

# Northeast Catholic Research Forum (NECARF)

## GENERAL BODY MEETING (No. 3)

August 9, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. via Google Meet.

### THE MINUTES

The meeting was moderated/chaired by Mr. James Pochury, Convener, NECARF. The Venue (Google meet) was hosted by Raskan Ngachonmi Jonah. The meeting began with a passage from the Gospel of Mt. 5:13-16, and an opening prayer; read and pronounced by Rev. Fr. Linus Neli.

- 1. Opening Note:** Mr. James Pochury welcomed the members with a brief introduction of the participating members. The genesis and the initial motive that has necessitated the initiation of the formation of this forum were briefed. He stated that, one of the primary motives was the need to find ways and means of reaching out to and inspiring our Catholic boys and girls in remote parishes and villages and being mindful of the fact that there could be potential writers if only level playing field and spaces were provided to them at parish and diocese levels. He said that like the hanging bridge across turbulent and deep and wide rivers, accomplished writers in towns and cities could act as one end of the bridge fastened to a huge tree and the last parishioner fastened at the other end; that if we encouraged such writers we would have won half the battle and the purpose of this Forum fulfilled. This is indeed important because, accomplished writers have avenues and opportunities where they are already finding spaces to publish their articles and researches. It is the budding and future writers in small villages and towns that we need to set our hearts and minds on.
- 2. Outline the Purpose and how we propose to go about:** The agenda was opened and deliberated by Mr. John Shilshi and was put to the house for further discussion. Subsequently, the following conclusions were arrived at:

**The Purpose:** The purpose of the forum shall be to rope in accomplished Catholic writers/scholars and other experienced professionals in different fields as well as encourage young and potential Catholic writers from the NE Region to write, thereby creating a platform of interaction and exchange of ideas and knowledge of expertise in different fields; and to serve as a think tank for the churches in the region apart from encouraging a writing culture, as clearly defined in the working structure under the heading 'Objectives'. Another basic purpose of this Forum shall be, to reach the unreached and to tap the untapped. In addition to the objectives mentioned in the working structure, the Forum shall encourage to research and archive the contributions of the Catholic Church, which is often unrecognised and not given due appreciation by society at large. Publicising the contributions of the Catholic Church is important as there are social and religious elements in the Region which are inimical to the Catholic Church. Such endeavours of the Forum, with the presence of many eminent personalities will bring much value and value weightage for greater impact in society. It is envisioned that the research, writings and findings of this Forum could potentially be of use in policy making of the Catholic Churches, institutions and organisations in the Region.

**Note:** kindly refer the drafted working structure for detailed objectives of the Forum.

**How we propose to go about:** It was unanimously decided that NECARF will host an interactive website wherein members can publish their writings/articles. Apart from the main articles written by experienced professionals, scholars and writers, there shall be a section for short articles, poems, short stories, travel experiences, etc., for young and new writers. It will be an interactive e-platform of the young budding writers with established writers and scholars. The website shall also have section for Catholic news, information from the Dioceses, educational institutes and for other Catholic organisations like NECCOD. The website shall have a section as People's Edit where people can voice their opinions on different issues in the Church.

The General Body entrusted the responsibility of finding a web designer and purchasing the domain to Mr. John Shilshi with a tentative budget estimate of INR. 40000/- (Rupees forty thousand) only.

3. **Approval of Working Structure draft:** The draft of the working structure of NECARF was presented to the house for deliberation by Mr. John Shilshi, Chairman drafting committee. After detailed discussions, the house has approved the working structure with the following recommendation for addition.

- i. The powers and functions of different portfolios in the Executive Committee shall be clearly defined and incorporated in the Working Structure itself to avoid ambiguity and overlapping of functions and functionaries.
- ii. New article/section to be added to declare that NECARF does not represent the official voice of the Catholic Church. The readers shall be made clear that the articles/writings carried by this Forum is not the official voice of the Catholic Church.

4. **Update from the Finance Secretary /Treasurer:** The Treasurer Mr. David Boyes updated the house on the present financial status of the Forum. As per his update, only twenty members have registered so far as on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2020; which amounts to Rs. 20000/- (Twenty thousand only). The house has resolved to encourage members to register themselves by paying a sum of Rs. 1000/- (one thousand only) as one-time membership fee, which is the current primary source of income for the forum. The following suggestions by the treasurer as the prospective future source of income have been considered and found viable thereby it was endorsed.

- i. Membership fee, which is Rs. 1000/- at present may be revised/increased from time to time with the change in the value of currency
- ii. The upcoming Website of the Forum can become a source of income generation
- iii. In the print journal, appropriate advertisements could be invited
- iv. Certain paid research projects could be taken up by the forum or its members
- v. Good will donations from individuals or organisations will be solicited.