

SAMBALPUR MISSION HONOURS 4 SVDs

Four SVD “Grass-Root Missionaries” were honored in a very special manner, in a very special ceremony on the occasion of the concluding celebration of the year of the Priests at Sambalpur Bishop’s House, on 15th June, 2010, for their unique contribution to the Mission of Sambalpur.

About 75 priests gathered with their leader Rt. Rev. Lucas Kerketta, SVD, the Bishop of Sambalpur, to conclude the year of the priests in a very meaningful way. The theme chosen for the day “*The Joy of Priesthood: Consecrated for the Salvation of the World*”, resounded in every one’s heart throughout the day as Fr. Rabindra Swalsingh, a diocesan priest from Berhampur, led the assembly to reflection and soul searching. The input session, reflection and sharing really led all the participants to soul searching, to become meaningful to the World through the ‘Word’. Rt. Rev. Lucas Kerketta, SVD, once again emphasized that one of the finest way to become relevant to the world is through our efforts to activate SCCs (Small Christian Communities). He commended the efforts made by all the priests and religious to spread the Gospel Values through various activities. But there are some, according to the opinion of the people as well as the clergy, who have contributed a lot in an extraordinary way. And they, four SVDs and a diocesan priest were honored for their commendable contribution to Sambalpur Mission. They honored ones are:

1. Fr. Shilanand Kamath, SVD, a veteran missionary who worked in building up the mission in Sambalpur Mission (today both Rourkela and Sambalpur dioceses) for long 45 years and pioneered the “Ho” mission. He has always been a “grass-root” missionary. He is the first Mangalorean priest in the Sambalpur Mission and the first Mangalorean priest in the whole of Orissa. At present Fr. Kamath is taking rest at Shanti Bhavan, Jharsuguda.



2. Fr. Joseph Puthur, SVD, who was honored for his contribution in establishing a very good network of monitoring system in education and later his commitment in undertaking social work and community building since 1978 in the diocese of Sambalpur. He has dedicated long 41 years in the Mission of Christ in both Rourkela and Sambalpur dioceses. And he has very interesting experiences of working with many foreign missionaries like Fr. Edward Sawatzki, Fr. Franeis Pelzer, Fr. John



Jamric, Fr. Macpake, SVD etc. Since 25 years he is in a mission called Tangarpali fully dedicated for the cause of tribals and dalits.

3. Fr. Victor Timothy Pinto, SVD, who was honored for his specialized ministry in the line of vocational training and socio-economic empowerment of the tribals. Since the early days of his priestly life he has been very innovative in finding out various ways and means to train poor tribal youth in various trades and employ them for earning their livelihood.



4. Fr. Baptist D'Souza, SVD, who was honored for his pastoral contribution to the Pal- Lahara "HO" mission and leading it to the new heights. From the time of his regency onwards he had a very special love for "HO" Mission where he still works. His simple nature of being very informal with people, whether children, young or old, adjusting to any type of situation, learning any language quickly etc., make him very close to the people's heart.



5. Fr. Charles Cyprian Topno, who was honored for his long term of service in pastoral field with zeal and enthusiasm from among the diocesan priests.

Late Rev. Fr. Fleming SVD and **Late Rev. Fr. Scaria** (Sambalpur Diocese) were also remembered for their long dedicated service to the diocese of Sambalpur.

Fr. Sunil Damor, SVD