



Annual Clergy Pre-lent Retreat

Feb,14-16, 2010: This year the Annual Pre-lent Clergy Retreat programme was held at the Diocesan Retreat Centre, Khanpur, a scenic and quiet place.



Scenic View of the Khanpur Lake

Rev. Humphrey S. Peters (Bishop elect) conducted the Retreat enabling all the clergies of the Peshawar Diocese to be filled with the spiritual experience. The presence, and touch of the Holy Spirit was felt by all.

The clergies re-confirmed their commitment for the service of God, and prepared themselves for the forth coming Lent-Season with new missionary zeal and strength.

The programme started with evening prayers and worship, led by the Cathecists of the Diocese.

The second day started with morning devotion. Rev. Humphrey Peters was the key-note speaker of this whole event. The theme of this event was 'Humbleness'.

Later, the Bishop (Elect) divided the participants into four study groups, among the leaders were Rev. Altaf Gohar, Rev. Nazir Sherazi, Rev. Riaz Mubarik & Rev. Shahzad Murad. They were assigned the task to hold discussions from the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah for Bible studies.

In the evening, special time was fixed for prayer and meditation and then intercessory prayers were performed. A movie was also shown, followed by discussion on the movie.

The conclusion was 'we can take initiative by trusting God and can achieve our goals.' The whole night was a prayer night.



Khanpur, a Quiet Place for Prayer & Meditation

The third day started with worship, followed by the concluding reflections, presented by the four group leaders.

Holy Communion Service was held led by Rev. Rafique Javed and Rev. Riaz Mubarik.

Later, Rev. H. Peters, once again stressed the theme, i.e. Humbleness, and quoted the example of Jesus, then he (Bishop elect) performed the ritual by washing feet of all the clergies. It was an inspiring sight, and soul touching moment.

The Priests humbly presented themselves before God. They reconfirmed their pledge with God. The programme ended with prayers and blessings.

Diocesan Board Meetings

The Diocese of Peshawar functions through its six boards, i.e. Mission & Ministry, Education, Health, Property, Finance and Development & Relief.



Board Meeting in progress

In the last week of February, the Diocesan Staff was busy organizing the Board Meetings, all six boards held their meetings, and evaluated their work and performance during the year 2009, and later, future planning was made. Different matters related to their boards and sectors were also discussed, and decisions were made on various issues raised by the participants.

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Thanksgiving & Prayer Requests



Diocese of Peshawar is grateful to God for His blessings and Mercies and also to the Partners for their financial and prayer support.

Please also Pray for;

1. The War on Terror is still going on, kindly pray for those who are determined to eradicate this menace for good.
2. We need your prayer support for those who are living in hostile areas of NWFP, especially the Pakistani Christians and their institutions.
3. The Diocesan Relief Work in Pateka, Balakot. May God help the Diocese to work more effectively for the development of the Earthquake victims.
4. Construction work of the following churches is in progress:
Church of the Holy Name, Bannu; Christ Church, Nowshera; St. Xavier Church, Thandiani.

Special Prayer requests;

1. Please remember Pakistan and especially the minorities as they are facing the daily scarcity of flour and other food commodities; the prices have gone extremely high.
2. Military operation against the Taliban in South Waziristan is at its full swing. Thousands of people have evacuated the area and are getting themselves registered as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in D.I. Khan and Bannu.

Kohat Church hit by a Rocket

Feb, 12, 2010, on Friday night rockets were fired at Kohat contoment, one of the rockets hit the boundary wall of the St. Augustine's Church, Kohat, at 11:30 pm.

As a result, the outer wall and its pillar, windows, ceiling, doors and the air-conditioning system of the Church was badly damaged, causing huge financial loss to the Church and the community, but thanks God there was no human loss.

The Frontier province (N.W.F.P) now-a-days is in the frontline of the war against the militancy, and Christian inhabitants of Kohat, Bannu, D. I. Khan, Karak, Tank and other tribal areas are living in a very tense situation.

Kindly pray for the regional peace and especially for the Christian community of the Frontier Province.

Youth Badminton Tournament at D. I. Khan

The Youth Group of St. Thomas' Church, D.I. Khan organized a 'Badminton Tournament', from 4 to 17 January 2010. The tournament was held under the supervision of both the priests in D.I. Khan, i.e. Rev. Altaf Gohar and Rev. Yousaf T.M. Azam. And two youth leaders, Mr. John Philip and Mr. Adwin Ahtesham were the main organizers.



Prize Distribution Ceremony

This was a team event and 16 teams from different churches participated in this tournament, i.e. St. Thomas' Church, St. John's Church, Assembly of God, and the Catholic Church. The tournament was well organized and all the contestants competed with zeal and sportsman spirit. Christian families of D.I. Khan came to watch the matches and appreciated the event. Trophies and prizes were distributed among the winners in a graceful closing ceremony.

Spring Festival

The NWFP has long been suffering being the frontline in the war against terrorism. Despite the tension and terrorist activities by the miscreants, the Peshawar Diocese through the local churches keeps on organizing the social and religious events to reduce the fear of the local Christians.

The Youth Group of St. John's Cathedral, Peshawar, organized a 'Basant Fair/Kite flying' festival, to celebrate the Spring in Peshawar. A lot of Christian families came to participate in this festival.



Families enjoying the Spring Festival

Infact, Basant is a Hindu festival to celebrate the spring harvest, but has also been adopted by people belonging to other religions in the sub-continent, the idea is to have fun while flying colourful kites.

This was an opportunity to enjoy a social gathering after a long time, as the people are usually confined to their houses to avoid the terrorist attacks, especially in the NWFP, and Peshawar.



Various stalls for Spring Festival

This Basant Festival was also celebrated by flying kites and by playing musical instruments, like drums and pipes, and people danced on the beats of traditional tunes. The kites of various colours presented a colourful scene, as if some body had spread all the colours of rainbow in the sky.

The Cathedral Youth Group also arranged some stalls of different food items, enjoyed by all. The families also spend the whole day there with their kids and had fun together.

It was an opportunity to enjoy social life and to come out from the tensed and fearful situation, for a change.

(Mission & Ministry Sector)

Youth Leadership Training Programme

The Diocesan Youth Desk organized a three-days 'Leadership Training programme' for the Youth Leaders of our Diocese, from 19 to 21 February 2010, at the Diocesan Centre, Peshawar. About 30 to 35 youth leaders from various parishes participated in the training programme.

The purpose of this training was to develop and train new leaders for our parishes to serve more effectively, and to start micro projects for community development. It was also an opportunity for our young leaders to re-confirm and refresh their faith and commitment to serve God. The vision behind the programme was to make them good disciples of Jesus Christ, and to prepare them for God's serve in their youth groups. The theme of the programme was 'Christian Ministry'.



Group Photo of Leadership Training Prog.

Teaching Sessions:

The first session was of a Bible study, led by Mr. Naeem Nazir from Peshawar, his emphasis was on, 'how to become good disciples of Jesus and how can others be brought to Jesus Christ to become his disciples'.

In the second session, Mrs. Sheba Emmanuel from Rawalpindi motivated the youth to start a fruitful prayer life and also to form a prayer-chain with others. She explained about ups and downs in our lives, and thoroughly talked about tough times in the life and said, "we should remain firm in our faith, especially in testing times as God never leaves His people alone."

Mr. Emmanuel Khurshid from Incensory Prayer Network, Rawalpindi, led a session on 'Christian Stewardship', and explained about 'how a Christian youth leader can serve the Lord more effectively.'

A Bible study session on 'Sin, Temptation & Satan' was conducted by Mr. Shahzad

Bashir from Peshawar, he taught how to deal with it. Mr. Insar Gohar led a session on 'Community Development', and gave the example of Nehemiah, how hard he worked to rebuild Jerusalem and developed his community.



Project Planning Session

A workshop was also conducted on 'Project Planning', Mr. Shahzad Bashir was the resource person, he taught skills and new methods to develop and plan small projects for the community development for parishes. As an exercise, participants were divided into small groups and were assigned to make micro projects.

The Bishop (Elect), Humphrey S. Peters, also honoured the programme by his visit and encouraged the youth leaders to strengthen their faith and commitment with God. The 'Secretary' Mission and Ministry, Rev. S. P. Aghar led the closing session and encouraged the youth in his closing remarks.

The participants of the programme also attended the Holy Communion Service in the St. John's Cathedral, Peshawar on Sunday, 21 February 2010.

Prison Ministry

We thank God that some of the Christian women (ex-pats) prisoners have been released from Haripur Central Jail, NWFP. We pray for the release of rest of the prisoners. Our Women Coordinator regularly pays visit to these prisoners.

Two prisoners from Nigeria are still in Peshawar Jail, although their punishment has ended, but they are still in captivity, **as they do not have enough money to buy their return tickets.** The Prison Chaplain, Rev. Rasheed Nazir, is also working hard to raise funds for their return tickets. May God help him in his efforts.

Our Women Coordinator received some comments/requests from the foreigner women prisoners during their visit to Peshawar Jail on this Christmas;

"Lina & Vilma are thankful to the Diocese of Peshawar for the lovely Christmas gifts, we highly appreciate their help, support and kindness."

OTS Rally

The OTS (Open Theological Seminary) is one of the various desks working under the Mission & Ministry Board. OTS Courses are being run in various parishes of the Diocese. Dr. Yousaf Masih Yad coordinates the courses/classes and other activities of the OTS.

An OTS rally was held in D. I. Khan (our most Southern Parish), there were about 300 participants, including tutors and students of the OTS. The participants came from D. I. Khan, Tank, Bannu, Kotla Jam, Bhakhar, Daria Khan and other surrounding areas.

Rev. Naseem from OTS Office Lahore was the guest speaker on this occasion, he shared the Word of God. Dr. Yousaf Yad explained about the aims and objectives of the rally. A quiz show was also held for the OTS students. Mrs. Noureen Altaf, the Sunday School Coordinator distributed trophies among the winners. Awards and Certificates were also distributed among the OTS Tutors and Students. The best tutors were given the Robert-Auto Award by the OTS. The programme ended with prayer by Mrs. Noureen Altaf.

OTS Day

The OTS Day was celebrated all over Pakistan, A special programme was organized at the All Saints Church, Peshawar on 4 February 2010. About 80 tutors and students participated in this programme, belonging to different compounds and areas of Peshawar, where the OTS classes are being held.

In the first session, a quiz programme was held. Questions were asked from the OTS courses, and the students enjoyed this quiz by answering the questions intelligently.

In the second session, a function was organized to celebrate the OTS Day, Mr. Naeem Nazir, a senior tutor, shared the Word of God and Dr. Yousaf Maish Yad told about the OTS ministry. A few pastors and members of the other denominations also participated in this programme. The programme ended with prayer by Rev. Fayyaz.

(Development & Relief Sector)

Diocesan Micro Credit Scheme

Ms. Ghazala is a promising young Christian lady always ready to accept new challenges. She is well skilled and has opened her own **Reproductive, Health and Family Planning Clinic**. She took a loan from the Diocesan Micro-Credit Scheme and started her Clinic.



Ms. Ghazala at her Clinic

Here is Ghazala's success story "I achieved management training in specific field of Reproductive Health and Family Planning from Karachi, and Bangkok. During my Field work in Gulbahar Colony, Peshawar city, majority of the women complained that they were unable to reach the centers, which are very far from their homes, and expressed their need to have a clinic in their own area.

A landlady offered her newly built apartment, to be hired on reasonable rent. Keeping in view the demand of the neglected women and vague of the landlady, all these facts inspired me to give a serious thought to this proposal. I shared this with my friends, a Doctor and a Lady Health Visitor. We surveyed the area; my friends encouraged me to open my own clinic and agreed to offer their part time services. Another hurdle was the finances, my brother in law informed me about the Diocesan Micro Credit Scheme. After, having fulfilled all required formalities. I received a loan of Rupees Thirty thousand (Pak Rupees).

Now, with the help of Diocesan Development office, I run my own responsive clinic of Reproductive Health and Family Clinic at Gulbahar Colony, Peshawar. I feel happy and contend by offering my services to the under-privileged women. It is also a source to uplift my own family, financially. My gratitude to the Diocese of Peshawar, for their kind assistance."

Development Secretary visits Earthquake affected areas

Ms. Bimla Yousaf, Secretary Development and Relief, visited the Diocesan adopted villages of Pateka to assess the ongoing Diocesan Community Development Projects. The activities that are in progress are:

- New Light Public High School
- Pateka Health Clinic
- Entrepreneurial Program

New Light Public School:

The Development Secretary visited the New Light Public School at Pateka and met the Principal and staff of the school. She appreciated their efforts as the school is progressing well and showing excellent results, since the last two years it is showing 100% result in the S.S.C Exams (Secondary School Certificate).



Staff & pupils, New Light Public School

Last year, the school also started its 1st year classes (college classes), and this year 2nd year classes will also be added.

Thus the school has become Higher Secondary School (Inter-college), and it is a great achievement, now it would meet the great need of the students of Pateka villages more effectively.

Shohal Health Clinic:



Shohal Health Clinic

The Secretary also visited Shohal Health Clinic in Balakot to see the medical care services for the local community. The local community is appreciative of the Diocesan efforts.

The Shohal Health Clinic is working nicely, about 20 to 25 patients benefit from this clinic daily.

Last month, the staff of the Shohal Health Clinic, Balakot, visited Peshawar to congratulate the newly elected Bishop of Peshawar Diocese. They also met the Development Secretary and appreciated his sector's cooperation with them.

Provision of LHV Training:

Last year, the Diocese brought three girls from Pateka villages (Earthquake affected areas) to Peshawar and provided them opportunity to receive LHV (Lady Health Visitor) Training.

The diocese also provided them accommodation in the Elizabeth Girls Hostel in Peshawar.

Two of them got provision to receive the Nursing training in Ghandhara Nursing School, Peshawar. And one of them has joined the Shohal Health Clinic, Balakot, as an employee.

CBO:

During her visit, she met with Pateka Community Based Organization (CBO) members.



Local people of Pateka are busy in Construction Work

In the meeting the CBO members presented a few new proposals for their community development, which were approved by the Dev. Secretary.

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