

# GUWAHATI

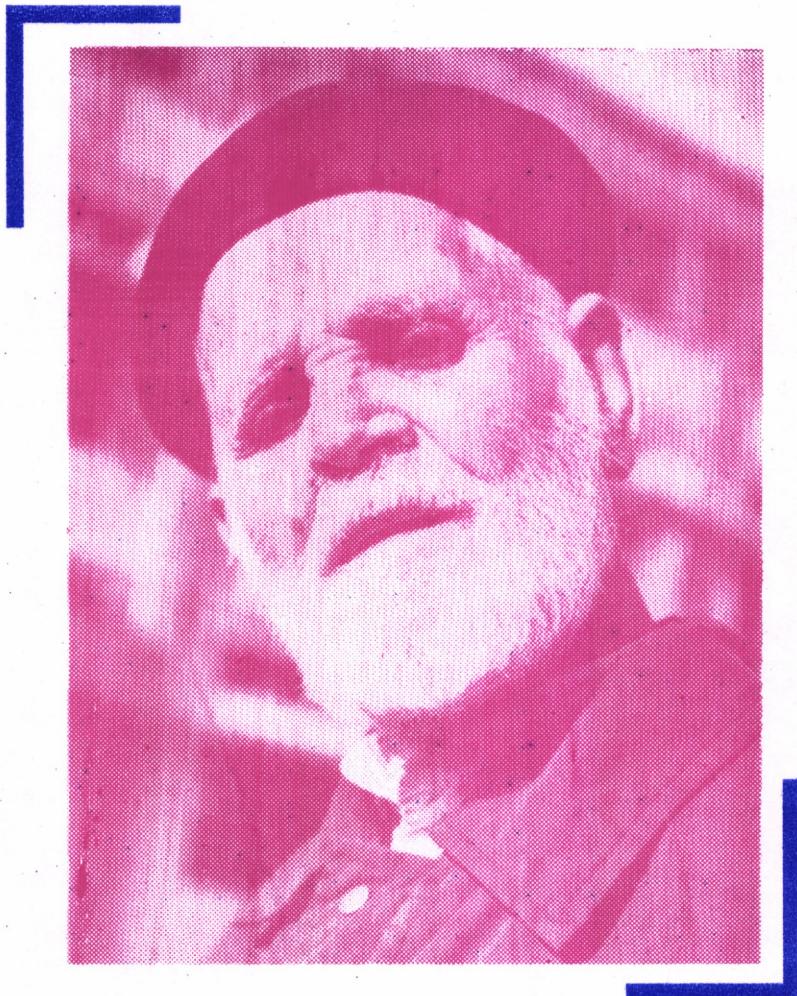
NEWSLETTER

"Do great things for us, O Lord, for you are mighty, and Holy is your name."

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, BOX NO. 100, GUWAHATI - 781 001, ASSAM, INDIA

August 16, 1998 No.21

Dedicated  
to



25B002

**† RT. REV. ORESTES MARENGO SDB. DD.**

July 30, 1998

"A Loving Father, A Zealous Apostle,  
A Wise Pastor And An Intrepid Pioneer."

ГЛАВА ДЕСЯТАЯ

Сколько же я вспоминаю о тебе, о любви, о тебе, о любви!

Сколько же

ты

вспоминаешь

Сколько же

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Сколько же я вспоминаю о тебе, о любви, о тебе, о любви!

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## BISHOP ORESTES MARENGO

### A LEGEND IN MISSION HISTORY

We mourn the death of our revered Bishop Orestes Marengo, the retired Bishop of Tura who was also the founder of the Dioceses of Dibrugarh and Tezpur. He was 92 at his death. He was a zealous missionary, an active and caring pastor and a saintly bishop.

His funeral was held at the Cathedral Church, Tura on August 1, Saturday at 1.00 P.M. Seven Bishops of North-East, and over 100 priests concelebrated the Requiem Mass for this valiant pioneer missionary who spent more than 75 years in this region. He had mastered many regional languages. He was a missionary whose heart was open to people belonging to various tribes and races. He had a special love for the poor and he helped them very generously.

Bishop Marengo was born in Diano d'Alba, Italy in 1906. He came to India in 1923 as a member of the second batch of Salesians to the North-East.

Given below is the text of the homily by Archbishop Menampampil during the Mass for the repose of the soul of late Mgr. Orestes Marengo on July 30, 1998, 6.30 p.m. at St. Joseph's Cathedral Church, Guwahati.

My dear friends,

We are gathered here this evening to pray for our beloved Bishop Orestes Marengo who departed from us this afternoon at 2.00 P.M. At the departure this man of exceptional stature, the Church in North-East India suffers a great loss, and so many of us closely associated with him in a variety of ways will miss him.

It is not easy to describe Mgr. Marengo. He was many-sided in his gifts and rich in his accomplishments. We could speak of him as a loving father, a zealous apostle, a wise pastor, an intrepid pioneer. Very few in Church History have had the privilege of founding three dioceses. He founded the dioceses of Dibrugarh, Tezpur, and Tura, the clergy and faithful of each considering him as their very own. Nagaland and Manipur that were separated from Dibrugarh in later years also would lay a claim to him. He knew Khasi and had endeared himself to the Khasi people. Having worked many years in the plains of Assam as priest and bishop, there is hardly any village that he had not visited where there was at least one Christian family, Adivasi, Bodo or Karbi. He spent his final years in Tura and was deeply attached to the Garo people.

During the first years of his priestly life, he was in the field of formation. As a Rector and Novice Master, he left a stamp on persons who were to render great services to the Church in later times. As Bishop of Dibrugarh, he showed his pioneering skills, penetrating new areas, visiting villages in the interior hills and the plains.

Mgr. Marengo exuded love and religious fervour wherever he went. His faith was communicative, his prayer-life most edifying. Affectionate to everyone, he drew children to crowd around him. He was a wise guide to religious and lay people alike. He was always attentive to those who were sick and suffering. For all these many qualities, Bishop Marengo was always humble. He sought unglamorous roles and gave importance to low-profile services. Ever laborious, what burdened him most during his later years was the fact that he could not do as much as he could do earlier.

As the leader of an apostolic team, he was always most encouraging. He truly rejoiced in the success of others. He could never be jealous of someone else. Even in his retirement, it was his joy to receive good news of apostolic successes in different places where he worked and listen to the achievements of others. He would ask eager questions and rejoice at every step that the missionary team was taking in any field of activity. Even when he was weak and enfeebled, he wanted to feel that vibration of missionary enthusiasm all around him. He was eager to visit places, meet people, and listen to reports.

Skillful in languages, he is reported to have mastered more than 15 languages of the region. He could communicate with people of our region in their own tongues. He easily came on the wavelength of people, shared pains with others, speedily manifested sympathy with the suffering and adapted himself to very situation. Detached from things, his poverty was most exemplary. He needed few things for himself. He had made India his home, and the people he served, his own.

A valiant missionary has gone to his reward. Mgr. Marengo lived with God, and unto His he has returned. We shall not easily have one like him among us. We have a new patron in heaven. May he win for our region peace. May he obtain for our communities growth and every blessing. And may we who remain behind, take a pledge to walk in his footsteps.

- Archbishop Thomas Menamparappil

*"Death is but the dropping of the flower that the fruit may swell."*

-H.W.Beecher

## ARCHBISHOP MENAMPARAMPIL

### Reappointed As Consultor

His Holiness Pope John Paul II has re-appointed our Archbishop Thomas Menampampil as a consultor to the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. This appointment is for a term of five years. We congratulate Archbishop Thomas and wish him success. "Well aware of your competence, especially in the field of evangelization, I feel sure that your Excellency will be able to offer invaluable collaboration to this Dicastery on behalf of the missionary cause." wrote His Eminence, Josef Cardinal Tomko to Archbishop Menampampil.

### Nominated For Humanitarian Award

Archbishop Thomas Menampampil has been nominated for 'Life Time Achievement Humanitarian Award' by the Fr. Aurelius Maschio Foundation, Mumbai for his efforts for peace and reconciliation as well as for his humanitarian services in Kokrajhar in the wake of the ethnic clashes. The Award will be presented on September 9, 1998 on the occasion of the second death Anniversary of Rev. Fr. Aurelius Maschio.

## PARISH OF BORJHAR OPENED

The 34th Parish of the Archdiocese of Guwahati was formally opened on August 2, 1998 at Borjhar, Guwahati by His Grace, Most Rev. Thomas Menampampil during Eucharistic concelebration at 11.00 A.M. Prominent among those present were Fr. Joseph Mapilaprampil, the Regional Delegate of the Claretians in North-East India, Fr. Luke Maniangatt, Parish Priest of Sonaighuli Parish, Fr. Albano D'Mello, the Parish Priest of the Cathedral Parish, Guwahati. Many from the Parish Community were also present on the occasion. During the homily the Archbishop emphasized the need for deepening Christian faith.

This new Parish is entrusted to the Claretian Congregation. It is carved out of the Parish of Sonaighuli and extends to Jalukbari on the East, to the border of Boko Parish on the West, the Brahmaputra river on the North and the boundary of Meghalaya State on the South. Fr. Paulose Joseph is the Parish Priest and Fr. Christopher Kerketta the Assistant Parish Priest.

English, Hindi, Assamese and Garo languages were used during the liturgy to make it understandable to the faithful drawn from these language groups.

The Claretians are already running an English Medium School at Borjhar. The plot of land was acquired in the area through the pioneering efforts of Fr. Abraham Valiakandam. The Parish Centre is located on the National Highway at a distance of hardly a Kilometre from the Borjhar Airport.

The parishioners are mostly Garos, Adivasis (working in the Tea Gardens of Rani and Borduar), and a few Rabhas besides the Catholics employed in the Airport, the Airforce Colony, and the Guwahati University. There are two convents in the Parish, the Clarist Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Most Blessed Sacrament (running a school for girls and a hostel) and the Missionaries of Charity (looking after AIDS patients and other destitute).

## **DEACONS ORDAINED**

Archbishop Thomas Menampampil ordained 23 deacons at Oriens Theological College, Shillong on August 2, 1998. Of these five are for our Archdiocese. They are Kochukulathinkal Johny, Lakra Binen, Macarenhas Rohan, Sangma Crosper and Selvaraj Ignatius. We congratulate the newly ordained deacons and accompany them prayerfully along their onward journey to priesthood.

## **FOUR HOSTELS BLESSED**

From August 7 to 10, Archbishop Thomas Menampampil blessed all the four newly constructed hostels at Bashbari, Gurubasha, Bongaigaon and Ballamguri. The funds for three of these hostels were given by Manos Unidas. Rev. Fr. Mathew Kottaram the Vicar General of the Archdiocese was the Project Manager. He saw to the speedy construction of the hostels with the cooperation of the Parish Priests. These hostels will make our educational efforts more fruitful. Community assets like hostels in the rural areas are of immense value for the building up of a new social order.

## **SILVER JUBILEE**

### **• *Charity Sisters***

The Silver Jubilee of the religious profession of Sr. Mary Alapathukunnel, Sr. Mary Angadiyath, Sr. Philomena Parapuram and Sr. Anna Vellavallyil was solemnized at the Provincialate of the Sisters of Charity on Thursday, August 6, 1998. Archbishop Thomas Menampampil presided over the Jubilee Eucharist at 11.00 A.M. The Eucharist was followed by Felicitations to the Jubilarians and a Family Meal.

- ***Brother Thomas Plathottam***

The Silver Jubilee of the Religious Profession of Bro. Thomas Plathottam, the Provincial of the Montfort Brothers, North Eastern Province, was solemnized at Montfort School, Amerigog, Guwahati with a Holy Mass presided over by Archbishop Thomas Menampampil. It was followed by the Jubilee felicitations and lunch. Many priests and religious from Guwahati and Montfort Brothers from all over North-East India participated in the celebration.

- ***MSMHCs***

Silver Jubilee celebration of the religious Profession of 12 MSMHC Sisters was centrally solemnized at Little Flower Convent, Guwahati on May 24, 1998. Rev. Fr. Matthew Kottaram, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Guwahati presided over the Jubilee Eucharist concelebrated by eight priests. The Holy Mass was followed by festive lunch and a felicitation programme in honour of the Jubilarians.

- ***Sr. Rosa Thodukayil DSP***

The Silver Jubilee of the religious profession of Sr. Rosa Thodukayil DSP was celebrated in anticipation on July 26 at the residence of the Daughters of St. Paul in Guwahati. Archbishop Thomas presided over the Jubilee Mass. Several friends and well-wishers took part in the Jubilee Mass and the Dinner that followed. The Jubilee date falls in the month of December 1998.

## CHURCH BLESSING & CONVENTION AT DOTMA

The Church of the Risen Lord at Dotma was blessed by Archbishop Thomas Menampampil on April 14, 1998 at 9.00 a.m. in the presence of Archbishop Tarcisius Resto of Shillong and Bishop Robert Kerketta of Tezpur, and Rt. Rev. Nityananda Borgoary the Lutheran Bishop of Bongaigaon.

The Catholic community of Dotma Parish prepared themselves for the event with a three day convention. Fr. Joseph Palamthattel, Fr. Sebastian Ishorary and Fr. John Vaikath animated the convention on the theme CHRIST THE LIGHT. Delegates from the neighbouring parishes also participated in the convention.

Archbishop Resto presided over the Eucharistic celebration during which 43 children received First Communion. The Mass was followed a candle-lit procession through Dotma Bazaar.

The church blessing was the highlight of the convention. This magnificent new church was constructed by Fr. Edward D'Souza. He was assisted in this task by Fr. Thelekkatt who was the inspiration behind the design prepared by Designers Plenum, by Fr. Thomas Lakra the Assistant Parish Priest, and by Fr. George Mudakampuram touch of whose artistic skills are evidently seen.

Archbishop Thomas urged the Christian community to make the occasion an opportunity for deepening their faith. "This celebration", said Fr. Edward, " is a true manifestation of the unity, love and fellow-feeling among the people belonging to different ethnic communities professing faith in Jesus Christ.

## **BODO LANGUAGE COURSE**

A Bodo Language course was organized at Gossaigaon by Rev. Fr. Mathew Kottaram from June 8 to 21, 1998. There were 8 participants including fathers, brothers and sisters. Fr. Sebastian Ishoray was the teacher. It was a good introduction to the Bodo language for those interested in learning it. First of its kind, this course was a great success. Such courses will give opportunities for learning the local language faster.

## **ASSAMESE COURSE HELD**

The one-month long Assamese course held at Guwahati from July 1 to 31, 1998 was inaugurated by Archbishop Thomas Menampampil. He spoke encouraging the participant to make use of the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of the Assamese language to make our service more effective and relevant in the Brahmaputra Valley.

The course which is organized every year from July 1st to 31st drew 37 participants (Fathers, Brothers and Sisters) from all over Assam. Rev. Sr. Dorothy the Provincial of the Charity Sisters presided over the concluding function which was organized and conducted by the students themselves in Assamese with songs, dances and skits.

The participants visited the birth-place of Srimanta Sankardeva at Bordowa, Nagaon on July 29 and witnessed the Nama Prasanga. Fr. Lukose was the coordinator of the course. He was assisted by competent teachers and assistant teachers.

## **NEWS IN BRIEF**

### **Archbishop Returns After The Synod**

Archbishop Thomas Menampampil who was the Special Secretary at the Asian Synod returned to the Archdiocese on June 29. Soon after the Synod he visited some countries like Germany and France. He spent a few days at Taize with Bro. Roger.

The clergy and religious of Guwahati welcomed back the Archbishop by gathering at Kharghuli for a Dinner. The Archbishop spoke briefly about the Synod.

The contribution of Archbishop Thomas to the success of the Asian Synod has been widely acknowledged. He had to keep a very heavy schedule during the Synod.

### **Fr. Varghese returns**

Fr. Varghese Kizhakevely had been at Rome helping Archbishop Thomas Menampampil at the Asian Synod. After that he toured Europe, America and Canada contacting benefactors. He is now back in the Archdiocese. He returned on August 6, 1998. We gratefully welcome him back.

### **Table Tennis & Basketball Tournaments**

As a part of the ongoing Golden Jubilee celebrations of Don Bosco School, Guwahati, Table Tennis and Basketball Championships were organized on North-East level from July 1 to 5, 1998. The Chief Guest on the inaugural day was Dr. Zoi Nath Sarma, Hon'ble Revenue Minister of Assam, whereas Shri Ganesh Kutum, the Hon'ble Speaker of the Assam Legislative Assembly was the Chief Guest on the 2nd day. Mr. Digen Bora, Hon'ble Minister, Food & Civil Supplies presided over the concluding function and gave away the prizes.

### **Fr. Joseph Olickal in the States**

Fr. Joseph Olickal has left for the United States to study Social Work. We wish him success in his studies. His address in America is:

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1400 INGLEWOOD + ROCHESTER  
MICHIGAN 48307**

**PHONE (248) 651-7486/7490  
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### **KUKI -PAITE DIALOGUE AT GUWAHATI**

After several months of conflict in the Churachandpur area, representatives of the Kukis and Paites had met at Social Forum, Guwahati, in December of 1997 at the initiative of Archbishop Thomas Menampampil to search for a possible solution of the problems between the two communities. During a 4-day reflection on the Biblical message of peace and a study of the actual situation in South Manipur, they had drawn up certain proposals for the consideration of both communities. Archbishop had visited Churachandpur along with the other members of the Core-Team based at Guwahati to exhort the two groups to accept the proposals. No immediate fruit was noticeable.

However in March 1998 the two groups in conflict came together under the guidance of the civil authorities and agreed on a cessation of hostilities. The Guwahati document was taken as the basic text for later agreements.

On August 4-6, 1998 representatives of the Kukis and the Zomis met at Hotel Nova, Guwahati, under the guidance of the Christian Council of Asia and National Christian Council of India, and the Core-Team, to explore ways of making the temporary peace agreement (valid upto September end) permanent. Great hopes have been generated in the communities of a peace that will abide. Peace programmes have been conducted and will again be organized for youth, pastors, women and other groups.

Churachandpur may set an example of Ecumenical peace-negotiations as Kokrajhar did two years ago.

## **BIBLE FESTIVAL**

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, North Province India, celebrated the Year of the Holy Spirit in preparation for the Great Jubilee Year 2000 with a Bible Festival on May 30, 1998 at Don Bosco School, Sashipur, Darranga Mela. Members of various Christian Churches like Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, Pentecostals and members of the Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist communities participated in the two and a half hour programme.

Placards with Biblical quotations were prepared in various local languages and displayed. Bibles in different languages were also displayed.

The Bible was taken in procession to the stage and placed on a decorated stand by Fr. Elias the Parish Priest. A garland was then placed on it. The arati followed. Then there was the Bible reading (Mt. 5:1-12). Bhajans and Bhajan dances followed. Devotional songs were sung in Bodo and Santhali. The parables of the *Good Samaritan* and the *Prodigal Son* were acted out in Hindi and English respectively.

The Bible Festival was organized with the cooperation of one and all at Don Bosco, Sashipur.

## **SENATE MEETING**

During the Senate Meeting held on 30.06.98 at Kharghuli, Guwahati, while speaking about the proposed division of the Archdiocese, the Archbishop said that personnel will become members of the Diocese in which they are at the time of the division. St. Aloysius Seminary will be common for both the Dioceses for some time. So also St. Paul's Centre, Rangia will be at the service of both Dioceses.

The new rates of allowances for priests, sisters and catechists which come into effect from July 98 were also announced.

The Archbishop welcomed Fr. Thomas Pulloppilly who has joined the staff of the Archbishop's House as Administrator and CRS Director. He gratefully acknowledged the services of Fr. T.O. Jose (Parish Priest of Bengtol) and Fr. Mathew Vandalakunnel (of St. Aloysius Seminary) who are going outside the Archdiocese for their new assignments. Fr. Elias Kerketta, who was a member of the Archdiocesan Senate and also an Archdiocesan Consultor has also taken up an assignment outside the Archdiocese. His services were gratefully acknowledged.

## CATHOLIC CONVENTION AT SONAPUR

The first Catholic Convention of the Sonapur Parish was held at Rongphar, Sonapur from April 2 to 5, 1998. The Convention was preceded by a novena. The programme included enlightening talks on the sacraments and other topics related to Catholic faith. About 400 people including those from the neighbouring parishes participated in the Convention. Fr. Prakash of Nagaon presided over the inaugural function. A special Biblical Magic Show by Rev. Bro. Joy C.S.T, the Regional Superior of the CST Brothers was one of the highlights of the convention.

On the last day there was a Variety Entertainment Programme during which the Archbishop gave away the prizes for various competitions such as Bible Quiz, Catechism Competition, Group Song Contest, Bible-based Cultural Dances etc.

Earlier, a four-day charismatic retreat was conducted in three separate villages of the Parish for the Hindi speaking community by Fr. Nicholas, for the Assamese speaking community by Sr. Seraphina Tirkey and for the Garo speaking community by Sr. Mariette Nelluvelil assisted by Sr. Agnes Daimari.

## NEW PROVINCE OF THE MONTFORT BROTHERS

The General Administration of the Gabriel Brothers, canonically erected the Province of North East India with effect from April 28th, 1998. The inauguration of the new Province took place during a two-day function at the Montfort School and ITI, Chabua on 9th and 10th May 1998. This was preceded by a day-long animation programme by Fr. Peter Celestine. Bishop Lumen Monteiro of Tripura presided over the inaugural Eucharist. Bro. Thomas Plathottam is the Provincial. There are 31 Brothers in the new Province.

Your special prayers are requested for the good health of Sr. Dominica of Soraibil who is recovering from a severe attack of cerebral malaria. She was in critical condition for a number of days and was treated successfully in Bongaigaon. Now she is recuperating.

## YOUTH MEET AT GOALPARA

A Youth Meet was organized for the youth of St. Thomas Mission, Goalpara on July 12-13, 1998. Inspite of inclement weather, 70 youngsters enthusiastically participated in the programme. Bro. Rohan was the coordinator. He was assisted by Fr. Leslie of Rangjuli, Fr. John of Panishali and Bro. Crosper. The programme aimed at bringing together the youth, promoting creative thinking and fellow-feeling.

## CONSULTORS' MEETING

The Meeting of the Consultors of the Archdiocese took place on August 4, 1998 at 2.00 P.M. at Kharghuli, Guwahati. Fr. Kuriala Chittattukalam gave a presentation of the Government's decision on the Minimum Wages for Private School teachers. The Consultors took stock of the prevailing situation of uncertainty and violence in Kokrajhar District. The Archbishop exhorted all to do whatever they can and what they consider possible in the present situation. Other matters regarding purchase of land in various places, preparations for the Jubilee Year 2000 etc. were also discussed in the meeting.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO *BISHOP ELECT FR. PETER CELESTINE, OFM(CAP.)* WHO WILL BE ORDAINED BISHOP OF JAMMU-SRINAGAR ON SEPTEMBER 6TH, 1998.**

He was felicitated at the Archbishop's House, Guwahati, on June 2. We assure him our prayers for the success of his episcopal ministry. During his short tenure as Parish Priest of Dispur, he endeared himself to one and all. He will be given a farewell at Dispur Parish on August 23, Sunday. He leaves for Jammu on the next day.

### Prayers Requested:

Mr. John T. Venadt, the father of Fr. Joseph Ronald Venadt, the Assistant Parish Priest of Doomni, who expired on July 27th, 1998. He was 90.

The mother of Fr. John Chellanthara, the Parish Priest of Barpeta Road, who expired on August 18. Fr. John is at home.