



'Let us Persevere in our Hope'



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

After a very long and intense period of Lent and Easter, as we enter into Ordinary Time in Liturgy, I feel I must remind our local Church the need to 'hope' because of the situation in our country. There is no guaranteed and bold stand of the government at centre to protect the minorities. Lynching, the much hated barbaric behaviour is permitted by the society in some parts of our country. The would-be new-president of the sovereign, secular State of India is quoted to have said that Christians and Muslims are aliens in India. We need to be prepared and not panic before these irresponsible statements and happenings. That's why I prefer to speak about Christian 'hope' in this issue.

In his Commentary on Psalms, Hillary of Poitiers repeats a question that was addressed to Christians by many of his contemporaries: Christians, where is your hope? This question is still being addressed directly to them. If it sometimes contains tones of self-sufficiency or scepticism, this matters little. Christians know that hope is their responsibility. They are called to give an answer to anyone who asks for a reason for their hope ("Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from

you an accounting of the hope that is in you," 1 Pet 3, 15). Today this responsibility has become a crucial one. It is one of the critical challenges that the Church faces: is the Church able to open up vistas of meaning? Does it know how to let its hope for the coming of the Kingdom, which was the hope of Christ, be the source of its life? Does it know how to give hope and the possibility of a future to concrete, personal lives, and show that it is worth living and dying for Christ? Is the Church able to call people to a life that is filled with beauty, happiness, and meaning because it is filled with hope, as was the life of Jesus of Nazareth?

These questions cannot be avoided because we are not able to give a long-term hope since our cultural horizons seem to close us within a narrow thinking. Ours is a 'society of uncertainty' where we continue to talk about the 'end' (end of Christian world, ideologies, modernity etc.), and where even the few hopes that manage to express themselves in a society are not allowed to take root. In such a time, the urgent question is: what can we hope for? The two previous Popes and the present Holy Father are relentless in promoting hope and giving it to the young adults. If the Church wants to promise hope to the world, it must give it to the young adults today.

It seems that the enemy of hope today is the indifference which we can trace to the sense of lack of meaning, or even the sense of the irrelevance of meaning. The theological virtue of hope must be expressed in a visible, concrete and lasting way in a concrete place; otherwise it becomes an illusion and rhetoric. An interesting passage of St. Augustine tells us that, 'Only hope makes us Christians' (The City of God 6.9.5). In other words, our experiences as Christians are not new or different in themselves, but hope leads us to invest our experiences, our relationships and all of reality with a new and a different meaning. Defining hope is not difficult. What is difficult is actually living in hope! Certainly we can call hope 'an active struggle against desperation' (Gabriel Marcel) and 'the capacity for intense activity not yet expended' (Eric Fromm) but hope is above all what allows us to walk on the path way of life, to be human—we cannot live if we do not hope. *Homo viator, spe erectus*: it is hope that keeps us on our feet and walking forward, and that makes us capable of facing the future.

Christians find their hope in Christ ('Christ Jesus, our hope, 1 Tim 1,1) - in other words they find in Christ the ultimate meaning that illuminates all realities and relationships. In this way Christian hope is a powerful reservoir of spiritual energy, a dynamic element grounded in faith in Christ who died and is risen from the dead. Christ's victory over death is the source of the believer's hope that evil and death, in all of the

forms in which they appear in human life, will not have the last word. Christians share their hope with others through forgiveness, which conveys the message that no fault committed has the power to close the door to the future of a life. They also communicate their hope by living among others in a way that expresses their faith that God wills the salvation of all people, as the Paschal event makes clear (1 Tim 2, 4; 4, 10; Titus 2, 11). Most importantly, Christians communicate their hope by living according to the logic of the paschal event. This is the logic that makes it possible for Christians to live in community with people that they did not choose themselves, and it also make them capable of loving even their enemies, those who are difficult to love, and those who express hostility towards them. It is the Paschal logic that leads Christians to endure hardships, trials and suffering with joy and serenity, and it is what guides them towards giving their lives - that is, towards martyrdom. When I met Pope Francis in September last year, as soon as I approached him he said, "Oh from India, the new land of martyrs!" If we want to see an authoritative narration of Christian hope in the Church today, it is towards situations of martyrdom and persecution that we should look. There the hope of eternal life, of life in Christ beyond death, finds a mysterious, disquieting, yet extremely concrete and convincing narration. There Augustine's words become credible: "Now our life is hope; then it will be eternity" (Commentary on Psalms 103.4.17).

Let me conclude these reflections with the prayer of abandonment

Father,

I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.

Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.

Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures -

I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul:

I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord, and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.

- Blessed Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916)



+ **Thelagathoti J. Raja Rao, S.M.M.,**
Bishop of Vijayawada

Bishop's Engagements July, 2017

2	July	Sunday	: Mass at Carmel Nagar Parish 7.30 a.m.
4	July	Tuesday	: Mass at Gunadala for School Children, 10.00 a.m.
6	July	Thursday	: Priestly Ordination, Society of the Holy Spirit, Kattubadipalem, 5.30 p.m.
7	July	Friday	: Leaving for Hyderabad (evening)
8	July	Saturday	: ATCRI, AGBM, Hyderabad, key-note address, 9.00 a.m.
9	July	Sunday	: Mass at St. Paul's Cathedral, 8.00 a.m.
10	July	Monday	: National Women Domestic Workers Convention, Loyola Auditorium, 3.30 p.m.
15	July	Saturday	: Visit of General Councillors, St. Paul's Fathers, 6.00 p.m.
18	July	Tuesday	: Visit & lecture: St. Paul's Seminary, Nuzvid, 10.00 a.m.
19	July	Wednesday	: Monthly Recollection for Clergy
20	July	Thursday	: Bangalore
21	July	Friday	: Kannur: Celebrations at Ursuline Sisters
23	July	Sunday	: Silver Jubilee in Mysore
24-26	July		: New Delhi, CBCI: National Consultation on SC Status for Dalit Christians.
27	July	Thursday	: Back in Vijayawada
29	July	Saturday	: Blessing of renovated Deepa Nivas and handing over to Salesians of Don Bosco, 5.30 p.m.

Pope's Message

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the First World Day of the Poor

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time 19 November 2017

Let us love, not with words but with deeds

1. “Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but indeed and in truth” (1 Jn 3:18). These words of the Apostle John voice an imperative that no Christian may disregard. The seriousness with which the “beloved disciple” hands down Jesus’ command to our own day is made even clearer by the contrast between the empty words so frequently on our lips and the concrete deeds against which we are called to measure ourselves. Love has no alibi. Whenever we set out to love as Jesus loved, we have to take the Lord as our example; especially when it comes to loving the poor. The Son of God’s way of loving is well-known, and John spells it out clearly. It stands on two pillars: God loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4:10.19), and he loved us by giving completely of himself, even to laying down his life (cf. 1 Jn 3:16).

Such love cannot go unanswered. Even though offered unconditionally, asking nothing in return, it so sets hearts on fire that all who experience it are led to love back, despite their limitations and sins. Yet this can only happen if we welcome God’s grace, his merciful charity, as fully as possible into our hearts, so that our will and even our emotions are drawn to love both God and neighbour. In this way, the mercy that wells up – as it were – from the heart of the Trinity can shape our lives and bring forth compassion and works of mercy for

the benefit of our brothers and sisters in need.

2. “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him” (Ps 34:6). The Church has always understood the importance of this cry. We possess an outstanding testimony to this in the very first pages of the Acts of the Apostles, where Peter asks that seven men, “full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (6:3), be chosen for the ministry of caring for the poor. This is certainly one of the first signs of the entrance of the Christian community upon the world’s stage: the service of the poor. The earliest community realized that being a disciple of Jesus meant demonstrating fraternity and solidarity, in obedience to the Master’s proclamation that the poor are blessed and heirs to the Kingdom of heaven (cf. Mt 5:3).

“They sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need” (Acts 2:45). In these words, we see clearly expressed the lively concern of the first Christians. The evangelist Luke, who more than any other speaks of mercy, does not exaggerate when he describes the practice of sharing in the early community. On the contrary, his words are addressed to believers in every generation, and thus also to us, in order to sustain our own witness and to encourage our care for those most in

need. The same message is conveyed with similar conviction by the Apostle James. In his Letter, he spares no words: "Listen, my beloved brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you, and drag you into court? What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled', without giving them the things needed for the body; what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has not works, is dead' (2:5-6.14-17).

3. Yet there have been times when Christians have not fully heeded this appeal, and have assumed a worldly way of thinking. Yet the Holy Spirit has not failed to call them to keep their gaze fixed on what is essential. He has raised up men and women who, in a variety of ways, have devoted their lives to the service of the poor. Over these two thousand years, how many pages of history have been written by Christians who, in utter simplicity and humility, and with generous and creative charity, have served their poorest brothers and sisters!

The most outstanding example is that of Francis of Assisi, followed by many other holy men and women over the centuries. He was not satisfied to embrace lepers and give them alms, but chose to go to Gubbio to stay with them. He saw this meeting as the turning point of his conversion: "When I was in my sins, it seemed a thing too bitter

to look on lepers, and the Lord himself led me among them and I showed them mercy. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of mind and body" (Text 1-3: FF 110). This testimony shows the transformative power of charity and the Christian way of life.

We may think of the poor simply as the beneficiaries of our occasional volunteer work, or of impromptu acts of generosity that appease our conscience. However good and useful such acts may be for making us sensitive to people's needs and the injustices that are often their cause, they ought to lead to a true encounter with the poor and a sharing that becomes a way of life. Our prayer and our journey of discipleship and conversion find the confirmation of their evangelic authenticity in precisely such charity and sharing. This way of life gives rise to joy and peace of soul, because we touch with our own hands the flesh of Christ. If we truly wish to encounter Christ, we have to touch his body in the suffering bodies of the poor, as a response to the sacramental communion bestowed in the Eucharist. The Body of Christ, broken in the sacred liturgy, can be seen, through charity and sharing, in the faces and persons of the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. Saint John Chrysostom's admonition remains ever timely: "If you want to honour the body of Christ, do not scorn it when it is naked; do not honour the Eucharistic Christ with silk vestments, and then, leaving the church, neglect the other Christ suffering from cold and nakedness" (Hom. in Matthaëum, 50.3: PG 58).

We are called, then, to draw near to the poor, to encounter them, to meet their gaze, to embrace them and to let them feel the warmth of love that breaks through their solitude. Their outstretched hand is also an invitation to step out of our certainties and comforts, and to acknowledge the value of poverty in itself.

4. Let us never forget that, for Christ's disciples, poverty is above all a call to follow Jesus in his own poverty. It means walking behind him and beside him, a journey that leads to the beatitude of the Kingdom of heaven (cf. Mt 5:3; Lk 6:20). Poverty means having a humble heart that accepts our creaturely limitations and sinfulness and thus enables us to overcome the temptation to feel omnipotent and immortal. Poverty is an interior attitude that avoids looking upon money, career and luxury as our goal in life and the condition for our happiness. Poverty instead creates the conditions for freely shouldering our personal and social responsibilities, despite our limitations, with trust in God's closeness and the support of his grace. Poverty, understood in this way, is the yardstick that allows us to judge how best to use material goods and to build relationships that are neither selfish nor possessive (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nos. 25-45).

Let us, then, take as our example Saint Francis and his witness of authentic poverty. Precisely because he kept his gaze fixed on Christ, Francis was able to see and serve him in the poor. If we want to help change history and promote real development, we need to hear the cry of the poor and commit ourselves to ending their marginalization.

At the same time, I ask the poor in our cities and our communities not to lose the sense of evangelical poverty that is part of their daily life.

5. We know how hard it is for our contemporary world to see poverty clearly for what it is. Yet in myriad ways poverty challenges us daily, in faces marked by suffering, marginalization, oppression, violence, torture and imprisonment, war, deprivation of freedom and dignity, ignorance and illiteracy, medical emergencies and shortage of work, trafficking and slavery, exile, extreme poverty and forced migration. Poverty has the face of women, men and children exploited by base interests, crushed by the machinations of power and money. What a bitter and endless list we would have to compile were we to add the poverty born of social injustice, moral degeneration, the greed of a chosen few, and generalized indifference!

Tragically, in our own time, even as ostentatious wealth accumulates in the hands of the privileged few, often in connection with illegal activities and the appalling exploitation of human dignity, there is a scandalous growth of poverty in broad sectors of society throughout our world. Faced with this scenario, we cannot remain passive, much less resigned. There is a poverty that stifles the spirit of initiative of so many young people by keeping them from finding work. There is a poverty that dulls the sense of personal responsibility and leaves others to do the work while we go looking for favours. There is a poverty that poisons the wells of participation and allows little room for professionalism; in this way

it demeans the merit of those who do work and are productive. To all these forms of poverty we must respond with a new vision of life and society.

All the poor – as Blessed Paul VI loved to say – belong to the Church by “evangelical right” (Address at the Opening of the Second Session of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 29 September 1963), and require of us a fundamental option on their behalf. Blessed, therefore, are the open hands that embrace the poor and help them: they are hands that bring hope. Blessed are the hands that reach beyond every barrier of culture, religion and nationality, and pour the balm of consolation over the wounds of humanity. Blessed are the open hands that ask nothing in exchange, with no “ifs” or “buts” or “maybes”: they are hands that call down God’s blessing upon their brothers and sisters.

6. At the conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy, I wanted to offer the Church a World Day of the Poor, so that throughout the world Christian communities can become an ever greater sign of Christ’s charity for the least and those most in need. To the World Days instituted by my Predecessors, which are already a tradition in the life of our communities, I wish to add this one, which adds to them an exquisitely evangelical fullness, that is, Jesus’ preferential love for the poor.

I invite the whole Church, and men and women of good will everywhere, to turn their gaze on this day to all those who stretch out their hands and plead for our help and solidarity. They are our brothers and sisters, created and loved by the one

Heavenly Father. This Day is meant, above all, to encourage believers to react against a culture of discard and waste, and to embrace the culture of encounter. At the same time, everyone, independent of religious affiliation, is invited to openness and sharing with the poor through concrete signs of solidarity and fraternity. God created the heavens and the earth for all; yet sadly some have erected barriers, walls and fences, betraying the original gift meant for all humanity, with none excluded.

7. It is my wish that, in the week preceding the World Day of the Poor, which falls this year on 19 November, the Thirty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time, Christian communities will make every effort to create moments of encounter and friendship, solidarity and concrete assistance. They can invite the poor and volunteers to take part together in the Eucharist on this Sunday, in such a way that there be an even more authentic celebration of the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King, on the following Sunday. The kingship of Christ is most evident on Golgotha, when the Innocent One, nailed to the cross, poor, naked and stripped of everything, incarnates and reveals the fullness of God’s love. Jesus’ complete abandonment to the Father expresses his utter poverty and reveals the power of the Love that awakens him to new life on the day of the Resurrection.

This Sunday, if there are poor people where we live who seek protection and assistance, let us draw close to them: it will be a favourable moment to encounter the God we seek. Following the teaching of Scripture (cf. Gen 18:3-5; Heb 13:2), let us

welcome them as honoured guests at our table; they can be teachers who help us live the faith more consistently. With their trust and readiness to receive help, they show us in a quiet and often joyful way, how essential it is to live simply and to abandon ourselves to God's providence.

8. At the heart of all the many concrete initiatives carried out on this day should always be prayer. Let us not forget that the Our Father is the prayer of the poor. Our asking for bread expresses our entrustment to God for our basic needs in life. Everything that Jesus taught us in this prayer expresses and brings together the cry of all who suffer from life's uncertainties and the lack of what they need. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he answered in the words with which the poor speak to our one Father, in whom all acknowledge themselves as brothers and sisters. The Our Father is a prayer said in the plural: the bread for which we ask is "ours", and that entails sharing, participation and joint responsibility. In this prayer, all of us recognize our need to

overcome every form of selfishness, in order to enter into the joy of mutual acceptance.

9. I ask my brother Bishops, and all priests and deacons who by their vocation have the mission of supporting the poor, together with all consecrated persons and all associations, movements and volunteers everywhere, to help make this World Day of the Poor a tradition that concretely contributes to evangelization in today's world.

This new World Day, therefore, should become a powerful appeal to our consciences as believers, allowing us to grow in the conviction that sharing with the poor enables us to understand the deepest truth of the Gospel. The poor are not a problem: they are a resource from which to draw as we strive to accept and practise in our lives the essence of the Gospel.

From the Vatican, 13 June 2017
Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua

Franciscus
FRANCIS



INTENTION OF THE HOLY FATHER FOR JULY 2017

Lapsed Christians : That our brothers and sisters who have strayed from the faith, through our prayer and witness to the Gospel, may rediscover the merciful closeness of the Lord and the beauty of the Christian life.



POPE'S QUOTE

'Christians Witness Hope That Faith Inspires'

Communications

Thanks to you :

I thank all the priests, religious and the faithful of Vijayawada diocese for your wishes and prayers both in person and in the form of cards/letters on the occasion of the 37th Anniversary of my Priestly Ordination on 07th June. Please continue to pray for me and for our diocese.

Mass Intentions and Mass Diary :

Each Parish Priest is expected to maintain Mass Diary to record all the Mass Intentions received and celebrated (Priest's Personal Mass Dairy). The Mass Diaries are now available in Bishop's House. I request all the priests to take the diaries and record all the details of the Masses.

July Recollection :

There will be a monthly recollection for the pastoral Clergy of the diocese on 19 July, 2017. It will start at 9:30 a.m. and will end with lunch. All the pastoral clergy are obliged to attend the Recollection without fail.

Third Volume Lectionary is Available :

The Third volume of new Lectionary is available both in Bishop's House and at Catholic Centre, Vijayawada for a price of Rs. 800/- each. Volumes 1 & 2 are available as well at the same price.

New Directory of the Diocese :

As it is published earlier, the diocese is planning to bring out new directory giving the up to date information of the diocese. The work has already commenced

at primary level. I request all the parish priests and the heads of the institutions to extend their cooperation in bringing out the new directory. Please do respond promptly when the staff of the Bishop's House approaches you to furnish with the relevant information of your parish or institution. The history of the parishes, the congregations, the institutions and the statistics are required to be gathered and so kindly cooperate to accomplish this work.

New Telephone Directory of the Diocese :

The Telephone directory of the diocese needs to be revised as well. Hence, I request all the priests and the religious to update at the Bishop's House the information about your telephone numbers (landline) and your permanent mobile numbers for better communications. Please do contact Rev. Fr. Kondala Ravikanth, the secretary to Bishop to intimate your latest landline and mobile numbers. Cell No. 8978817703.

Fr. Redaelli, PIME, Scholarships :

Fr. Redaelli Educational Society (Regd.) offers a cash award of Rs. 1,000.00 (Rupees One thousand only) to FIVE Catholic students of 10th Class in every parish who scored highest marks in public examinations March 2017. Hence I request the Parish Priests to instruct the students to submit: Xerox copy (Internet) Marks List/ Grade attested by the Parish Priest along with the Baptism Certificate and a self-addressed postal envelop of the student, complete address with Door No. and PIN

Code and with the student/parent Phone Number.

All the papers should reach Fr. Mallavalli Balaswamy, president, Fr. Redaelli Educational Society, RCM Church, Gannavaram - 521 101 by 15 July 2017. The awards will be disbursed on 15 August 2017, Tuesday, at the premises of Bishop Grassi High School, Gunadala, at 4.00 p.m. and on 16 August, Wednesday, 4.00 p.m. at the RCM Church Gannavaram. Contact No. 91 9849483497

-Fr. M. Balaswamy, President, Fr. Redaelli Educational Society

Camp Sisters for Evangelization :

Rev. Sr. Amala Rani Swamikkannu, the Provincial Superior of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate has appointed Rev. Sr. Arockia Selvi Joseph and Rev. Sr. Disha D' Souza exclusively for the pastoral ministry. The parish priests can avail their services under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Damala Vijaya Kumar, the Director of St. Joseph's Pastoral Centre. Our thanks to the Nirmala Sisters for their commitment to evangelization.

Formal and Non-formal Training by Franciscan Missionary Brothers at Gunadala :

The Franciscan Missionary Brothers at Gunadala are rendering their services in giving the formal and non-formal training to boys in different trades at St. Joseph's ITC and St. Joseph's Technical Training Institute respectively during the academic year 2017-2018. The parish priests are requested to inform the Catholic students of these availabilities and help them build their future.

St. Joseph's ITC (Formal –Affiliated to N.C.V.T, NEW DELHI)

S. no.	Trade	Duration	Available Seats	Qualifications
01	Electronics	2 years	20	10 Pass
02	Fitter	2 years	20	10 Pass
03	Welder	I Year	30	08 Pass
04.	Carpentry	1 Year	15	08 Pass

Please Note:

- Only 50% of the above available seats will be selected by the institute while the other 50% will be done by the DSC of Government ITC.
- The students who opt Welding and Carpentry trades have to pay the fee as prescribed by the government.
- The students have to submit the copy of the caste certificate along with the other certificates.
- The applications are being issued from 20.05.2017
- The filled in applications have to be submitted by 20.07.2017
- Hostel facility is available.

St. Joseph Technical Training Institute (Non-Formal-Training Options for Early School Leavers)

Non-formal training is for all the drop-out boys and especially for the poor and the orphans. Here below are the available trades:

S.no.	Trade	Duration	Available Seats
01	Welding	1 year	20
02	Carpentry	1 year	25

Please Note:

- The applicants have to submit the copy of T.C. along with passport photos
- Catholic students should submit Baptism certificate. Non-Christians have to submit the birth-certificate.
- Catholic students need the recommendation letter from their parish priest while the other students should get the certificate from the secretary of the Panchayat.
- Free hostel facility is available.

For further details please contact: Principal, St. Joseph's Technical Training Institute, Gunadala. Telephone No. (0866) 2455222, 2450295.

A Seminar on the Awareness of BCC

(Vicariate level Meetings for Catechists)

A seminar on the awareness of Basic Christian Communities will be conducted at Vicariate level to all the catechists of the diocese. This is in view of reviving the BCC programme at the diocesan level. Therefore the parish priests are requested to encourage the catechists to participate in the seminar conducted at different venues of your respective vicariates as indicated below.

1. Gudivada Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
	Gudivada Town
Date: 10 July 2017	Goodmanpeta
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Polukonda
Venue: Gudivada Town Parish	Vennanapudi
	Vetrapragada
	Gudlavalleru

Group 2

Date: 11 July 2017	Name of the Parish
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Pamarru
Venue: Pamarru Parish	Vuyyuru

2. Korukollu Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
Date: 17 July 2017	Kalidindi
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Mudinepalli
Venue: Kalidindi Parish	Kaikaluru
	Bhyravapatnam
	Bhaskaraopeta

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
Date: 18 July 2017	Bantumilli
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Kothapalli
Venue: Korukollu Parish	Lakshmipuram
	Korukollu

3. Machilipatnam Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
Date: 24 July 2017	Manginapudi
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Machilipatnam
Venue: Konkepudi Parish	Pedana
	Saradhanagar
	Konkepudi

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
	Challapalli
Date: 25 July 2017	Avanigadda
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Nagayalanka
Venue: Challapalli Parish	Yesupuram
	Koduru
	Kuchipudi

4. Nandigama Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
Date: 7 August 2017	Keesara
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Kanchikacherla
Venue: Kanchikacherla Parish	Bodavada-Jammavaram
	Jagannadhapuram

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
Date: 8 August 2017	Nandigama
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Siluvagirinagar
Venue: Nandigama Parish	Nawabupeta
	Munagalapalli
	Thurlapadu

Group 3

	Name of the Parish
Date: 9 August 2017	Chillakallu
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Jaggayyapeta
Venue: Chillakallu Parish	Muchinthala
	Vatsavai

5. Nuzvid Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
	Nuzvid
Date: 21 August 2017	Nehrupeta
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Musunuru
Venue: Nuzvid Town Parish	Ramanakkapeta
	Thukkuluru
	Edulagudem

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
Date: 22 August 2017	Mylavaram
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Edara
Venue: Edara Parish	Agiripalli

6. Thiruvuru Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
	Vissannapeta
Date: 28 August 2017	Lourdhunagar
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Chanubanda
Venue: Chatrai Parish	Chatrai
	Velagalagudem
	Kotapadu

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
Date: 29 August 2017	Kambhampadu
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Thiruvuru
Venue: Kambhampadu Parish	Gampalagudem
	Penugolanu

7. St. Paul’s Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
Date: 11 September 2107	St. Paul’s Cathedral
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Gunadala
Venue: Pastoral Centre	Labbipeta
	Christurajapuram
	Ranigarithota

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
Date: 12 September 2107	Kankipadu
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Vanukuru
Venue: Kankipadu Parish	Kanuru
	Penamaluru

8. St. Peter’s Co Cathedral Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
	Pezzonieta
Date: 18 September 2107	St. Peter’s Co Cathedral
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Satyanarayanapuram
Venue: Pezzonieta Parish	Rajarajeswaropeta
	Vellaturu

	Jakkampudi
	Ajithsingnagar
	Nunna

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
	Gollapudi
Date: 19 September 2107	Joji Nagar
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Guntupalli
Venue: Pastoral Centre	Kondapalli
	Ibrahimpattanam
	Paidurupadu

9. Avutapalli Vicariate – Group 1

	Name of the Parish
	Azzampudi
	Uppaluru
Date: 25 September 2107	Gannavaram
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Enikepadu
Venue: Azzampudi Parish	Kesarapalli
	Kondapavuluru
	Velpuru
	Peda Musthabad

Group 2

	Name of the Parish
Date: 26 September 2107	Telaprolu
Time: 10 am – 4 pm	Hanuman Junction
Venue: Telaprolu Parish	Arugolanu
	Avutapally
	Mallavalli

- Fr. Vijaya Kumar Damala, Director, St. Joseph's Pastoral Centre, Carmel Nagar.

Contributions to Diocese in May - June, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY COLLECTIONS OF CITY PARISHES

S.no.	Name of the Parish	May	June
01	Labbipeta	₹. 4,265.00	₹. 4,010.00
02.	Ranigarithota	₹. 1,471.00	₹. 1,688.00
03.	Kankipadu		₹. 3,155.00
04.	Christurajapuram	₹. 2,207.00	₹. 2,432.00
05.	Carmelnagar	₹. 511.00	₹. 589.00
06.	Pezzonipeta	₹. 6,465.00	₹. 6,835.00
07.	Satyanarayanapuram	₹. 1,746.00	₹. 2,262.00
08.	Gollapudi	₹. 2,410.00	₹. 2,250.00
09.	St. Paul's Cathedral	₹. 17,480.00	₹. 16,280.00
10.	Ajithsinghnagar	₹. 2,156.00	₹. 2,342.00
11.	Gunadala Matha Shrine	₹. 20,133.00	₹. 24,570.00
12.	Jojinagar	₹. 3,691.00	₹. 3,461.00
13.	St. Peter's Co-Cathedral	₹. 12,500.00	₹. 13,000.00
14.	Kanuru		₹. 2,350.00
Total		₹. 75,035.00	₹. 85,224.00

MASSES

11.05.2017	Kesarapalli @ Rs.100	80	₹. 8,000.00
	Kesarapalli @Rs.70	05	₹. 350.00
03.06.2017	Joji Nagar@ Rs.100	47	₹. 4,700.00
06.06.2017	Kanchikacherla @ Rs.100	21	₹. 2,100.00
20.06.2017	St. Paul's Cathedral @ Rs.100	45	₹. 4,500.00
29.06.2017	Gunadalamatha Shrine @Rs. 100	640	₹. 64,000.00
03.07.2017	St. Peter's Co-Cathedral	60	₹. 6,000.00
Total		991	₹. 85,650.00

FAMILY CARDS

20.06.2017	St. Paul's Cathedral	₹. 4,500.00
29.06.2017	Gunadalamatha Shrine	₹. 20,080.00
03.07.2017	St. Peter's Co-Cathedral	₹. 7,000.00

Lenten Campaign – Hunger And Disease

S.no.	Date	Name of the Parish /Institution	Collection
01	06.06.2017	Kanchikacherla	Rs. 3,216.00
02.	14.06.2017	Sacred Heart Convent, Gudivada	Rs. 5,000.00
TOTAL			Rs. 8,216.00

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday Collections

S.no.	Date	Name of the Parish / Institution	Maundy Thursday	Good Friday
01	06.06.2017	Kanchikacherla	1,567.00	2,560.00
02.	21.06.2017	Vellaturu	1,226.00	3,046.00
03.	22.06.2017	Pezzonipeta	2,150.00	8,350.00
04.	28.06.2017	Mallavalli	200.00	300.00
Total			5,143.00	14,256.00

News from the Parishes

Grotto Blessing at Valivarthipadu, Goodmanpet Parish

The community of Valivarthipadu had the most significant day on 24 June, 2017 when the grotto of Our Lady of Fatima was blessed by Most Rev. Thelagathoti Joseph Raja Rao S.M.M., Bishop of Vijayawada. His Excellency presided over the Eucharistic celebration, concelebrated by the priests of the vicariate. His Excellency in his homily narrated the apparition of Our Lady at Fatima to the little children and the instrumentality of Our Mother in helping the Church to work for salvation of mankind. His Excellency extolled very much the goodness of the poor faithful who secured their chapel with the compound wall and adorned with the artistic grotto. The faithful were very happy to celebrate with joyous hearts joining their chief shepherd. Special thanks to Fr. Merugumala Anil, the assistant parish priest

and the religious nuns of Goodmanpet and Gudivada parishes.

*Fr. Bantumilli Yohan, Parish priest,
Goodmanpet.*

Grotto Blessing at Gandepalli, Keesara Parish

The long awaited grand day for the faithful of Gandepalli (165 families), the main substation of Keesara parish had come to reality on 25 June, 2017. The community of Gandepalli had voluntarily under the guidance of the parish priest Fr. Sebastian Kottoor, raised the funds and built a beautiful grotto in honour of Mary, Help of Christians. His Excellency, Most Rev. Thelagathoti Joseph Raja Rao S.M.M., Bishop of Vijayawada inaugurated and blessed the grotto of Our Lady. The solemn mass was celebrated by His Excellency along with the priests and religious of the vicariate. His Excellency praised the faithful of the village for their coordination and cooperation in building up the grotto. The faithful felicitated the Bishop and the priests who were invited for the celebration. The celebration came to an end with the sharing of the meal by the villagers.

Fr. Sebastian Kottoor, Parish Priest, Keesara.



Feast of Patron of St. Peter's Co-Cathedral, Vijayawada

The Solemnity of the Sts. Peter and Paul, the patrons of the diocese of Vijayawada was joyfully celebrated at St. Peter's Co-Cathedral parish on 29 June, 2017. A large number of faithful irrespective of the religions participated in this feast. His Excellency Most Rev. Thelagathoti Joseph Raja Rao S.M.M., Bishop of Vijayawada celebrated the Solemn Mass with the 47 priests of the vicariate and the diocese. The women religious from different communities of the diocese partook in this celebration.

Rev. Fr. Ravishekar Dusi S.J., the Rector of Andhra Loyola College, broke the Word of God on the solemn day. He highlighted the role of Sts. Peter and Paul as the prominent columns of our Christian faith. His Excellency administered the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation to the children of the parish. 52 children received the Holy Communion for the first time and 45 were given confirmation. His Excellency spoke about the importance of Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians. He Excellency encouraged the faithful to live according to the fruits of the Holy Spirit and have the faith of Sts. Peter and Paul to proclaim Christ through our way of life.



The parish priest Fr. Muvvala Prasad, thanked His Excellency, the priests, religious and the faithful for making the feast grand by their graceful presence. He appreciated Fr. Maddala Vinay, the assistant parish priest, the religious of the parish, the elders and the youth for their kind cooperation.

Fr. Muvvala Prasad, Vicar General & Parish Priest, St. Peter's Co-Cathedral, Vijayawada

Silver Jubilee Celebrations at Krishnavaram, Mallavalli Parish

The faithful of Krishnavaram, substation of Mallavalli parish honoured Silver Jubilarian, Rev. Sr. Veerabathina Prasanna, member of Augustinian Congregation of German Origin on 22 June, 2017. She served as nurse in Germany for 12 years and at present she is working in Kummili, Kerala.

On that day at 10.30 a.m., Rev. Fr. Thota Gabriel, the Vicar General of Eluru diocese presided over the Eucharistic celebration. Rev. Fr. Inje Paul, Rector of Diocesan Minor Seminary preached on Prerana. The family and the villagers honoured the silver Jubilarian. Sr. V. Prasanna thanked all the priests and the faithful who made the celebration solemn. The celebration came to conclusion with the sharing of the meal.

-Fr. P. John, CM, Parish Priest, Mallavalli

News from Social Service Centre

Empowerment Programme at Vatsavai Parish: Organized by SSC

Social Service Centre has organized an awareness and motivation campaign at Vatsavai mandal on 15 May 2017. ICM Sisters are working at Vatsavai Mandal in coordination with SSC on different women issues and they are active in income generation program run by SSC. Sisters have brought to notice of SSC, many family disputes that are faced by women in this area. Two women were killed due to family disputes but the families of these women did not get any legal help due to their poverty and ignorance. There are many other women problems like health issues, illiteracy, malnutrition of children, trafficking.

On these issues SSC has organized an awareness meeting for the women at Vatsavai. 200 women from Vatsavai and



nearby villages have participated. Mrs. Leela Kumari, LLB, Advocate, has given a lot of information with regards to legal issues concerning family disputes and domestic violence. Mr. P. Ratnam MSW has also spoken to women on issues of health, education and trafficking.

Fr. Thomas Pasala, Executive Director, Sr. Josephine ICM, Sr. Usha, Mrs. Vani, Mr. Udayabanu SSC Staff and Fr. Neelam Lourdu Raj and Fr. Kuchipudi Prashanth, parish priests of Vatsavai and Chillakallu respectively have participated.

SSC Women Groups

Fr. Thomas along with staff had visited and interacted with the women groups and gave loans at Korukollu, Tamirsi, Nidamanuru, Khambampadu and Gollapudi during the month of June.



APSSS Vijayawada Diocese

APSSS staff of Vijayawada Diocese along with APSSS Executive Director Mrs. Karuna Kumari and Fr. Thomas Pasala Director of APSSS Vijayawada met at SSC office for their annual review meeting on 12 May. In that meeting, APSSS programs in Vijayawada Diocese were reviewed and new responsibilities were given to the staff and activities for the coming year were planned.

-Fr. Pasala Thomas, Director, Social Service Centre, Gunadala

News from Prayrana Youth Centre

Youth Meeting at Bhyravapatnam Parish

On 27th of May 2017, the youth meeting was conducted at Bhyravapatnam parish. There was a large and active participation of youth. The theme of the day was Get Connected. The present youth is more connected with the world than God. There was a nice workshop on the theme of the day. The youth are exhorted to get connected to God after which God will connect everything we want. We helped the youth to be aware of the wrong connections, which lead them to destroy their lives. This youth meeting really helped the Youth of the Bhyravapatnam parish to be connected to God, Church, Family and Moral Values. I



sincerely thank Fr. Jeeva Kumar the parish priest for arranging wonderful youth meeting and helping the poor people to study by giving note books to everyone.

Youth meeting at Kotapadu parish

On 28th of May 2017 we had youth gathering at Kotapadu Parish a remote village. It was so good to see the remote village. They are very simple and obedient. We have given them very good inputs to



get awareness in choosing their careers for their life. They are actively participating in the church activities under the guidance of Fr. Y. Thambi, the parish priest. I express my sincere thanks to Fr. Y.Thambi for conducting a very good youth gathering in the parish. In fact the whole village people took part in this youth gathering.

Youth meeting at St.Paul's Cathedral

A one day youth meeting was conducted at St. Paul's Cathedral for the youth of the parish by Fr. Basani Papi Reddy, the parish priest on 25th June 2017. Many young boys and girls participated actively in this meeting. The meeting was animated by the diocesan youth director, Rev. Fr. K. Anil Francis.

Rev. Fr. Shekar, the assistant parish priest, is very happy to take care of the youth



ministry in the parish. I express my thanks to Fr. B. Papi Reddy, Fr. Shekar and Nirmala Sisters for their cooperation in this youth meeting.

Youth meeting at Gannavaram parish in Vicariate level

On 26th June, youth convention was held at Gannavaram parish for the youth of Avutapalli Vicariate. Good number of youth attended this convention. We had a great session to give inputs to youth to be a light to the family, church and society. The youth were touched by the Word of God and lit by the light of Christ to give vibrant light to the society. Fr. M. Balaswamy, the Parish Priest and Vicar Forane started the convention with prayer and Fr. Sleeva Raju gave an inspiring talk.

A special word of appreciation and thanks to all the parish priests of Avutapalli



Vicariate for encouraging and sending the youth to attend the convention. I sincerely thank Sr. Prema and Sr. Helen for their presence. I thank the youth of Gannavaram parish who took the initiative to conduct this convention and also the elders and members of St. Vincent de Paul Society and faithful of Gannavaram parish for their cooperation. My heartfelt thanks to all the youth for attending this one day youth convention.

Fr. K. Anil Francis, Youth Director Prayrana Youth Centre, Gunadala.

News from Laity Commission

Laity Sunday Celebrations at Social Service Centre

Laity Sunday Celebration was organized by the Laity Commission of the diocese on the 25th June, 2017 at Social Service Centre, Gunadala at 11.00 a.m. Dr. Maddala Anthony, the general secretary of the commission welcomed the guests and the



gathering and introduced the day's theme. Fr. Swaminadham briefed the history of St. Thomas More who was born in London in 1478, studied at Oxford University and became a lawyer and later on elected as the member of the Parliament. He became the advisor to Emperor Henry VIII. He was declared the Patron Saint of the laity by St. John Paul II.

Most Rev. Thelagathoti Joseph Raja Rao S.M.M. Bishop of Vijayawada, was the chief guest. His Excellency appreciated the laity representing 14 associations for their active participation and well sorted programme. In his address, His Excellency exhorted the lay leaders to play an active



role in the activities of the Church. He quoted the Church in Papua New Guinea (Mini Vatican), which is fully organized by the laity except the celebration of the Mass and administering of the sacraments. He expressed his aspiration of organizing various programmes to strengthen the role of the laity at the diocesan level. Fr. Pasala Thomas, the Director of Diocesan Social

Service Centre gave good suggestion to the Commission and held that the meeting of this sort should be organized on regular basis.

Various associations like Catholic Association, Legion of Mary, Vincent de Paul Society, Newman Association, Retired Employers' Association, Cultural Wing, Youth Association, Lawyers Forum leaders etc. participated representing the city parishes. Mr. Yesupadam thanked His Excellency, Fr. Thomas, the spiritual director, the city parish priests and the participants. The meeting ended with the blessing of the Bishop.

Fr. I.M.Swaminadham, Director, Diocesan Laity Commission, Vijayawada.

Special Feature: An Interview with Fr. John Pottamkuzhiyil CM

“We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do.”

St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata

A Journey to Inner Self

“I belong to the congregation of the Mission (CM) founded by Vincent de Paul in 1617, i.e., four hundred years ago. We are missionaries at Abroad and Carthusians at Home.” These are the opening words of **Fr. John Pottamkuzhiyil CM**, who is proud to be part of CM family when asked for a chat during the interview.

Fr. John has been a missionary for 41 long years from 1976, still going on, in the mission places belonging to the states of Odissa and Andhra Pradesh. He is popularly known as the **CYCLE-PRIEST** in the dioceses of Eluru and Vijayawada (20 years)

particularly as he did his ministry travelling by cycle (1982-2009). He pedalled until his knees were worn out. Even at the age of 70 he never restrained from the obligation of manual labour in



his daily personal time-table. His simple life even now is an agent of witness to God and a resolution to his pastoral ministry. He is highly esteemed by the priests and especially the faithful for his pastoral care. He always aimed at the restoration of the

lost sheep of the Church and worked on it tirelessly smelling the pastoral needs of the sheep. He is an unspoken worker of God but astounding pastor of the faithful.

Fr. John please tell me something about your family and your early life.

I was born on 22 January 1947 at Neezhioor, Kottayam Archdiocese, Kerala. My parents are Thomas Joseph and Elizabeth. My father died before I became priest (1971), whereas my mother expired after seeing 30 years of my priestly life (2005). I have two brothers and one sister. I did my primary education at St. John's Lower Primary School, Thurthipalli and High School studies at NSS High School, Kattampack, Kerala.

I joined the Minor Seminary at Bhanjanagar, Odissa for the Congregation of Mission in 1965 after completing my SSLC for Initiation course. After that I was sent for Novitiate at Stella Maris, Gopalpur and for Philosophy in Aquinas College, Gopalpur, Odissa along with degree. I completed my Theological studies at St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Aluva. After a period of ten years of formation I was ordained on 19 December, 1975 for the Congregation of Missions.

When did you first think of becoming a missionary?

To be truthful, I do not have special vocation story. I had a very simple course of action. My Uncle Br. John Chirayath of Sacred Heart Congregation was my great inspiration. Actually, he wanted me to become a diocesan priest but I preferred to

become a missionary and that's how I am here now. As a child when I reached the age of some understanding, I was regular to Mass and actively participating in Church activities. The life of the priests and the religious sisters of my parish made impact on me. That motivated me to choose the life of a missionary.

Father, Please tell me about your missionary work.

Soon after my ordination, I was sent to Alligonda Odissa (1976-79) as the assistant parish priest. From 1979 onwards I worked as the parish priest of Tenthulikundi, Odissa (1979-82), Kamavarapukota, Eluru (1982-84), Koyalagudem, Gauravaram (1985-86), Karakaipet, East Godavari Dt. (1986-87), Kannapuram, West Godavari Dt. (1987-89), Kanchili, Srikakulam (1989-93). In 1993 I went to Iritti, Kerala for the Apostolate of Agriculture for a period of five years.

In 1997, I made my first entry into the diocese at the invitation of late Bishop Marampudi Joji to work as the parish priest of Kanchikacherla. I worked there till 2004 and was transferred to Velpur where I worked for eight years. After a break of two months of ministry in Yerrupalem, I again came back to Vijayawada diocese to take charge of Mallavalli parish on July 28, 2012. At present I am the local superior of the community, staying at Singannagudem and looking after four substations of Mallavalli parish. (Rangannagudem, Narayanapuram, Kommuru and Krishnavaram). Except those specific five years in Kerala (1993-97), I have been working in mission places.

What was and is your pastoral plan which brought you reputation as a good pastor?

I do not have special tactics in my ministry. It is very simple. In the first place, it is like telling to my mind and heart that I should be available to my people. It is similar to Jesus going in search of the His sheep. I never hesitated to spend my time in visiting every house of my parish wherever I worked. It is my first priority. In fact, I visit each family twice a year or sometimes more than that in my parish even now.

In my first parish, I visited 60 villages under Aligondla parish and stayed in the villages and I used to say three Masses daily. I used to travel 35 kms to reach some of the substations by foot. I had to go by foot because it was a hilly area. I baptized 3000 harijans and girijans within 3 years of my stay as the assistant parish priest. That is the greatest satisfaction I had in my life.

Secondly, I never make my people wait when they approach me for any need. I used to respect them as they always did. My immediate response to them at any part of the day gained me their respect and love.

Hailing from Kerala, you worked first in Odissa and then in Andhra. How did you overcome language barrier?

To be specific, when I came to work in Srikakulam diocese, in the beginning I had a Telugu teacher. He taught me basics for one month. Then I made good use of the media of the time (1976) like newspapers and magazines to learn both Odiya and Telugu languages according to the place. In the next stage my conversation with the faithful helped me a lot. Anyhow people were good

enough to bear me when I knew little of the languages. I always liked to interact with the people and have a friendly talk with them. In addition to this, I used to make an extra effort to prepare my homilies in local language. Normally I do not preach long but short homilies.

Father John, did you face any challenging moments in your ministry?

(After a wholehearted laughter which is his hallmark) There weren't any challenges in my pastoral life to specify. I am a person who is not interested in controversies and I never allowed myself to enter into such situations. I was fully involved in my works and responsibilities. If at all there was a difference or discomfort with persons, I used to smile at them and that would ease us all. Added to this, my simple life-style is a great advantage to me and that helped me to resolve many problems and I could even avoid them.

Would you like to share your experience with the young priests?

Yes, I would like to share what I am and how I am. God assisted me with His Grace and Providence all through my priestly life. But that Grace of God can be effectively experienced or shared with others only through our instrumentality. For that, I never did wonders. I am always sincere and hardworking. Simple thinking and living are great assets for the life of witness. I never get angry with my people because they do not expect that from me. My broad smile is always my best companion.

National / International News

Declare St Teresa's birthday 'Compassion Day': Mumbai NGO to UN

The International Day of Compassion aims to commemorate Mother Teresa's work among the poorest of the poor.

A Mumbai-based NGO on Tuesday urged the United Nations to declare August 26, the birth anniversary of St Mother Teresa, International Compassion Day. In a statement, Harmony Foundation President Abraham Mathai said compassion is the need of the hour and what better way to have the world observe International Day of Compassion than by celebrating it on the birth anniversary of Mother Teresa, "whose life symbolised compassion and hope".

"The Harmony Foundation has decided to celebrate August 26 as the International Day of Compassion to commemorate Mother Teresa's work among the poorest, hungry, homeless, crippled, lepers and the most unwanted people of society shunned by all. We have written to the UN to likewise declare the day in honour of her selfless services," Mathai said.

The NGO said it will work towards a world of "compassion without border" by



launching acts of compassion in India and abroad on August 26.

Bishops seek government help in probing priest's death

Fr. Xavier was the parish priest of the St Francis Xavier's Church in Scotland, and was also pursuing his studies simultaneously.

New Delhi:

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) has urged the federal government to facilitate a probe into the mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of a Catholic priest last week in the United Kingdom. The CBCI has requested the Minister for External Affairs to facilitate the prob "into the circumstances surrounding the death" of Father Martin Xavier Vazhachira, said Father Joseph Chinnayyan, Deputy Secretary General of the conference.

The bishops are "deeply saddened at the tragic death" of the priest a member of the Carmelite of Mary Immaculate order who was currently serving in the Diocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh in Scotland, Father Chinnayyan said. The 33-year-old Keralite priest was found dead on a Scottish beach June 23, four days after he went missing from his residence.



External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj on Sunday expressed condolences on the priest's death and asked the Consulate General of India in Edinburgh to provide help. A message about the death of Martin Xavier Vazhachira, belonging to the CMI Congregation, was received by the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate provincial in Thiruvananthapuram from the Archbishop of St Andrews in Edinburgh, on Saturday.

1,600-year-old basilica found underwater in what was ancient Nicaea

Zelda Caldwell | Jun 28, 2017

Archaeologists in Turkey suspect the church may have been built in the year 325, following the First Council of Nicaea.

The remains of a 1,600-year-old Byzantine basilica have been discovered at the site of the Councils of Nicaea, at the bottom of a lake in northwest Turkey.

“We have found church remains. It is in a basilica plan and has three naves,” said Mustafa Şahin, an archaeology professor at Bursa Uludağ University, told Hurriyet News.

Plans are now underway to open an underwater museum to allow tourists to view the foundation of the church, which



was found lying in 5-7 feet of water in Lake İznik, in Bursa, Turkey.

The ancient basilica was discovered by aerial photographs taken in 2014 during an inventory of historical and cultural artifacts, according to an article in Hurriyet News.

History of the Underwater Basilica

According to Sahin, the church was most likely built in the 4th century, in honor of St. Neophytos who was martyred during the time of Roman emperor Diocletian in 303. Neophytos had travelled to Nicaea (now modern-day northwest Turkey) to denounce the pagan faith during the Diocletian persecution. The basilica was built on the spot where he was killed by Roman soldiers in a most brutal manner:

The enraged persecutors suspended the saint from a tree, they whipped him with ox thongs, and scraped his body with iron claws. Then they threw him into a red-hot oven, but the holy martyr remained unharmed, spending three days and three nights in it. The torturers, not knowing what else to do with him, decided to kill him. One of the pagans ran him through with a sword (some say it was a spear), and the saint departed to the Lord at the age of sixteen. – Orthodox Church of America. It is possible, according to Sahin, that the basilica was built as a result of the First Council of Nicaea, convened by Emperor Constantine the Great in the year 325.

“Most probably, it could have been built in 325 after the first council meeting in İznik. In any case, we think that the church was built in the 4th century or a further

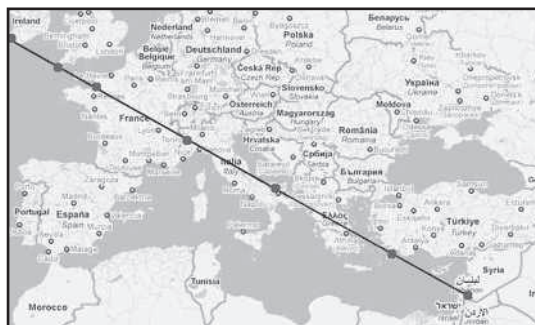
date. It is interesting that we have gravures from the Middle Ages depicting this killing. We see Neophytos being killed on the lake coast,” Sahin told Hurriyet News.

Archaeologists have determined that the basilica collapsed during an earthquake in 740 and was never rebuilt. The ruins were submerged over time by changes in the water level of the lake. The discovery of the basilica was named one of the Top 10 Discoveries of 2014 by the Archaeological Institute of America.

7 Sanctuaries linked by a straight line: The legendary Sword of St. Michael

Gelsomino Del Guercio | May 31, 2017

According to legend, the line represents the blow with which St. Michael sent the devil to hell. A mysterious imaginary line links seven monasteries, from Ireland to Israel. Is it just a coincidence? These seven sanctuaries are very far from each other, and yet they are perfectly aligned (siviaggia. it). The Sacred Line of Saint Michael the Archangel represents, according to legend,



the blow the Saint inflicted the Devil, sending him to hell.

In any case, it is surprising how well these sanctuaries are, in fact, aligned. But the details of such alignment are also astonishing: the three most important sites, Mont Saint Michel in France; the Sacra of San Miguel in Val de Susa; and the Sanctuary of Monte Sant'Angelo in the Gargano are all the same distance one from the other. Some say this is a reminder from the Holy Archangel: the faithful are expected to be righteous, walking the straight path.

If all this was not surprising enough, the Sacred Line also is perfectly aligned with the sunset on the day of the Northern Hemisphere's Summer Solstice (www.viagginews.com).



Vatican News

Cardinal Ivan Dias Dies

Indian Cardinal Ivan Dias, a kind, smiley and discreet priest, has died in Rome on 19 June 2017. He was 81 years old. He worked for years as a diplomat of the Holy See. In 1996, John Paul II appointed him archbishop of Mumbai and years later made him a cardinal.

Benedict XVI called him to Rome in 2006 as prefect of the Congregation for the Peoples. Despite needing a wheelchair, he



participated in the last conclave and said that he was the first cardinal to greet the new Pope Francis.

The Exscquial Mass was held at St. Peter's Basilica at 3 pm (Italian Time) on Wednesday, 21st June. It was presided over by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Dean of College of Cardinals, joined by several Cardinals, including the CBCI President, Cardinal Baselios Cleemis, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Cardinal Telesphore Toppo and others. The final prayers of the funeral Rites were offered by His Holiness Pope Francis. The mortal remains of the diseased Cardinal were interned in the Verano Cemetry of the Propaganda Fide, Rome, on Thursday morning, 22nd June.

In short, Cardinal Ivan Dias was a perfect gentleman, seasoned Vatican Diplomat, able administrator, strict disciplinarian, zealous missionary and finally, to quote Pope Francis "a wise and gentle pastor".

Fr. Nazarene Soosai is Appointed as the New Bishop of Kottar (20-5-2017)

The Holy Father Pope Francis has appointed Rev. Fr. Nazarene Soosai, pastor of the Our Lady of Ransom parish of Kanyakumari in Kottar, as the bishop of the diocese of Kottar, India. The Holy Father has accepted the resignation from the pastoral care of the diocese of Kottar, India, presented by His Excellency Msgr. Peter Remigius.

Rev. Nazarene Soosai was born in Rajakkalamngalamthurai in the diocese of Kottar on 13 April 1963. He studied

at the St. Aloysius' minor seminary in Nagercoil, concluding his philosophical and theological studies at the Sacred Heart Seminary in Poonamallee, Chennai. He obtained a licentiate in theology from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, and a doctorate from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He also holds a master's degree in political sciences from the University of Madurai. On 2 April 1989 he received priestly ordination for the diocese of Kottar.

He has performed his priestly ministry in the following offices: deputy priest of the Our Lady of Presentation church in Colachel (1989-1990); prefect of studies at the Tamil Nadu Xavier Mission Home in Nagercoil (1990-1992), and at the same time secretary of the diocesan commission for vocations; pastor of the St. Helen's parish in Enayam, and ecclesiastical assistant of the Christian Life Community and secretary of the Diocesan Priests Personal Board (1992-1998); student, specializing in theology, in Leuven, Belgium

(1998-2000); student, obtaining a doctorate in Rome (2000-2003); dean and professor of theology at the Sacred Heart seminary in Poonamallee, Chennai (2003-



2011); since March 2012, pastor at the Shrine of Our Lady of Ransom in Kanyakumari and vicar forane of the vicariate of Kanyakumari, and at the same time visiting professor at the Sacred Heart seminary in Poonamallee, Chennai, and at various other universities and institutes (Madras University, Chennai; CRI Theological Institute, Bangalore; Sason Sambalpur, Odisha; Salesian Theological Institute, Chennai; St. Paul's seminary, Tiruchirapalli; Arul Kadal, Chennai). The episcopal ordination will be held on June 29, 2017.

Priests need real “friends” too, says pope

Diane Montagna | Jun 23, 2017; Becoming “friends” is more than the click of a button.

VATICAN CITY — Being a true friend to priests and seminarians is a great gift the laity can offer to the Church, Pope Francis said on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Addressing lay men and women from Serra International, a group dedicated to promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life, the pope lamented that the word “friend” has become a bit overused today, especially on social media. He also called on laity to recover the true meaning of friendship revealed to us in Jesus Christ.



Real vs. Virtual friends

“Friend” is one of the most frequently found words in virtual communication, Pope Francis told the Serrans. “Yet we know that superficial knowledge has little to do with that experience of encounter or closeness evoked by the word ‘friend.’” When Jesus speaks of his “friends,” the pope noted, he points to a hard truth: “true friendship involves an encounter that draws me so near to the other person that I give something of my very self.”

Jesus says to his disciples: “No longer do I call you servants... but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you” (Jn 15:15).

Jesus thus establishes “a new relationship” between God and man, freeing friendship from “sentimentalism,” Pope Francis said. He shows us that friendship involves a “responsibility that embraces our entire life: ‘Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends’ (Jn 15:13).”

The pope said we become friends only if “our encounter with another person is more than something outward or formal.” True friendship, he said, involves “sharing in the life of another person, an experience of compassion, a relationship that involves giving ourselves for others.” Friends “stand at our side ... they listen to us closely, and can see beyond mere words; they are merciful when faced with our faults; they are non-judgmental,” he said. “They do not always

indulge us but, precisely because they love us, they honestly tell us when they disagree. They are there to pick us up whenever we fall.” To be a true friend to priests means knowing how to “accompany and sustain them in faith, in fidelity to prayer and apostolic commitment,” the pontiff told lay men and women of Serra International. Lay people who offer priests true friendship, the pope said, “are like the home of Bethany, where Jesus entrusted his weariness to Martha and Mary, and, thanks to their care, was able to find rest and refreshment.”

A Cassock: Work clothes, not a dress uniform

Dk. Michał Lubowicki - Poland | Jun 25, 2017

Wearing a cassock can and should be a form of prayer, but just putting it on isn't enough.

The first day he put on a cassock, a seminarian got a letter from a friend, a few years his senior. This is what he learned about his cassock:

A CASSOCK :

Today in your eyes it is more beautiful than a bride's dress. You are truly and rightfully happy wearing it; after all, you have been waiting for it since the time you entered the seminary. I can only hope that you will be equally happy when it has come to be what its color implies, i.e. a deadly shroud and a dying uniform. Today it is a bride's dress you enthuse over, along with your family and friends. Be as enthusiastic about it when it starts to be your solitary confinement, cage and furnace where God

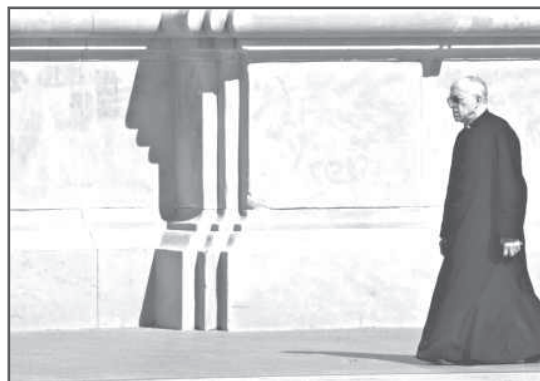
will melt and purify you, an uncomfortable hermitage.

This bride's dress, when necessary, will be your armor, provided you care to remember and use it this way. Wearing a cassock can and should be a form of prayer in itself, but it does not become a prayer just by putting it on.

POCKETS:

The deep ones are meant to store all the things you will share with others. Always have something to give away to the needy and children. Remember that they will appreciate a little money, your smile, and a word of solace more than your impeccable hymn singing. This is because people need first and foremost to hear that they are loved, and even more so to feel that this is true.

An inside breast pocket. It is not meant for holding an expensive pen. Carry in it letters you do not know how to answer, notes with the names of those you have promised to pray for, other people's bills you have decided to pay, addresses you know should be visited, as their occupants will never come to you on their own, pictures of dogs, cats, grandchildren, and people in love



as well as tree leaves and drawings nursery students have offered you. Keep this pocket filled at all times.

May your cassock always be a nuisance and a stumbling block when you start putting on airs and strutting like a peacock, falling prey to your vaulting ambitions. May you always stumble on it when you are led astray. Do not worry – it will stick in your way.

Do not be afraid to tuck it up and run to help your neighbor, even if you will look like a clown.

SLEEVES can be rolled up. The cuff reminds you that a cassock is no dress uniform, but work clothes. But roll up your sleeves only to do the work He wants you to do, never to further your own agenda. I sincerely wish that your cassock would show white salt marks: the ones on the back will be the signs of your sweat, the ones on the chest will be the marks of tears, both yours and those who, hugged by you, will confide in you their hundreds of worries big and small, grave and frivolous. I wish that these white salt marks would appear sooner than the first streaks of grey in your hair.

Do not be afraid to crumple and soil your cassock, coming to the rescue of the needy and wounded. Do not hesitate to tear it up to make bandage and dressing for human wounds. Remember that, if need be, it can

be converted into a cloak or a tent.

May it quickly show traces of wear and tear on the knees and shoulders, signs of your prayer and bearing other people's burdens. May it not show such signs on the behind and elbows, indicators that you have sat down a lot or elbowed your way through the crowd.

Love your cassock but do not love yourself in it. First and foremost, love the Church who has given it to you. And love Jesus, who has offered you the Church and who has offered you to the Church, for which I am myself so grateful to Him.

Remember that passengers on a bus or on the metro believe they have more right to take a seat than a priest. Frankly speaking, it is immaterial whether they are right or not. What matters is that even when people hate you, they must not hate God. More and more people will look at you; after all, your cassock gives you a lot of visibility. It also intimidates, and there will be fewer people brave enough to criticize you. This does not mean, however, that there will be no grounds for criticism.

Remember that your cassock is not the packaging of a completed product. The Lord has clothed you in it to mercifully hide your inadequacies and deficiencies. *Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly (John 13:17).*

Days to Remember in the month of July

ORDINATION DAY: HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS

- 11th Fr. Rayappa Reddy, SDB
 20th Fr. Francis Xavier Anthony Samy SJ
 24th Frs. Kakumanu Kiran, Marri Philomin Raju, Bala OMI
 25th Fr. Bezwada Samuel John
 29th Fr. Mariadas K, PSDP



HAPPY BIRTHDAY: MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY

- 3rd Frs. Kakumanu Sebastian, Kommathoti Joshi Anil Kumar
 4th Fr. Menyam Francis Sarath Babu
 6th Frs. Boddu Anand Babu, Merugumala Anil
 8th Fr. Polimetla Mario Vara Prasad
 9th Fr. Bavanu Vijaya Raju
 10th Frs. Mandala Velangani Raju, Banka Yesobu
 12th Frs. Kandula Maria Babu, Daram Nirmal Kumar
 13th Fr. Merugumala Chinnappa
 15th Fr. Nakka David Raju
 16th Fr. Thotakarra Chacko
 20th Fr. Polimetla Joachim
 23rd Fr. Paragati Bernard
 25th Fr. Kolikepogu Anil Francis
 28th Frs. Mesapam Gabriel & Mesapam Joseph
 30th Fr. Thota Sunil Raju



OBITUARY: MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

- 1st Fr. K.J. Anthony (2014)
 4th Fr. Thomas Kollanoor (2014)
 5th Fr. Thanam Marreddy (2004)
 7th Fr. Sylvio Pasquali PIME (1924)
 17th Fr. Fortunato De Paoli PIME (1970)
 20th Frs. Thumma Albin Reddy, Katam Vijaya Kumar (2016)
 22nd Fr. Yadala Balaswamy (1994)
 26th Fr. Gabriele Arosio PIME (1963)
 30th BISHOP ARULAI AH (2003)

