

“Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest”. Matthew 11:28

Dear Friends,

Our Lord has always been faithful to His children. He has always taken care of their needs and His words are always a strength for us to survive in any situation of the world.

In chaotic situations like the current times, the author of the above verse gives us Hope. Hope to cling unto the words of the Lord. As faithfuls of the Lord we have to share this Hope with people who have nothing.

Trusting in the Lord and as per His command, the Diocese of Calcutta in the Months of the lockdown and even as I write this, continue reaching out to the unreached.

So far God has taken care of all of us, He will further it too. Please keep praying for humanity in the world around, for our Country, for our universal Church and above all for our leaders, elders, widows, children, women and youth.

With all blessings,

Yours in His service,

**The Rt. Revd. Dr. Paritosh Canning,
Bishop of Calcutta, CNI**

During the time of crisis when the nation was coming into terms with the spread of COVID 19 and the directives issued by the Government for compliance, The Rt. Revd. Dr. Paritosh Canning, Bishop of Calcutta, CNI stepped in and stepped up the efforts to share the Love of Christ with the needy and share with all people the message that “Jesus Loves You”.

During the time of crisis (Time of lockdown in the country, 2020) Bishop Dr. Paritosh Canning vigorously commenced Relief operations in the Diocese of Calcutta, CNI and the Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI and also to a large number of people in the rural areas of West Bengal. The friends and partners of Cathedral Relief Service in UK and other parts of the world are taking all care in raising funds for this endeavour along with many other well wishers in the Diocese of Calcutta and Barrackpore. They all offered their financial support to Bishop Dr. Paritosh Canning. All these gifts of love and concern are making the undertaking of the Relief operations possible.

Following are glimpses of the Relief work-

Church offers to help

MITAMUKHERJEE

Chowringhee: The Church of North India (CNI) on Tuesday decided to offer some of its premises to the state government to set up quarantine facilities.

“The church is ready to offer its premises to the state government to set up temporary quarantine facilities if there is shortage of space for those who need to be kept in isolation,” Reverend Paritosh Canning, bishop of the Calcutta diocese of the CNI, told Metro.

For example, the premises of Oxford Mission in Behala or St Thomas’ Church School Howrah — both with large premises — can be used to set up such facilities, he said. The church owns several properties in Calcutta and on its outskirts, he said.

The church, though, cannot set up such facilities by itself, the bishop said. It will have to be set up with the help of the state government because the church does not have the expertise or the arrangement to deal with the present situation, he said.

Given the contagious nature of the coronavirus, specialised expertise will be needed to convert a place into an isolation centre even temporarily, Canning said. “The church has always played an active role to help the needy in time of crisis... floods, drought or any other natural calamity. We want to offer our services even this time... to fight the coronavirus. But this time we can’t work alone. We need to work with the state government.”

He said he had written a letter to chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday requesting her to allow the church to work with the government in preventing the spread of the coronavirus.

Bishop Canning said the church was keen to engage its volunteers and health workers in its work, along with various state government departments, to fight the disease.

The CNI runs a hospital and several dispensaries in the city for the poor and the needy. “Members of the staff of our health services programme can work together with the state government if there is a need for more such people in combating the outbreak,” he said.

A large number of people who depend on daily income are not able to earn because of the ongoing lockdown. The church is ready to offer them food and other items, he said. “We want to provide the items not just to people from our community but also to the common people. It will be easier for us to identify the people who need such help if we work with the government.”

The church has requested the chief minister’s office to arrange for a meeting with government officials to discuss what the church needs to follow so that it can help in the fight against the virus.

The bishop will attend a prayer service at 3.10pm on Wednesday, which can be viewed on YouTube.

Due to the lockdown and to prevent the spread of the coronavirus from gatherings, the faithful were not allowed to attend Worship Services in the Churches; Worship Services led by Bishop Dr. Paritosh Canning were live-streamed on YouTube from Bishop’s House. The Worship Services include- Sunday Worship Service, Wednesday Lenten Devotion and Holy Week Services up to Easter. Thereafter, the Services are being continually led by Bishop.

THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

On 25th March, 2020 Bishop Paritosh Dr. Canning, in the weekly Wednesday devotion shared on the theme “The Holy Name of Jesus”. He said that it has now become common knowledge that the entire world is in danger of the spread of the new Coronavirus which is claiming people’s lives. During this time we need to pray to the Holy Spirit to edify us, and we all need to call on the Holy Name of Jesus for our protection. The accounts of the miraculous protection and cures from plagues and serious disease in the past may have been long forgotten by many. I have come to know about the early toxic plague which broke out in Lisbon in 1432 when a retired Bishop from a monastery urged the sick and the dying to pronounce the Holy Name of Jesus and pray fervently. They were miraculously cured and all the healing miracles took place by the Grace and Healing Mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This incident has convinced me of the great efficacy of invoking Our Lord’s Most Holy Name for our immunity from this feverish illness and for our healing. Along with this strict adherence to the guideline and directives issued by the State and Central Government for preventing spread of the coronavirus is needed. Bishop Dr. Paritosh Canning concluded his message by sharing that the next live stream on YouTube will be on Sunday, 29th March, 2020 where he will explain how we can all receive spiritual communion at our homes and will administer the same at the Sunday Eucharist Service on 29th. He also informed all the viewers that the Diocese has released the bilingual Order of Worship booklet for Confirmation Service to be used by the Churches in Diocese and the Bengali Sung Eucharist Service audio CD.

29th March, 2020 Kalighat Police Station, Shelter for the Homeless



30th March, 2020, Bantra, Howrah District



1st April, 2020, CHINSURAH



5th April, 2020, NAWHAZARI



During the Lockdown the Diocese is stepping up its efforts by introducing sustainable livelihoods through Nari-Dana – An Initiative for Social Enterprise, Empowering Women and Initiative for Social Development. A Child Development Programme, is on where children in the age group of 6 – 15 years are provided with supplementary education after regular school hours. This will provide additional educational support for children in need of improved performance in school. In addition, the children will be provided with a nutritious meal for their nourishment. In Geonkhali, both these programmes are functional. At Kulberia we are planning to implement these programmes soon. Also a TB Hospital and a general out door clinic at Boskati is planned in the near future. The Diocese of Calcutta made headlines when on 24th March, 2020 the Diocese offered its premises to the State Government to set up quarantine facilities.

Bamanpukur



Raghabpur



Since 29th March, 2020 and upto 10th May, 2020 over 3000 families are being supported by supply of groceries under its unique programme of providing for the needy "Jesus Loves You" initiated by Bishop Paritosh Canning. The Bishop has so far made over 43 trips in 43 days. As we continue in the lockdown it is becoming increasingly evident that the true challenge for such people won't be to evade the coronavirus but just to get enough food to stay alive.

Ghaaskhali

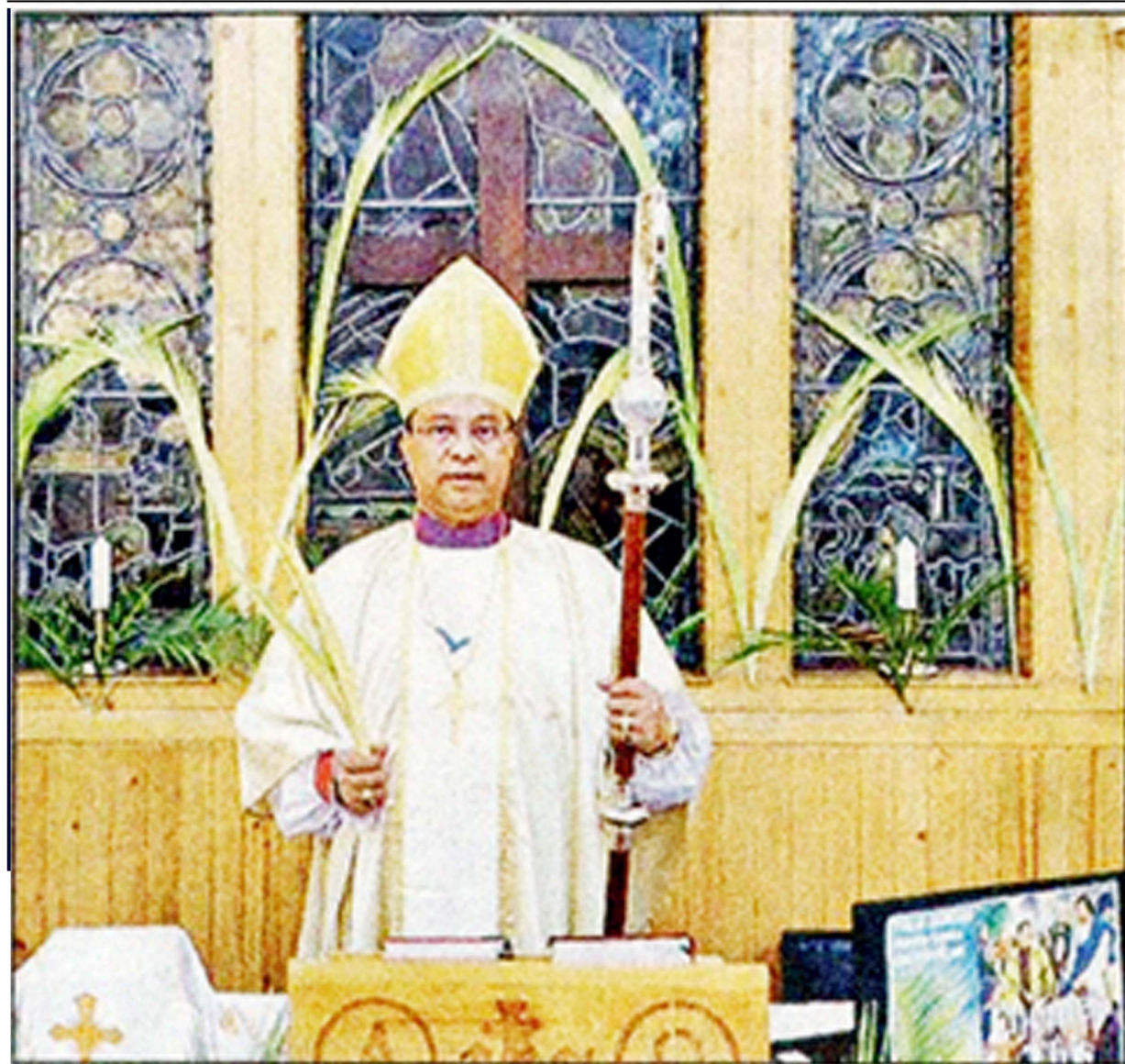


Arunima Hospice- Snehakunja



Maliapota Dist. Nadia

DIOCESE OF CALCUTTA, CNI
Jesus Loves You Initiative



On Palm Sunday Bishop Paritosh Canning in the live online Worship Service from Bishop's House said it is God who is guiding our leaders. He urged the congregation to chant 'Hosanna'. Which means 'help us...save us, God'. Jesus will hear us. Like He said, 'Go away Satan!' He will also say Go away Corona!

Taking a leaf out of Bishop Paritosh Canning's Life

In his life, he grew up in a very challenging condition, struggling everyday for food and provisions.

This is his testimony

I did not know how to pray even though born in a Christian family.

I met Jesus through Oxford Mission Fathers and got a new lease of life-

I was naked - After meeting Jesus, I had clothes.

I was hungry - After meeting Jesus, I had food.

I was weak - After meeting Jesus, I was empowered.

I was a slave - After meeting Jesus, I got freedom.

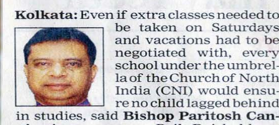
And I am sure each one of you got a story to share as to how Jesus changed your life.

Today we need to say Hosanna more and more, as we are going through difficult times. So Indians need to say Hosanna. Jesus is the sole authority, the creator, redeemer, sustainer, in control to remove Coronavirus according to His own plan and purpose. So let us all say Hosanna to make it happen; besides following the government guidelines about our health and hygiene.

Parents of our schools have been anxious that the delay in the reopening of schools might jeopardise the progress of their children. In a statement to the press Bishop Paritosh Canning assured the parents that the loss shall be compensated by appropriate means. And it is the prime objective to see our teaching and non-teaching staff do not suffer monetarily at this hour.

No kid will lag behind in studies, no pay-cut for CNI school staff: Bishop

Jhilmil.Mukherjee@timesgroup.com



Kolkata: Even if extra classes needed to be taken on Saturdays and vacations had to be negotiated with, every school under the umbrella of the Church of North India (CNI) would ensure no child lagged behind in studies, said Bishop Paritosh Canning in a message on Poila Baishakh.

I urge parents to have patience. The loss... shall be compensated by appropriate means... It's our prime objective to see our teaching and non-teaching staff do not suffer monetarily at this hour

Bishop Paritosh Canning

Parents of schools yet to start online classes have reportedly been pushing for the distance-learning sessions to begin. Many schools are also yet to publish their results and guardians have been asking whether the report cards would be mailed or not.

The message, released from Bishop House on Tuesday, reached all CNI schools, including La Martiniers, St James', Pratt Memorial, St Thomas' and others. It contained an advisory for both school administrations as well as parents, the stakeholders in kids' education.

Many parents have been anxious that the delay in the reopening of schools might interfere with their children's lay their fears. "I urge parents to have patience. The loss... shall be compensated by appropriate means," the message read. La Martiniers Schools secretary Supriyo Dhar said, "The Bishop is equally concerned about academics in schools and together with the administrations, is trying to work out the best options, which could mean working on Saturdays or cutting Puja or winter vacations short, to make up for lost time."



Skype Connect

On 7th May, 2020 Mr. Clive Brown, Secretary, Friends of The Calcutta Cathedral Relief Service, UK made contact with Bishop Paritosh Canning through Skype. The following points were discussed. Diocesan collaborative work with Cathedral Relief Service for Relief and Post Covid-19 Rehabilitation work. Focus on LIVELIHOOD programmes for Parishes and Projects of CRS- Emphasis on Nari - Dana. Support given to 3000 families(Diocese of Calcutta). Bishop informed Mr. Clive brown when he talks about the Diocese of Calcutta, CRS is also included. Continuation of 2nd phase food support was also discussed.

On 22nd May, 2020 Revd. Anita Matthews of St. Peter's Church, UK interacted with Bishop Paritosh Canning, through Skype. Bishop thanked Revd. Anita Matthews and her Church for the funds for Covid-19. It was decided that the 2nd phase of work was to focus on livelihood programmes. Bishop informed Revd. Matthews about the Launching of Geokhali Nari-Dana and Child development programmes.

Cyclone Amphan - I believe you all are praying for us (Diocese of Calcutta, CNI and Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI) when cyclone Amphan made Landfall in West Bengal and wreaked havoc in the State. I am trying to give you an overall picture of the damages we suffered in the Diocese of Calcutta and Diocese of Barrackpore.

Diocese of Calcutta, CNI - Kolkata is one of the four worst affected districts in West Bengal. To give you an idea, in many of our Churches, big trees have been uprooted causing much damage. In one Church, beautiful glass above the altar has been broken into pieces. In some Churches, fierce wind has blown away roof-top water tanks. Similarly, tin roofs in the members' houses in Krishnapur, Kalagachhia, Geonkhali, Nahajari were blown away coupled with the cyclone, there has been incessant rainfall all over. In two of our Girls' hostels, rooms were damaged and boundary walls has collapsed which poses a threat to their security. In St. Paul's Cathedral, roof trusses were blown away causing water seepage in the walls, floors and on a grand piano. Added to that, in the Cathedral, huge old trees have been uprooted causing the boundary wall to collapse.

Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI - The Cyclone Amphan affected severely 24 Pargans North and 24 Parganas South and Kolkata. In the Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI, many Church roofs are either made of tin sheets or Asbestos. Therefore many Churches lost the same or have been damaged badly. Few Parsonages have been damaged too. In many places boundary walls have collapsed. Thousands of trees have been uprooted. Many members have lost their houses partly or totally. Many hostels have lost their roofs and boundary walls have collapsed.

Church buildings were open to provide shelter to the church members and locals during the cyclone. I am challenged to visit the affected places at the moment due to the roads being blocked by the uprooted trees. As soon as it possible I will visit these places. Our Presbyters, EC members, Pastorate Committee members are actively doing their best this time.

Please continue to pray for us which surely would provide us a lot of strength at this challenging time, as we initiate all efforts to restore and rebuild.



Cathedral Relief Service Office at St. Paul's Cathedral



Arunima Hospice - Fallen trees on the Children's Dormitory.



Oxford Mission-Sister side. East side of Sister House. About 120 Ft. length and 8 Ft. height boundary wall has collapsed.



Oxford Mission, Boys Hostel



Christ Church, Diocese of Calcutta, CNI



Duff Church, Diocese of Calcutta, CNI



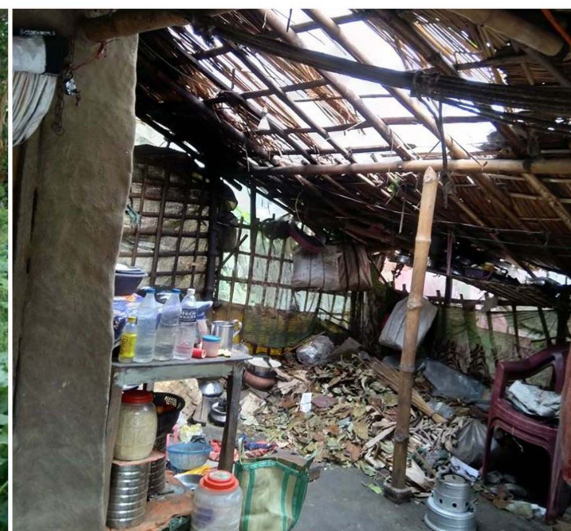
Sadhu Sundar Singh Church under Kumrakhali Pastorate, Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI



St. Peter's Hostel Canning



Home of a member of the Basanti Pastorate, Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI



Home of a member of the Baruipur Pastorate

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ. I thank you immensely for your prayers, care and concern for the people of Kolkata. Your support has helped us in giving hope and smiles to 4500 families in the villages and slums where we work under the Diocese of Calcutta, CNI. At this moment we join you in prayers for strengthening our hands to do the work and mission of Christ. With many challenges facing us besides COVID-19 and now the cyclone affected people, we look forward to your prayerful support.

+Paritosh



PENTECOST SUNDAY

On 31st May, 2020 The Rt. Revd. Dr. Paritosh Canning, Bishop of Calcutta, CNI and Moderator's Episcopal Commissary, Diocese of Barrackpore, CNI conducted the Worship Service after almost two and half months. Now the Government has announced that we can open Churches but only ten people can be allowed at a given time. Bishop Paritosh Canning in a statement to the press in response to the Government said our Churches are quite big, with large seating capacities, like St. Paul's Cathedral. If we open the Church for Worship many will come and it will be difficult to say no to the. We thank our Chief Minister for her concern for the Church. We will keep the Church doors open. If individuals wish to come for prayers, meditation they may come ten at a time. We are open, but not for public worship. The clergy in the Diocese of Calcutta and Barrackpore, will open the Church gates for prayer and meditation. We thank God for all their efforts to save us from Coronavirus. Today, we are in Pentecost Sunday. Birthday of the Church. Birthday of the Catholic Church i.e. Universal Church. We as the Church should not be afraid to speak of Jesus. Nicodemus came in hiding to meet Jesus although he was convinced that Jesus was divinely commissioned by God but for fear of the other Pharisees met Jesus in secret. Pentecost does not support all this. You cannot have double standards after you have the 'Born Again' experience. Born Again is a continues process as temptation come every time. Today on this special day we need to have the born again experience. The phrase "Born Again" applies to people who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour or Redeemer. To be born again in this sense is not an actual physical rebirth, but it indicates a spiritual rebirth.



BIRTHDAY OF OUR BELOVED BISHOP

On 30th May, 2020 Bishop Paritosh Canning celebrated his 57th Birthday. As much as the office Bearers of the Diocese of Calcutta wished to celebrate Bishop's birthday in a grand way but due to the lockdown, on behalf of the Bishop brought smiles on the faces of the clergy and heads of institutions by arranging to send to their homes a sumptuous dinner. The dinner was thoroughly enjoyed by all. In a message to his clergy the Bishop said on this day when he celebrates his birthday it is another thing that before joining the Church he never celebrated his birthday. He being a Bishop many affluent and big names in the city would greet him and visit him, yet he prefers spending this time with his inner circle, i.e. his presbyters.



On 31st May, 2020 on the request of the Office Bearers of the Diocese of Barrackpore where Bishop holds additional charge he visited St. Stephen's School Dum Dum to be with them. The Office Bearers took turns to express their gratitude and good wishes to their Bishop for them even though he is now the Moderator's Episcopal Commissary. We were informed that Bishop Paritosh Canning by his outreach works during the lockdown and Cyclone Amphan has bought laurels to the Diocese and the Christian Community in West Bengal and has now become a name associated with rebuilding and restoration of life. And while once he was travelling to Digha some 200 km from Bishop's House he was escorted in a pilot car back and forth. It is truly a matter of pride for the Christian Community in West Bengal when we are respected for our good works.

COVID-19 INFORMATION : GUIDANCE FOR WORSHIP

On 1st June, 2020, day one of the Unlockdown period, The Rt. Revd. Dr. Paritosh Canning, Bishop of Calcutta, CNI, entered St. Paul's Cathedral with Presbyter-in-Charge, Associate Presbyter, Diocesan Finance Secretary and Diocesan Property Secretary, all wearing masks after thermal screening and hand sanitization. Bishop then went to the Altar with them and offered Prayer for the CM of West Bengal, PM of India and also for COVID19 and cyclone Amphan affected people. There will be no Public Worship as of now. Only a maximum of 10 people at a time maybe allowed to come and offer Prayer after going through all the necessary precautions at the entry gate.



NEW APPOINTMENTS - Mrs. Gracie Abraham, has been newly appointed as Secretary to The Bishop of Calcutta, CNI. The Bishop offered prayers and wished Mrs. Gracie Abraham all the best in her new assignment. Mrs. Abraham is a Communicant Member of St. Stephen's Church, Kidderpore, Diocese of Calcutta, CNI since the year 1975. She has been the Hony. Secretary of the Church; Secretary and Treasurer of the WFCS and also Sunday School superintendent. At present she is the Hony. Treasurer of the Pastorate Committee. Mrs. Abraham has a vast knowledge of secretarial duties. She has worked in Pratt Memorial School as Secretary to the lady Principal and has in the past worked in corporate offices as well. At present Mrs. Abraham is the secretary to the Hony. Diocesan Secretary and Education Secretary of the Diocese of Calcutta, CNI.

Mrs. Esther Thomas, hitherto Secretary to The Bishop of Calcutta is shifted from Bishop's Secretariat to the Diocesan Information Centre, Diocese of Calcutta, CNI. The Diocesan information Centre, a brainchild of our Bishop is his dream project, with its focus on equipping and empowering our youth in their pursuit of knowledge and information and to be established in their life in today's fiercely competitive world. The team from Derbyshire, UK which visited the Diocese of Calcutta this year, appreciated this initiative of our Bishop a lot and promised all cooperation on their part.

Mrs. Esther Thomas, with her long experience in interacting and coordinating with teams from abroad will be of much utility for the information Centre in its nascent stage and subsequent development. Please continue to keep the Diocese of Calcutta, CNI in your thoughts and pray for all the programmes and initiatives of the Diocese of Calcutta, CNI.

