

First Salesian College Local Alumnus Ordained Salesian Priest

Suruk, a Himalayan village in the subdivision of Kalimpong in Darjeeling District, West Bengal woke up to ordination bells on 5th January, 2011. "I am very glad to ordain Deacon Patrick Lepcha here at this very ground where I myself was ordained twenty nine years back," said Rt. Rev. Stephen Lepcha, Bishop of Darjeeling Diocese, who hails from Suruk.

The ordination ceremony commenced at 10.30 A.M. with a lively entrance dance. The parents of Deacon Patrick led their son to the altar. Thirty two concelebrants and around 1500 people from the Parish and the substations witnessed the ceremonies. Among the many religious present fifteen were Salesians.

The local parish priest Fr Augustine and the Cluny Sisters orchestrated the preparations by mobilizing the entire parish community and assisted the candidate from the village for the moving and touching ceremony of ordination. The local youth under the direction of two Deacons from the village rendered the choir for the occasion.

Fr Patrick thanked his parents and the entire village population including friends, relatives and well wishers.

Saint Maurice Parish, Suruk had its beginnings with the arrival of the first priests, the Canons Regulars of San Maurice Monastery, Switzerland and nuns, the St Joseph of Cluny sisters from France, over fifty years ago. The parish has already contributed four priests and twelve nuns to the Church in the past fifty years of its life.

Though as the crow flies, the village is hardly half hour from the international high way connecting India and China through Sikkim, by road it takes over four hours to reach Suruk, an idyllic village of pastoral beauty and splendid view of the Kanchenjunga, the divine mountains from where the Lepchas believe themselves to have originated.



