



BISHOP-ELECT STEPHEN LEPCHA

Rev. Fr. Stephen Lepcha is the youngest son of the Late Paul and Celina Lepcha of Suruk Parish in Kalimpong Sub-division of Darjeeling District. He has two elder brothers and two younger sisters. Born on 22nd December 1952, Fr. Stephen received his primary education in the school at Suruk, and secondary and higher secondary education at St. George's School, Pedong, and St. Robert's Higher Secondary School, Darjeeling. Inspired by the ardent faith of his own parents and the example of the priests in his parish, Fr. Stephen joined John XXIII Institute, (Minor Seminary), Darjeeling, with the firm desire to become a priest for the Diocese of Darjeeling. He completed his Philosophy and Theology studies at St. Albert's College, Ranchi, and was ordained a priest on 15th December 1982 by the late Bishop Eric Benjamin.

The first appointment took Fr. Stephen to Git-Dubling as co-pastor in May 1983. From May 1985 till May 1990, Fr. Stephen served the people of the same parish as Parish Priest. His pastoral commitment and zeal for the Gospel, together with a compassionate love for the people, endeared him to the Christians and non-Christians of Git-Dubling. Since June 1990, Fr. Stephen Lepcha has been Director of the Diocesan Minor Seminary - John XXIII Institute - at Darjeeling. As Vocation Promoter of the Diocese since 1990, Fr. Stephen has been largely responsible for the many local vocations in the Diocese.

The Diocese of Darjeeling now has a good shepherd and worthy successor to the late Bishop Eric Benjamin, in the person of Bishop-elect Stephen Lepcha who will be the first Lepcha Bishop. May Jesus the Good Shepherd and Mary the Immaculate Conception, shower choicest blessings and graces on Fr. Stephen Lepcha, Bishop-elect of Darjeeling.



BISHOP-ELECT THOMAS D'SOUZA

Rev. Fr. Thomas D'Souza was born on 26th of August 1950 to the late Joseph and Teresa D'Souza at Neermarga, Mangalore (Karnataka). He is the youngest in his family with two elder brothers and an elder sister. After completing his High School at St. Aloysius' High School, Mangalore, Fr. Thomas came to Darjeeling in 1966. He was in the first batch of minor seminarians at John XXIII Institute, and completed his College studies at St. Joseph's College, North Point, Darjeeling. For Seminary studies, he was sent to St. Albert's College, Ranchi, where he did his Philosophy and Theology, and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Darjeeling, by the late Bishop Eric Benjamin, on 16th April 1977.

For a year after his priestly ordination, Fr. Thomas was Assistant Treasurer at Bishop's House, Darjeeling. In June 1978, he was sent to St. Augustine's School, Kalimpong. From March 1979 till April 1985, he was Principal of the same School. From June 1985 till April 1989, Fr. Thomas was on the staff of Morning Star Regional Seminary at Barrackpore. On 14th May 1989, he was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese of Darjeeling, and he continued in that office till the death of Bishop Eric Benjamin, the first Bishop of Darjeeling, on 12th May 1994. On 14th May 1994, Fr. Thomas was elected Diocesan Administrator and for the past 3½ years, he has shouldered this responsibility with complete commitment and pastoral zeal for the whole Diocese.

As Bishop-elect of the newly established Diocese of Bagdogra, Fr. Thomas has great task ahead of him. Our prayers are with him so that he may lead his flock to Jesus the Good shepherd.



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