

## **St. Louis Parish, Chhaygaon**

St. Louis Parish is located at Chhaygaon, headquarters of the newly constituted South Kamrup District of Assam, 47 kilometres away from Guwahati and is situated along the NH 37. Bifurcated from St. John Bosco Parish, Boko it was established in the year 2004. The purpose of opening the parish was to get connected with the Assamese speaking people through education and other developmental programmes.

### **Establishment of the Centre**

As the Archdiocese of Guwahati decided to open a centre at Chhaygaon, Fr. Anna Amala Christian was entrusted with the responsibility of finding out the possibilities. He spent his initial days at St John Bosco, Boko. Later moved to a rented house in Nowapara Village in Chhaygaon and searched for a suitable land to start the mission and a school. Meanwhile, he catered to the spiritual needs of the people in the neighboring Catholic villages and helped the school and college going students of Nowapara through tuition and spoken English classes.

After purchasing a plot of land the Archdiocese opened an English medium school in a temporary structure with a few children. It was during the time Fr. Anna Amala Christian the construction of the concrete building began. Initially, he had to face a great deal of opposition and unrest from the local people who looked for their monetary and personal gain, giving a religious colour to it. A few individuals had even placed placards in the purchased land, citing 'site of Hanuman Mandir'.

Fr. Christian with the help of Fr. Mathew Anchukandam, the Financial Administrator of the Archdiocese, Assam Police personnel and a few elders of the village settled the issues and managed to complete the construction.

In 2006, at the request of the Archdiocese, the congregation of the Daughters of Divine Providence joined the mission. They collaborate with the mission of the parish: education, family apostolate and village tour.

### **St. Louis school**

Fr. Varghese Kizhakevely, Vicar General of the Archdiocese, formally inaugurated St. Louis school on 17 January 2006. Mr. Kamala Kalita, the local MLA was present for the function. From its inception, the school has been instrumental in imparting quality education to the students in its vicinity. The people of the place proudly acknowledge the positive impact being made in the society through the School. Today it has over 900 students from LKG to Class X. The School gives emphasis on character formation and value based education, enabling the students to become responsible citizens.

St. Louis promotes local culture by organizing various programmes and encourages the students to participate in similar events organized by other groups. It has annual sports days, science exhibition, other competitions and carrier guidance programme.

During the term of Fr. John Paul in 2012 an extension of the School was opened at Hatighor, one of the villages under the parish to help the Catholic children of the villages to have access to education. A school building with nine classrooms was constructed and was blessed on 15 March 2014 by Archbishop John Moolachira.

### **Conclusion**

The Parish consists of seven villages belonging to different tribes: Garo, Boro, Rabha and Khasi. People here are agrarians and live on cultivation.

The parish conducts various programmes such as Faith formation, Small Christian Community (SCC) and annual retreats for the spiritual growth of the people.

The present parish priest and principal is Fr. Joby Mundackal. He, together with the Sisters and the team of supporters strive to impact the individuals and society.

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