pope Gregory XIII instituted the feast of the Holy Rosary to commemorate this historic victory. On 13th October 2019, during the apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima, she had asked the three children to “Continue to pray the Rosary everyday”.



St. Louis Marie de Montfort, the Founder of the Montfortian family, comprising the Montfort Brothers (Brothers of St. Gabriel) the Montfort Fathers (Company of Mary) and the Montfort Sisters (the Daughters of Wisdom) is known as one of the greatest Champion of Marian Consecration and devotion to Mary. *Blessed Pope Pius IX* (1846–78): Declared, “**Saint Louis De Montfort’s devotion to Mary was the best and most acceptable form of devotion to Our Lady. It is a glorious inheritance, worthy, that you continue to sacrifice your strength and your life, as you have done until today.**” *Pope Saint Pius X* (1903–14) said, “I heartily recommend *True Devotion to The Blessed Virgin*, so admirably written by St. Montfort, and to all who read it grant the Apostolic Benediction. If you want peace in your heart, in your home, in your country, assemble together every night and say the Rosary”. Let us pray the Holy Rosary with much devotion and love, in our communities or with our neighbours (wherever possible) during this month of Rosary. We shall in a special way pray to our Heavenly Mother for protection from the Covid-19 pandemic.





*Montfort Brothers in Collaboration
with CBM(Germany)
An Outreach Initiative
"Building Back Better"*



18th COUNCIL OF THE INSTITUTE -2021

The 18th Council of the Institute (a meeting of all the Provincials, District superiors, special invitees and the members of the Central Administration of the Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel) that was supposed to be held in Spain in May 2020, is being held virtually from 4th to 20th October 2021. The main agenda for this council of the Institute is 'Evaluation of the implementation of the message and Orientations of the 32nd General Chapter and the Directives of the Central Administration'. There will be three conferences by resource persons during the meeting. 1. Missionary Dynamism by Fr. Luis Augusto Stefani SMM 2. Issues of sexual abuses by Bro. Gabriel Villa-Real FMS 3. Transparency and Accountability by Fr. Lord Winner CMF. I request all the Brothers of the Province to pray every day for the success of the 18th Council of the Institute. May the Holy Spirit inspire the members to discern God's will for the Congregation in these challenging times.





LAUNCHING (MONTFORT) TV

MEducation TV

The Montfortian Education Foundation has launched the new MEducation TV Channel on the Brotherhood Day, October 4 2021. We congratulate Bro. Mani Mekkunnel , the Secretary of International Office of the Montfortian Education for coming up with this new initiative which is designed to carry forward the global learning process in a spirit of sharing and participation.

It will form a part of the Congregation's YouTube Channel SAN GABRIELE (SAN GABRIELE - YouTube), which also has other components like GSJPIC Asia-Pacific and Montfort Social Institute MSI. May I invite the Brothers of our Province, Staff, Students, Associates and Collaborators to SUBSCRIBE for it as soon as possible so that this TV Channel will be able to achieve its desired objectives.



Bro. John Kallarackal, Superior General, Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, Inaugurates the MEducation TV online.

MONTFORT EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION



The Brain behind the MEducation TV
Bro. Mani Mekkunnel, Secretary,
The International Secretariat for Education.



WHY AM I A BROTHER IN A CLERGY DOMINATED CHURCH ?

Bro. Varghese Mandapathil

Continued from Vol.23 / Issue No.3 / April 2021.....

These days the social media in Kerala is filled with anti-priests' news, voice clips and videos of priests who have trapped in sexual abuse or illicit relationship. The frontline media seems to have a hidden agenda to tarnish the good name of Catholic Priests. Even people who have been supportive of the church have begun to believe that something is rotten within the church circles. One of the reasons for this anti-priest feeling and propaganda may be because of the over emphasis on the sacredness of Priesthood and the projection of priests as next to God. Some priests take extra effort to paint priests as divine beings and when this indoctrination goes deep into the ordinary people, they find it hard to accept that priests are ordinary human beings who are weak and can make mistakes. This has gone deep in the psyche of the Catholics so much so some Sisters, even when they become Superiors and Provincials, tend to be subservient to the Priests even at the expense of their dignity and position.

For example, during the celebrations say a Jubilee or profession, the Sister Superior feels obliged to request the Bishop or the Parish Priest to bless the meal instead of requesting the Sister Provincial or one of their senior sisters to do the same. I had a personal experience of this type of behaviour from a particular Sisters' congregation when I was attending a Jubilee function recently. The Sister, who was addressing the gathering acknowledged the Bishop, Parish Priests, Priests and then their Provincial superior and other Provincials representing the Brothers' congregations, which is against the protocol in a formal function. The point I wish to make is that this religious superior who is well educated, is a prisoner of the indoctrination that has gone into her. Whereas the Bishop who was the chief guest, acknowledged the sister Provincial and Brother Provincials before addressing the Parish Priests and other priests who were present.

It is true that some parish priests get hurt when they are not given importance in public functions. Many Sisters are insecure and feel that the Priests may not come to celebrate Mass in the convent, animate their recollections or hear their confessions if they are displeased. So, they go an extra mile to keep the Priests in good humour even at the expense of overlooking some of their mis-adventures.

This model of hierarchy, after the Roman Empire, is inherited from the time of Constantine, the Roman Emperor whose conversion to Christianity that has changed the very nature of the church. It is from then that the church of Jesus, who identified himself with the poor and the lowly became a church of the powerful and the church of the Roman empire. This is why even today it is known as the Roman Catholic church and the other church denominations to call us 'Romans'.

Sadly, even today the remnants of the empire, like the crozier, the vestments, the chalice, the mitre and the titles like Your Grace, Your Excellency, Your Lordship etc are still practiced. Kissing the ring was considered as an expression of loyalty to the Emperor and sadly similar practices still continues in the church. The Cardinals, Bishops and the Clergy are unwilling to let go of some of the outdated customs and practices, even though the empire and its practices have

long disappeared from the world. The belief that they are 'holier than others' makes the church leaders keep quiet about the illegal use of the position and privilege of being ordained minister by those who indulge in exploitation of women, children and the unsuspecting faithful.

Today, the media is full of incidents that point fingers at the fact that much of what passes for catechism and religious formation in the Church is indoctrination about the sacredness of the Priesthood and the infallibility of the Priests. Neither the Bishops nor the Priests are going to take any steps to change some of these age-old practices and customs because they are the system. They are not going to speak against the benefits, adulation, and reverence that they have been enjoying all these years. A few Sisters who dare to talk against the system are attacked, shouted down or targeted. And others do not have the courage to stand against the system or the hierarchy of the church.

The lay people though invited many times into the Church for being a part of the Church administration, in reality are not really allowed to contribute positively to change the system. They have been taught to obey without asking any questions. And anyone who questions the evident unwise decisions of the Parish Priests are isolated and victimized.

My own elder brother who was a member of the Parish Council, questioned the judiciousness of constructing a 5-crore new Parish Church, when according to him and many others, renovation and extension of the existing church would suffice to meet the requirement of additional space needed to accommodate the parishioners. The infuriated Parish Priest overruled his suggestion, ridiculed him and refused to ask the opinion of the majority of the members present. He had decided to start the construction of a mighty church, which was his pet project, in a rural area. There was a rumour that if the construction begins, he will not be transferred even though his term was over.

It did not stop there. When my brother went to the Parish Priest for acquiring the certificate for the marriage of his daughter, he refused to give the same for no apparent reason. Then my brother had to approach the Bishop and get a letter asking the Parish Priest to issue the same. Even after receiving the letter the arrogant Parish Priest refused to issue one and asked him to come the next day. This hurt my brother, who is a devout Catholic, an office bearer in the Parish Council and an active member of the Parish, so much so he refused to attend the Church services till the Parish Priest in question was transferred.

The priests due to their position as spiritual leaders, the type of vestments they wear and the prefix 'Father' feel they have power and are superior to others. We know that the one group Jesus detested, called white washed tombs and hypocrites are the priests of his time. Though Jesus was the Eternal High Priest, he was found with sinners, outcastes, those rejected by the society and mingled with the common man on the streets. 'Clergy-oriented norms, religion misused to collect money, unquestioned donations, sexual scandals, luxurious life-style, and laity victimization are some of the elements which have caused a split between the clergy and the laity'.

I must say that not all priests are like that. The majority of them are good, self-sacrificing and pastoral oriented. But I believe that timely correction and healthy criticism for growth and teamwork are not anti-clergy but against the clericalism in the church which Pope Francis has time and again deplored and spoken against.

To be continued.....



ST. PETER'S HR. SEC. SCHOOL, CHHINGCHHIP

Bro. Anand Kumar

Greetings from Chhingchip to all the readers of Montfortian Expression

It gives me enormous joy and happiness to share with you all, the activities here at Chhingchip

As the Covid -19 has paralyzed the whole planet St. Peter's Hr. Sec. School also has been bearing the global pain with closure of all the activities. School is under lockdown situation to this date and no clear hope when it will resume. The teachers are kept busy over time by taking classes online.

Adieu Dear Mr. Immanuel

August 3rd was a shocking and sad day for us. Our beloved former student Mr. Immanuel passed away. The staff and the students joined the funeral service and prayed for the repose of his soul and for the bereaved family.

Achievements



'Rhythm and Beats' an all India singing virtual competition was organised by Entab Software Pvt Limited for High School and Higher Secondary Students. From our School Maria Goretti class X bagged the first Prize.

St Peter's Higher Secondary School was selected for the best school award by the Deputy Commissioner of Serchhip District. We received a Cash Award and a Citation. The award was received on August 15th the Independence Day in the presence of dignitaries from the Dept. of Education, in DEO's office at Serchhip. This award has encouraged us to put an extra effort and to be more committed in the future.

Cleanliness Drive

“Cleanliness is next to Godliness” keeping this axiom in mind, we, the teachers along with non teaching staff and students, cleaned the school premises and planted many saplings.

Programme for Teachers:

Teachers are fortunate to attend DIKSH (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) course which is the National Platform for School Education for the benefit of teachers and learners across India. Our teachers are registered for this course.

One of our staff Sir Rabi attended a 2 - day online International workshop on ‘Issues in school psychology for secondary school teachers in Mizoram’. It was organized by InSPA (Indian School Psychology Association) in collaboration with Directorate of School Education, Government of Mizoram. He was awarded with a certificate.

Reach out Programme of the Community

Realizing the need of the hour, we, the Brothers of Chhingchhip Community, with the help of local authorities, we distributed relief packages which consists of Rice, Potatoes, Dal, Channa, Oil, Salt, Sugar, Soyabean and Biscuits packets to 20 families of the locality, especially from Mualpui, Venglai.

During this pandemic time we extended our helping hand and cared for the daily labours by giving them food packets and medical care.

The VLTF (Village Local Task Force) had set up a Community Covid Care Centre (CCCC) to take care of the Covid patients of the village. A medical team has been working selflessly and tirelessly at the centre. As food and medicines are being provided from the contributions taken from the villagers, we too have contributed Rs 10,000 for the same.



REALITY OR PESSIMISM - ?

Bro. P. J. Jose



The earth is large enough to hold the entire population of the world at any given time. It has enough resources to feed all and to provide all necessities to all its children. Yet, human insatiation prevents a good portion of the population to be deprived of the earth and its resources which is the inalienable right of all. The powerful and mighty of the world appropriate a good portion for themselves in connivance with the government of the day. The consequences is there for all to see: millions deprived of there shelter, use the sky as their roof, live on pavements, under bridges, in pipes, on road sides, in public parks, in rail stations, in bus stands, in shanties and slums etc. Often they have to beg for a meal and there are times they fight with stray dogs to get a share from the thrown away left over from hotels. They are destined to live in such conditions lifelong. Look at the irony of human life, who made it so? Circumstances, fate, nature or God? Fix it on any. Can we as humans claim to be endowed with reason and conscience, close our eyes to it? Why don't such instances move us?

The homeless who are not beggars are also treated like beggars. They are often at the receiving end of the law. During winter many of them die of cold especially when they fall sick. Nobody ever bothers about them because they don't have votes and are therefore not valuable to the political leaders. Of course, the police who consider that their job is to protect the interest of the rulers, treat them as dirt.

Mahatma Gandhi said: "According to me, the economic constitution of India and for that matter of the world, should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. In other words, everybody should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make two ends meet. And this idea can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessities of life remain in the control of the masses. They should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of people would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness today in India." (Kumar. Theory and practice of Gandhian non-violence – P.100)

Let us look at our life in comparison to the vast majority of our country men. Deprivation and the injustice are their lot.

- When we have our sumptuous meals, do thoughts of these unfortunate ones who struggle to collect the crumbs that fall from the rich man table cross our minds?
- When we live in our comfortable rooms under the fans, sleep on comfortable mattress, does the plight of those who live in the above-mentioned conditions, with the mosquito bites and filthy smelling surroundings, ever flash across our mind?
- When we have excess clothes and other items in our wardrobes, are we aware that there

are millions going naked/with rags – perhaps not washed for ages.....?

- When we go for the best treatment when sick do we think of the dying ones for want of cash for bare minimum visit to the health centre, walk for miles or being carried.....?
- When we travel by air, first class AC coaches or our own car etc – do we think of the poor who stand by and watch from far ?
- Having three plus meals a day in ordinary conditions may not be luxury, but for the above mentioned they are.

Awareness of the anomalies around us should help us analyze them. Why are only some children able to access quality education? Why are there so many child labourers in the country ? why do the poor become poorer and the rich richer etc etc etc....? What would Jesus do if He were around today? These question should challenge us, make us look at our own lives in comparison to the vast majority who are suffering.



BECOMING HUMAN



Bro. Johnson Lugun

To become a human is a life long process sometimes it can be a painful process. It involves a growth to freedom, an opening up our hearts to others, no longer hiding behind mask. It means discovering our common humanity. It includes connectedness, acceptance, openness, understanding, love and commitment. In our life journey all of us go through some kind of loneliness. It is a part of our life, it can appear as a faint disease, an inner dissatisfaction, restless in the heart, it can come any time. It comes in times of sickness, during times of failures at work, it come when we lose our trust in ourselves and in others.

One of the essential parts of our life is forgiveness. Each of us carry some way or the other some kind of hurt feeling of our past events which don't allow us to live fully. Forgiveness includes acceptance for us to love enemies as He showed from the cross.

To be fully human we need to let go of our hurt feelings, fears and anxieties. Forgive and accept one another. In times of loneliness use energy for creativity. All these will help us lead into the path of freedom. It is only through acknowledging that we too are vulnerable we can discover our shared humanity. Finding freedom from inner hurts is a process of forgiving who have hurt us. The inner power of the spirit can transform our hearts of stone, giving us courage to forgive and be forgiven.

Conclusion; here I quote the famous words of John Welwood “Becoming Human means discovering our fullness and learning to live from it.”



ST. GABRIEL'S HOUSE [NOVITIATE] SITAGARHA, HAZARIBAGH



Tespul
2nd year novice

Introduction

Fraternal and warm greetings from St. Gabriel's Novitiate, Sitagarha to all the readers! I wish you a happy reading. I am delighted to bring to your knowledge some of the significant events that took place in St. Gabriel's Novitiate, Sitagarha during the last three months.

Walking Picnic to Lara River

After a long time we had a walking picnic to Lara River which is 9 km far away from the Novitiate. We enjoyed our walk on the road and swim in the river. We also relished the sumptuous meal by sitting on the bank of the river. We enjoyed every moment which brought so much of physical and mental relief. We felt that the Corona virus has disappeared from our sight.



Plantation of Saplings

We are happy that we've planted nearly 100 saplings of various types of fruits and paddy in our campus. The planted saplings are mango, pomegranate, guava and lychee. They are growing very well since the God in whom we believe waters the plants every day for the past two months. Since some of the planted saplings were

stolen we take in turns to guard the plants at night. There is no theft thereafter.

We were able to transplant the paddy in the entire field within a day with the help of the seminarians of St. Mary's Minor Seminary. The day was unforgettable, because for most of us it was the first experience. After the transplantation, we played a friendly football match and had a swim in the well. We have weeded the entire paddy field twice so far and manured them as well.

We are adding beauty to our house by planting more flower saplings in the pots; currently we have 150 pots in our garden with many types of plants and flowers. Our joy has been doubled by the arrival of 2 calves. We are enjoying plenty of pure cow milk every day. We're trying to make our entire campus more eco-friendly and ever green.



Feast of St. John Marie Vianney

It was a great joy for us to celebrate the feast of St. John Mary Vianney, the patron of priests on 4th of August. We were invited to our neighbouring community where we united ourselves in the Eucharistic celebration with the fathers and the brothers of St. Mary's Minor Seminary. We cherished their hospitality and friendliness. On this memorable day we had a football match with them in which we became the champions by scoring 4 goals. After the game we relished the sumptuous samosas and jillebis of Jharkhand. A tribal dance with DJ Songs entertained us as well.

Monthly shopping experience

We're having monthly outing to the nearby towns to do our shopping. We're on seventh heaven to go out and to purchase the toilet articles which are necessary for our needs. It enables us to spend money sparingly as well as to maintain the account book responsibly. Through this outing we are able to share our joy and happiness with the people whomever we meet, it also gives us contentment and refreshment to our mind and body.

Birthday celebrations



Every month end, we, as a community joyously celebrate the birthdays of our loving novices of the month. On 16th June we celebrated the birthday of Br. Rahul in a grand manner



by inviting the brothers, fathers of the neighbouring communities and the families of all our domestic helpers. The birthday celebration started with a prayer service after which we had short cultural programmes which consisted of dance, skit, songs, mime and cake cutting ceremony. followed by a good and an opulent meal. Every big celebration, after the meal, ends with a tribal dance of the local state lasting for 15 to 20 minutes which never fails to entertain us.

Human chain rally in Hazaribagh for the cause of social justice

On 28th July 2021, all of us novices and Brothers participated actively in a human chain rally organized by the Jesuit Priests for the cause of social justice and fighting against corruption. A large number of religious men and women belonging to different congregations and lay people participated in it. We started our human chain rally around 3 pm, though there was rain but we didn't give up our fight against social injustice and corruption. We also gave open interviews to news reporters and media personnel regarding injustice and corruption, very particularly, the ones meted out to late Fr. Stan Swamy.

Regular classes

We're engaged these days with so many intellectual activities and classes on different subjects

as found below:

1. Br. Rahul completed the classes on Prophetic spirituality and on the documents of Vatican council II
2. Director of Novices handles classes on the Rule of Life and constitutions
3. Fr. Immanuel OCD has just completed the class on the Wisdom Books
4. Fr. Varghese OCD takes classes on the spirituality of the Sacraments
5. Every night a novice gives a good night talk before the night prayer.
6. We all of us practice yoga every day except Sunday from 5.45am to 6.15am.
7. Novices gradually become computer literates learning to work in MS Word and PPT.



4th book review

“Opening the book means, opening the window for wisdom to enter in.”

The 4th book review presentation was wonderfully done. All of us toiled harder and smarter to present it creatively. Obviously, all of my companions have shown considerable amount of developments more particularly in the areas of language, confidence, creative presentation, teaching style, time management, PPT, etc. All of us have learnt to prepare PPT and present the book review in PPT format only.

Now we are getting ready for the 5th book review presentation which will be presented soon or later during the third week of September, 2021.

Monthly Recollection

On every first Saturday of the month we have the monthly recollection. On that day, we have a talk by the preacher, a silent prayer, the sacrament of reconciliation followed by the Holy Mass. We are spiritually nourished by the inspirational talks on different themes by the preachers. We are stimulated with new strength, energy and enthusiasm that come just after a good confession to begin afresh our life and all the activities of the month. External and internal silence and solitude are consciously followed by all the Novices especially during the monthly recollection which is the success of this program.

Independence Day

On 15th August we celebrated the 75th Independence Day with the holy Eucharistic Celebration, followed by hoisting of National Flag by Fr. Kishore, a Jesuit priest who delivered a small speech as well. We had short patriotic talents show, a marchpast and a powerful speech by one of the novices, Praveen. These events enhanced our patriotic spirit, our contribution to our mother land and to care for one another as Indians.

First doze of jab Covishield was given to all the novices and



staff on 24th August, 2021 in SSC, the Jesuit place. There were some minor health issues just after the vaccination but now all of us are doing very well.

Tertians come in turn to celebrate the Holy Mass in our Novitiate. They inspire us a lot with their updated and well prepared homilies.

We recently purchased 70 Nil Kamal plastic chairs, 25 chapel cushions for our daily use and 20 sleep well mattresses for the novices.

Conclusion

Currently, we the 17 novices from 7 different provinces are having our regular normal program of the novitiate. As we are getting ready to celebrate the feast of the nativity of our Blessed Mother, we wish you a happy feast of the Birthday of our Blessed Mother to you all. We thank you sincerely for taking trouble and time to read the snippets from St. Gabriel's Novitiate. Stay amply Blessed!



ECO-FRIENDLY TOILETS- THE FIRST OF ITS KIND AT GOVT. SCHOOLS IN MEGHALAYA



Montfort Brothers of St. Gabriel, have once again emerged as trend setters in North East in the field of 'Inclusive Education'. Twenty years of undying efforts in support of 'Inclusive Education' and building infrastructure facilities for the same, the Brothers in collaboration with CBM, have provided accessible Bio - Toilet facilities for a Lower Primary Government School at upper Dopgre in Meghalaya. We hope that this venture that is implemented by Montfort Centre for Education, Tura, will inspire the government of Meghalaya to install similar type of 'Eco-friendly toilets' in other schools as well.

This project is the first of its kind in Meghalaya and in the West Garo Hills. During the inauguration, the Chief Guest, Shri Ram Singh, the Deputy Commissioner of Tura, profusely thanked the Montfort Brothers and CBM for providing such a facility to this village school and commended the efforts taken by them that will make a difference in the lives of the students of the school and encourage Inclusive Education in the state.



MONTFORT SCHOOL, GUWAHATI

With the educational institutions undergoing lockdown due to the pandemic, the scholastic and the co-scholastic activities are considerably being affected to a great extent. Nevertheless, the Montfort School, Guwahati has been consistently striving towards providing the students a learning platform trying out every possible virtual means.

Academics

Online classes, exams and virtual co- curricular activities and competitions using various apps, have kept the students connected to the school and the teachers.

On the 30th of July, 2021 the Class 12 students got through the Board Exams with flying colours securing a pass percentage of 100%. On the 3rd of August, 2021 the CBSE results of class 10 was declared and the students of Montfort School, Guwahati once again excelled with a pass percentage of 100 %.

Co - Curricular Activities

On the 15th of August, the results of online inter- school solo (self-composed) singing competition which was organized by SFS, Narengi, Guwahati, was declared. Special students (VI) of Montfort School, Guwahati bagged the 1st and the 3rd prizes. All India Association of Montfort Schools organized the All India Montfort School Drawing, Essay and Poem writing competition for school. Several students of Montfort School Guwahati participated in them.

Distribution of Relief Materials - Covid – 19 Response

.On the 15th of July, 2021 an awareness campaign was organized on the Covid pandemic by the Montfort School, Guwahati, delivered by Mr. Uddipan Kalita. On the 17th of July grocery kits were distributed of to 35 families from the CBR area, Rampur Block in collaboration with PRATeYK, Nine is MINE.

The Montfort School, Guwahati, in collaboration with CBM also provided 180 library books, 1 library rack, 4 room sanitizers, hand sanitizers, 2 sanitizer machines, masks, 4 digital thermos meters, 2 fingertip oximereters, 1 projector, 1 projector screen, Lenovo tablets M7, 2 Amazon inverter batteries, UPS and 5 stopwatches to our students to utilize.

Our Provincial Rev. Bro. Vargese Mandapathil, our Principal, Brother Maria Soosai and Project MYP 4035 key teacher, Mr. Uddipan Kalita distributed hygiene kits to several families having kids and senior citizens, in 10th Mile, 11th Mile, Hastinapur and Adarshnagar.

Montfort School, Guwahati has made every possible effort to make learning accessible to all by distributing 50 tablets to the students with and without disabilities who face several problems to attend online classes due to non-availability of smartphones.

Faculty Enhancement

The teachers of Montfort School, Guwahati regularly updated themselves with the help of the various virtual training sessions and webinars organized by the CBSE, the CBM etc.

On the 20th of July 2021, “Ambassador Training Program” which was organized by the Ministry of Education, Government of India started. 50000 teachers from all over India participated in it, including 5 teachers from Montfort School, Guwahati.

Virtual Teachers Day Celebration

On the 5th of September, the students of Montfort School, Guwahati were all geared up for a virtual Teacher’s Day celebration to show their love and gratitude for their teachers. The First Term ended with the online Half Yearly examination, commencing from 25th of September to the 9th of October, 2020.



ST. JOHN’S HR. SEC. SCHOOL, KOLASIB

Bro. Saiju P Michael

Greetings from Kolasib

I am happy to share with you the notable events that occurred in Kolasib for the past couple of months. The Covid situation and its effects were so very minimum in the first phase in Mizoram, that even one or two cases in the state created sensational news last year. The situation has completely changed now as we have hundreds of cases in Mizoram even after very strict SOPs were imposed. Unfortunately three of the members of our domestic staff was found Covid positive. It was indeed a blessing that they eventually came out of it without much harm.

With the spread of Covid in the state, the commencement of offline regular classes in the near future is a question mark. We have our staff attending the school three days in a week as per the Govt. directions. We are happy to share that, the staff were introduced in to the basics of ‘Inclusive Education’ ‘Sign language’ and Assessment for all’ through a virtual training programme conducted by IBSG Society. Along with the number of Visually Impaired Students we have a Hearing Impaired girl too with us in the school this year. We are also delighted to share that we have the highest enrolment in the school with the total number reaching up to 1180 this year.

With the arrival of the rainy season the campus has become greener. We also have planted many trees all over the campus. We are trying biofloc method of fish farming now, hoping to have sufficient fish for our use from January 2022. The fishery department which is helping us in this project are very happy to see the biofloc in Mizoram for the first time. We did harvest a lot of vegetables and dragon fruits from our garden for our consumption this summer. Encouraged with



the developments in the gardening front, we are now busy preparing a place for the winter crop. Due to the SOPs imposed we don’t have many visitors and we ourselves don’t go out much.



MONTFORTIAN SPIRITUALITY IN A QUANTUM WORLD.

*Bro. Mathew K.M, A Psycho-Biblico counselor.
Province of Delhi*



The purpose of Montfortian spirituality is union with God considered under the aspect of “Jesus Christ living in us.” Evidently, such a purpose is common to all schools of spirituality. Montfort, however, brings forth a particular aspect: “To make Jesus live in us through that total and absolute dependence that is called Holy Slavery.” The essence of Montfortian spirituality is about relationship of God to human, human to human, human to nature, human to cosmic reality. Which is very gracefully and forcefully summarized in GOD ALONE.

Quantum physics is a field of study which describes the properties of matter and energy at an atomic and sub-atomic level.

What is quantum Physics?

A quantum is the minimum unit of any physical entity involved in an interaction. Quantum physics or quantum mechanics provides a mathematical description of the wave/ particle duality and interactions of energy and matter. Basically they are physics laws that govern all things that are matter.

One of the most interesting attributes of quantum physics is that it proves atoms are influenced by each other without being in direct or physical contact with the other. There is an energy that is not seen, yet can be physically detected by the behaviour of another atom. What this means is that our thoughts are energy and can alter the behaviour of our cells and actually override their predisposition of behaviour.

Like Einstein’s theory of relativity, quantum physics reveals the universe to be a single field of energy in which matter is just a “slowed down” form of energy. Further, Quantum physics has discovered that matter/ energy does not exist with any certainty in definite places, but rather shows “tendencies “to exist (i.e. The “Uncertainty Principle”) Even more intriguing is the notion that the existence of an observer is fundamental to the existence of the universe- a concept known as “the observer Effect”-implying that the universe is a product of consciousness. (I.e. the mind of God.

Quantum theology and Montfortian Spirituality takes seriously the PARTNERSHIP OF GOD AND THE HUMAN BEING. God truly uses us to do good to the world. Remember that crucifix in our parlor which has no arms. We are God’s arms with which God embraces the world. It is through us that people experience God’s loving kindness and compassion. Like St. Montfort Carrying the beggar and saying “ open the door to Jesus Christ”

Proven Quantum Principles-as featured in the Bible.

	Quantum Principles	Quantum Examples	A Possible Biblical Parallel	Biblical Examples
1	Wave Particle Duality-Matter exists as both a wave and as a particle	Double slit Experiment Video	Spirit underlines Physical God spoke , the world came into being	Heb 11:3 Gen 1:2,3 Neh .9:6
2	Uncertainty Principle-Simultaneous measurement of position and momentum is possible	Heisenberg's uncertainty principle video	According to your Faith According to your faith(momentum), be it unto you(your position/ blessings)	Mt.9:29
3	Superposition- A particle is present in all of its possible states simultaneously, but when measured or observed, it collapses to only one of its possible configurations.	Quantum Mechanical Superposition video	Alive in two dimensions We are seated in heavenly places, while living in the physical world	Eph. 1:20 Jn3:5 Col.1:15-17
4	Quantum Entanglement-particles become connected and are no longer independent of each other regardless of their distance.	Quantum Entanglement video	Spiritually Joined Our spirits are joined to God's spirit and we are corporately Christ body	1 cor,6:17 &12:12
5	Quantum Tunneling-can appear on the opposite side of impregnable wall by dematerializing and rematerializing, even faster than it could travel that distance.	Quantum Mechanical tunnelling video	Working of miracles The spiritual world breaking in upon us	Jn.20.26 1cor.12:10 Mt.14:24-27
6	The observer effect-by the very act of watching, the observer affects the observed reality. Seeing collapses all possibilities into one reality and creates it.	The observer Effect Video	Spiritual transformation seeing into the spiritual world crystalizes it, which helps to release it into our lives	Dan.7 & 8 2 kings 6:17;2 Cor.3.18; Rom.1 Col.2

The Quantum physics/ Mechanics and Montfortian spirituality.

Quantum mechanics (QM), the most challenging and mentally engaging form of the sciences, has given rise to whole new understanding of reality. Focused on the subatomic world of energy, electronic particles, and light, quantum physics is forcing the scientists and knowledgeable persons alike, to see the world anew and radically anew. But it is also giving rise to a whole new understanding of faith, as much of the subatomic world is non- observable and based only on effects.

Classical Newtonian physics with its mechanical orientation regarded light as either particles or later waves, but not both. Under QM light is both particles and a wave, an apparent impossibility, yet true and measurable, depending on the conditions of the observation, though not always explainable especially as regards its philosophical implications.

Several physicists and scientists have written about the ramifications of quantum cosmology, and the implications of the new physics (the converging of QM with the general theory of relativity) for the spiritual dimension. There are several physicists and scientists like Davies 1983, Tipler 1994, Lazich 1989, Pearcey and Taxon 1994, Wright 1993; who derived insights from this exciting field of study that will broaden our understanding of spirituality.

All reality is interrelated

Diarmuid O'Murchu (1998) declares: At the heart of the quantum vision is the conviction that all life forces are interdependent and interrelated. In fact, we experience life, not in isolated entities, not in separate units, but in bundles of experiences (quanta). German physicist Werner Heisenberg first voiced the idea that our world is essentially an interconnected web of relationships. This is a most important principle for interhuman relationship in a socially alienated and spiritually fragmented world. QM, by focusing on the small-size world, enables us to understand the essential elements and components that comprise life primary levels of existence. And from these basic levels on up, the basic *modus operandi* of the universe interconnectedness and interrelatedness emerges which governs our life in our universe. Life is the result of nondual relationships, interlinked, interconnected, and interdependent.

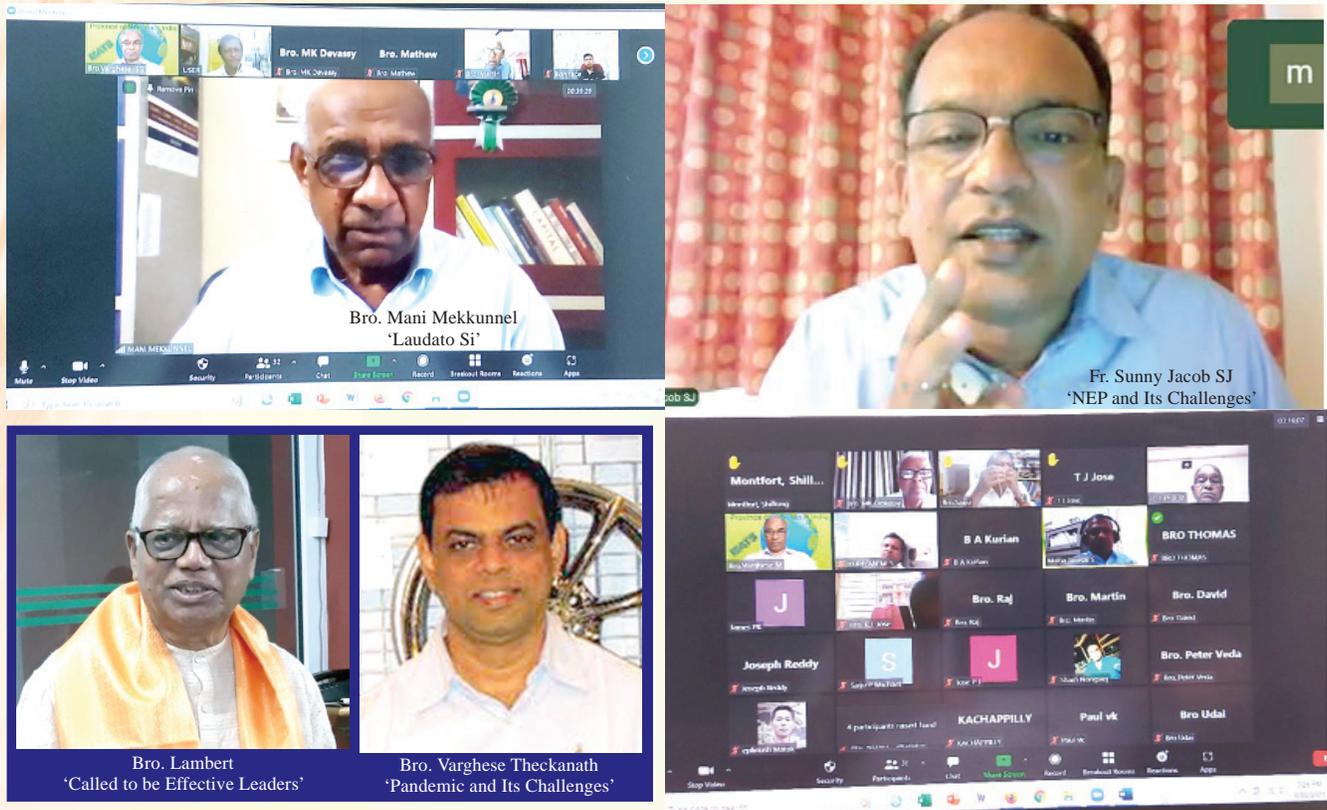
Max Planck, the father of QM who coined the term Quanta for the discrete bundles of energy that comprise light, made an insightful statement at the heart of this principle of interrelatedness. Science cannot solve the ultimate mystery of universe. And it is because, in the last analysis, we ourselves are part of the mystery we are trying to solve. Danah Zohar (1990) makes clear that the particle world is essentially particles in relationships. All this is important for spirituality, for ultimately spirituality is about relationship of God to human, human to human, human to nature, human to cosmic reality. The pivotal shift in spirituality's meaning for the twentieth century resides in the birth of a world view of interdependence or relationality. In its broadest sense, spirituality is the relational component of the lived experience. Even the traditional Christian Doctrine of the Trinity models this principle of interrelatedness. For too long a mechanistic paradigm has dominated an understanding of this doctrine, where people end up trying, as in jigsaw puzzle, to fit 3 into 1. But from a holistic QM framework, this doesn't make much sense. It is suggested that the doctrine of the trinity is an attempted expression of the fact that the essential nature of God is about relatedness and the capacity to relate, that the propensity and power to relate is, in fact, the very essence of God... God becomes meaningful in the very process of relating.

Danah Zohar (1990) makes clear that the particle world is essentially particles in relationships. All this is important for spirituality, for ultimately Montfortian spirituality is about relationship of God to human, human to human, human to nature, human to cosmic reality. The pivotal shift in Montfortian spirituality's meaning for the twentieth century resides in the birth of a world view of interdependence or relationality.



To be continued

THE LOCAL SUPERIORS & THE HEADS OF INSTITUTIONS VIRTUAL MEET-2021



The annual meeting of the Local Superiors and Heads of Institutions held virtually through Zoom on 29th and 30th August 2021 was a great success. The sharing on the main challenges faced by the communities and the Institutions during the Covid lock down brought about a family feeling among the Brothers. The input session by Bro. Bro. Lambert on the topic ‘Called to be effective Leaders’ was much appreciated by everyone. Bro. Mani Mekkunnel inspired the Brothers to take good care of themselves and to care for the mother earth and the environment. Bro. Varghese Thekkanath challenged the Brothers to use the Pandemic as an opportunity to care for the **less privileged and suffering brothers and sisters around us**. The interactive session with Fr. Sunny Jacob SJ on National Education Policy 2020 and its demands and challenges on the Montfort Brothers in the Northeast was a great eye opener for all.

The Local Superiors and Heads of Institutions spent substantial amount of time to discuss on the general concerns raised by some of the Local superiors and Principals. The sharing and discussion brought better clarity on a number of issues in the Province and brought better understanding among the Brothers. Snippets of the two days meeting is sent as a separate file along with this circular.



97th NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING '21 YERCAUD

