

EPHREM NEWS



Nov
2023

St. Ephrem's Theological College, Satna



Patron

Rev Dr. Matthew Kazhuthadiyil



Editors

Bro. Alen Pothanamuzhiyil, Bro. Alan Mullappallil

ADIEU TO DEACONS

On 19th of November we, the ETC family, bid farewell to our beloved Deacons, who are going to be ordained priests in the month of December. On the poignant occasion of bidding farewell to our respected seniors, His Excellency Bishop Mar. Joseph Kodakallil was the guest of honor. He with his message enlightened and encouraged our deacons.



The deacons shared their experiences, camaraderie, and memories forged during the time they lived in ETC. The programme was bitter-sweet blend of nostalgia and anticipation for the journey that lies ahead for our Deacons. This moment marked not just an end but a new beginning, as they step into the next chapter of their lives, the priesthood of Jesus.

VILLAGE EXPOSURE PROGRAM

The village exposure program (VEP) is an initiative from the Ephrem's Theological College to provide the brothers the immersive experience of the village life. From 28th of October onwards the Brothers went to different dioceses: the First Years to the Diocese of Satna, the Second Years to the Diocese of Sagar and the Third Years to the Diocese of Jabalpur. VEP fostered in brothers an understanding, appreciation, and awareness of North Indian villages, their challenges and the diverse cultural fabric.



The Brothers were engaged in activities such as living with the families, participating in local traditions, and contributing to community projects. The program not only facilitated firsthand learning about village lifestyles, agricultural practices, and community dynamics but also encouraged the Brothers to reflect on the socio-economic disparities between urban and rural areas. Ultimately, the village exposure program helped to inspire a sense of empathy and social responsibility within themselves.

ANNUAL RETREAT

November 12th onwards the brothers entered into the sacred prayer days of annual retreat. Rev. Fr Cyriac Kochalungal CST, a well-known retreat preacher in India, was the preacher. Our hearts were lifted in reverence and gratitude as we have spent our time in the spirit



of faith and devotion the days functioned as a beautiful reminder of the power of communal prayer, uniting us in a shared pursuit of spiritual connection and divine grace. The days of retreat were the source of renewal, peace, and a deepening of our relationship with God as we joined in fellowship, lifting our intentions and praises with one voice.



Christmas is coming soon...

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JABALPUR



The Third-Year brothers were sent to the Diocese of Jabalpur. The diocese is situated in Madhya Pradesh, and comprises the civil districts of Jabalpur, Damoh, Mandla, Shahdol, Narsinghpur and the Tahsil of Lakhnadon in Seoni district. The diocese has a well-established faithful community. Each parish Church has about 300 catholic families as well as catechumens. There is prayer service and prayer gatherings conducted every day in the parishes. The catechists are looking after these matters. He is the one who leads the house gatherings. In the house gathering, there is the recitation of Rosary, a reading from the Scripture and a reflection on the passage read, and finally it ends with agape. Faith and enthusiasm of the people for

the Word of God and their interest in prayer are tremendous. Catechists are paid by the diocese, and they also have the transfers, like parish priests, to different parishes. The Catechist is also the one who prepares the catechumens for baptism. The people of the villages were very much loving and caring. They offer a warm welcome whenever there is house visiting. People have firm trust in the priests as well as in the brothers. In spite of all the difficulties, people are having a feeling oneness and unity among them. The main occupation of the people in the villages is agriculture, and some of them possess cows, buffaloes, sheep, etc. According to the seasons they try for other side farming such as (maavuva) toddy, tobacco items, etc. The exposure programme helped the Brothers to have a missionary zeal in life. The words of Pope Saint John Paul II are relevant here: "the church needs joyful priest, capable of bringing true joy of God's people, which is the good news in all its truth and transforming power."

SAGAR



All the Second-Year brothers were sent to the Diocese of Sagar for the Mission Exposure Program. Very. Rev. Fr Paul Chungathu, the Vicar General of the diocese, was the in-charge of the Exposure Program in Sagar. The Brothers were divided into groups consisting of two, and were sent to the mission stations in Guna, Banda and Sagar districts. Guna district is one of the most tribal populated areas of the diocese. The Christian population in this area is increasing rapidly because of the hard work of the missionary

works of the diocese. Fr Jackson, Fr Sinto, Fr Sijo availed themselves to help all the brothers to have the mission experience in its fullness. Their guidance and support helped the brothers enormously. Brothers visited families and prayed for them regularly with the help of Catechists in the village. They attended prayer meetings with the people in the evenings and had prepared the people for the reception of the First Communion. The Brothers made use the mission exposure program to know the culture and traditions of the natives of the village, to learn about the difficulties that the people face, to improve their skills to enter into a good relation with the villagers, to experience the very way of living in the village, and to learn the language well, especially Hindi.

GIJWAR



Ten of the First-Year brothers, Abin Mullasseril, Sabin Kunnel Panthamackal, Ryan Maliyakal, Anumon Kiliyamvelil, Abhilash Tharappel, Ajanto Edakkoottathil, Jerin Melvettom, Mathew Moonnupeedika, Anoop Parathanathu, and Abin Ollattupurathu had their exposure programme in the village at Gijwar, in Sidhi District of Madhya Pradesh State, India. This mission station belongs to the diocese of Satna. The station consists of a parish, tailoring unit, dispensary and a social service centre. Rev. Fr. Mathew Cheruvil is the priest in charge. Social work is the main apostolate in the station. The villages near to Gijwar are mostly tribal populated, mainly Gond, Prajapathi, Pandey and Thakur families. Most of the villagers are farmers. People cultivate mainly mustard, wheat, rice, potato, etc. Fr Mathew and three SABS sisters are working there for the upbringing of the villagers. There are many projects going on under the direction of Samaritan Social Work Society of the diocese of Satna, in order to improve the life style of the people over there.

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KARIMATTY



Nine of the First-Year brothers were sent to Karimatty. They were Bros. Ajith Karottukunnel, Jeffry Snehatheeram, Jobin Onpathilchira, Tom Pullattu, Yacob Thattil, Akhil Mannarath, Johnpaul Poothara, Jackson Kuttikatt and San Mattathil. Karimatty village is also situated in Sidhi District. The social work activities in the villages are being carried out under the leadership and guidance of Rev. Fr. Siju Vadakumchery. In Karimatty there is a school for the village children from K.G - 8th standard. The other institutions of the station include a hospital, a dispensary, a tailoring centre, and a boys' hostel for the students. People are so co-operative towards the social work activities. They extend their maximum efforts to attain the best of the work done for them. The people of Karimatty village are not educated; they earn their living predominantly by farming especially rice, wheat, radish, mustard, etc. The Brothers were going for house visiting regularly, speaking with them and making them aware of the importance of education, etc. They were also teaching the children in the village. Some games and competitions were also conducted for the students in the village. They participated in meetings of different associations conducted by Social Service Society.

"FOR GOD DID NOT CALL US TO BE IMPURE, BUT TO LIVE A HOLY LIFE". (1 Thessalonians 4:7)



November - 01
All Saints' Day



Let's Welcome December...