

St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Rangjuli

Rangjuli is a small town, with people from diverse cultures, traditions and languages. They are Assamese, Garos, Rabhas, Rajbongsis, Boros, and Adivasis. It is a commercial centre where people from the villages meet for trade transactions.

The tribal population of the place is divided into clans and sub-clans. Though there are village level tribal organizations, due to the lack of education, leadership and finance those are not effective in bringing desired results.

Establishment and activities

St. Francis of Assisi Parish erected on 1 February 1997 was carved out of Damra Parish. Initially, the parish administration was entrusted to Franciscan fathers who took care of the Parish for 11 years.

As Rangjuli was a sub-station earlier, it had only a small church. When the parish was erected the accommodation of priests was facilitated in two small houses built by people with minimum facilities. Incidents, like dacoit and militant threats made the Archdiocese to construct a presbytery to ensure safety and security of the fathers.

The Congregation of the Daughters of the cross became partners in the mission in 1998. They learnt the language of the people and built rapport with them. Their dealings and work among them helped to bring changes in their attitude, beliefs and practices. They began to dispense their services to the people through the dispensary and the tailoring centre built by the Archdiocese. The courses conducted in the tailoring centre are supported by GGSS.

Sensing the need for imparting quality education, the Centre started a school. Initially, the school began in a thatched house with two classrooms. In order to facilitate education to the poor children from far away villages, a hostel was built which caused steady increase in the number of students attending the school. At present there are 700 students in the school of whom 42 reside in the hostel.

In 2008 the parish administration was entrusted to Fr. Benny from the Archdiocese of Verapoly, Kerala. After three years of service Fr. Benny returned to his home diocese and the Archdiocese took over the parish. Fr. Anna Amala Christian was appointed parish priest in 2010 and Fr. Sojan Pulickal succeeded him in 2014 as parish priest.

Conclusion

Over the years the parish has grown in strength. Presently it has a total number of 3700 Catholics spread out in 23 villages. Some of the villages are far away from the parish. The presence of the

mission has paved way for bringing substantial changes in the lives of rural population. It's educational, social and health services in the area continue to support and build their lives.

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