



ILLUMINARE OMNES



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Most Rev. Jaya Rao Polimera
Bishop of Eluru

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NIRMALAGIRI FEAST

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Diocese of Eluru

Beginning of the
Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee Year
of His Lordship Jaya Rao Polimera
(2-04-2016 - 2-04-2017)



From Priests, Religious & Faithful of the Diocese of Eluru

'Renew' YOUR COMMITMENT to Christ's Call

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Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, prayerful greetings to you from your Bishop.

I would like to speak about the infant Church and the post resurrection situation.

The disciples have been greatly disturbed and devastated by the death of their Master, Jesus. Jesus had died on a cross instead of becoming the 'king'. Perhaps, all their hopes were crashed...all their aspirations had sunk. Jesus' crucifixion devastated His followers.

Now after the resurrection, something seemed to be happening. God seemed to be doing something, but they couldn't figure out what it was. It certainly wasn't what they had expected. This is condition of the infant church. After the resurrection, Peter, perhaps filled with greater sorrow than others, makes an important statement, "I am going fishing" (Jn 21:3).



In Mt 4:19, we read that Peter had received the glorious vocation of following the Lord..."Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men". This was the vocation of Peter... This was his calling..... to follow Jesus closely and personally and intimately... to be a fisher of people, for the Kingdom of God. His strength and ability of fishing had become the reason for great depressions in his spiritual life. He was tempted to go for fishing which is his strength, assert and ability. It became the gateway to being tempted into false ways, leaving the way of the Lord, to abandon His true calling and vocation of life of being fishers of people.

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One's greatest strength can also be the reason for one's greatest fall. We should not think that what I do or know is the ultimate. But, always believe in the power of God. Peter has blasphemed the Savior, denied Him, run away from Him. He is unbridled, braggadocios, embarrassingly bold, and at times violent. Jesus now again calls Peter, by the Sea of Galilee by a miraculous catch of fish (Jn. 21: 7-8). He calls him to renew his commitment and love for the Lord. Calls him to go back to his vocation and give up his life for Jesus.

After His resurrection Jesus set out to restore their hope. Now Peter was a man who was greatly used by God, to preach at Pentecost, to lead the Church at Jerusalem, and to minister to the Church in Rome.

Holy Father Pope Francis said on May 24, 2013, "To suffer is to take the problems and to carry them with strength, so that the problems does not drag us down. To carry it with strength: this is a Christian virtue". The Apostles faced lot of difficulties. Like Apostles, we must trust in God when we find ourselves in a valley of darkness. Every person's life consists of various strengths, talents, abilities and aptitudes. These strengths and talents help a person to achieve goal in life.

In this year of Mercy, we ask Our Blessed Mother to give us the grace of forgiveness and to endure with it patience and overcome it with love.

God bless you.



+ Jaya Rao Polimera

LET US LISTEN TO THE HOLY FATHER



Message of His Holiness Pope Francis Urbi et Orbi Easter Sunday, 27 March 2016

"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures for ever" (Ps 135:1)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Happy Easter! Jesus Christ, the incarnation of God's mercy, out of love for us, died on the cross, and out of love he rose again from the dead. That is why we proclaim today: Jesus is Lord!

His resurrection fulfils the prophecy of the Psalm: God's mercy endures for ever; it never dies. We can trust him completely, and we thank him because for our sake he descended into the depths of the abyss. Before the spiritual and moral abysses of mankind, before the chasms that open up in hearts and provoke hatred and death, only an infinite mercy can bring us salvation. Only God can fill those chasms with his love, prevent us from falling into them and help us to continue our journey together towards the land of freedom and life.

The glorious Easter message, that Jesus, who was crucified is not here but risen (cf. Mt 28:5-6), offers us the comforting assurance that the abyss of death has been bridged and, with it, all mourning, lamentation and pain (cf. Rev 21:4). The Lord, who suffered abandonment by his disciples, the

burden of an unjust condemnation and shame of an ignominious death, now makes us sharers of his immortal life and enables us to see with his eyes of love and compassion those who hunger and thirst, strangers and prisoners, the marginalized and the outcast, the victims of oppression and violence. Our world is full of persons suffering in body and spirit, even as the daily news is full of stories of brutal crimes which often take place within homes, and large-scale armed conflicts which cause indescribable suffering to entire peoples. The risen Christ points out paths of hope to beloved Syria, a country torn by a lengthy conflict, with its sad wake of destruction, death, contempt for humanitarian law and the breakdown of civil concord. May the Lord of life also accompany efforts to attain a definitive solution to the war in Ukraine, inspiring and sustaining initiatives of humanitarian aid, including the liberation of those who are detained.

The Lord Jesus, our peace (Eph 2:14), by his resurrection triumphed over evil and sin. May he draw us closer on this Easter feast to the victims of terrorism, that blind and brutal form of violence which continues to shed blood in different parts of the world, as in the recent attacks in Belgium, Turkey, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Côte d'Ivoire. May he water the seeds of hope and prospects for peace in Africa; I think in particular of Burundi, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, marked by political and social tensions.

With the weapons of love, God has defeated selfishness and death. His son Jesus is the door of mercy wide open to all. May his Easter message be felt ever more powerfully by the beloved people of Venezuela in the difficult conditions which they are experiencing, and by those responsible for the country's future, that everyone may work for the common good, seeking spaces of dialogue and cooperation with all. May efforts be made everywhere to promote the culture of counter, justice and reciprocal respect, which alone can guarantee the spiritual and material welfare of all people.

The Easter message of the risen Christ, a message of life for all humanity, echoes down the ages and invites us not to forget those men and women seeking a better future, an ever more numerous throng of migrants and refugees – including many children – fleeing from war, hunger, poverty and social injustice.

On this glorious day, "let the earth rejoice, in shining splendour" (cf. Easter Proclamation), even though it is so often mistreated and greedily exploited, resulting in an alteration of natural equilibria. I think especially of those areas affected by climate change, which not infrequently causes drought or violent flooding, which then lead to food crises in different parts of the world. Along with our brothers and sisters persecuted for their faith and their fidelity to the name of Christ, and before the evil that seems to have the upper hand in the life of so many people, let us hear once again the comforting words of the Lord: "Take courage; I have conquered the world! (Jn 16:33). Today is the radiant day of this victory, for Christ has trampled death and destruction underfoot. By his resurrection he has brought life and immortality to light (cf. 2 Tim 1:10).

To those in our society who have lost all hope and joy in life, to the elderly who struggle alone and feel their strength waning, to young people who seem to have no future, to all I once more address the words of the Risen One: "See, I am making all things new... To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life" (Rev 21:5-6). May this comforting message of Jesus help each of us to set out anew with greater courage to blaze trails of reconciliation with God and with all our brothers and sisters.

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS ON CHRISM MASS

After hearing Jesus read from the Prophet Isaiah and say: "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (*Lk* 4:21), the congregation in the synagogue of Nazareth might well have burst into applause. They might have then wept for joy, as did the people when Nehemiah and Ezra the priest read from the book of the Law found while they were rebuilding the walls. But the Gospels tell us that Jesus' towns people did the opposite; **they closed their hearts to him and sent him off**. At first, "all spoke well of him, and wondered at the gracious words that came from his mouth" (4:22). But then an insidious question began to make the rounds: "Is this not the son of Joseph, the carpenter?" (4:22). And then, "they were filled with rage" (4:28). They wanted to throw him off the cliff. This was in fulfilment of the elderly Simeon's prophecy to the Virgin Mary that he would be "a sign of contradiction" (2:34). By his words and actions, Jesus lays bare the secrets of the heart of every man and woman.

Where the Lord proclaims the Gospel of the Father's unconditional mercy to the poor, the outcast and the oppressed, is the very place we are called to take a stand, to "fight the good fight of the faith" (*1 Tim* 6:12). **His battle is not against men and women, but against the devil (cf. *Eph* 6:12), the enemy of humanity**. But the Lord "passes through the midst" of all those who would stop him and "continues on his way" (*Lk* 4:30). Jesus does not fight to build power. If he breaks down walls and challenges our sense of security, he does this to open the flood gates of that mercy which, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, he wants to pour out upon our world. A mercy which expands; it proclaims and brings newness; it heals, liberates and proclaims the year of the Lord's favour. The mercy of our God is infinite and indescribable. We express the power of this mystery as an "ever greater" mercy, a mercy in motion, a mercy that each day seeks to make progress, taking small steps forward and advancing in that wasteland where indifference and violence have predominated.

This was the way of the Good Samaritan, who "showed mercy" (cf. *Lk* 10:37): he was moved, he drew near to the wounded man, he bandaged his wounds, took him to the inn, stayed there that evening and promised to return and cover any further cost. This is the way of mercy, which gathers together small gestures. Without demeaning, it grows with each helpful sign and act of love. Every one of us, looking at our own lives as God does, can try to remember the ways in which the Lord has been merciful towards us, how he has been much more merciful than we imagined. In this we can find the courage to ask him to take a step further and to reveal yet more of his mercy in the future: **"Show us, Lord, your mercy"** (*Ps* 85:8). This paradoxical way of praying to an ever more merciful God, helps us to tear down those walls with which we try to contain the abundant greatness of his heart. **It is good for us to break out of our set ways**, because it is proper to the Heart of God to overflow with tenderness, with ever more to give. For the Lord prefers something to be wasted rather than one drop of mercy be held back. He would rather have many seeds be carried off by the birds of the air than have one seed be missing, since each of those seeds has the capacity to bear abundant fruit, thirtyfold, sixtyfold, even a hundredfold.

As priests, we are witnesses to and ministers of the ever-increasing abundance of the Father's mercy; we have the rewarding and consoling task of incarnating mercy, as Jesus did, who "went about doing good and healing" (*Acts 10:38*) in a thousand ways so that it could touch everyone. We can help to inculturate mercy, so that each person can embrace it and experience it personally. This will help all people truly understand and practise mercy with creativity, in ways that respect their local cultures and families. Today, during this Holy Thursday of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, I would like to speak of two areas in which the Lord shows excess in mercy. Based on his example, we also should not hesitate in showing excess. The first area I am referring to is encounter; the second is God's forgiveness, which shames us while also giving us dignity.

The first area where we see *God showing excess* in his ever-increasing mercy is that of *encounter*.

He gives himself completely and in such a way that every encounter leads to rejoicing.

In the parable of the Merciful Father we are astounded by the man who runs, deeply moved, to his son, and throws his arms around him; we see how he embraces his son, kisses him, puts a ring on his finger, and then gives him his sandals, thus showing that he is a son and not a servant. Finally, he gives orders to everyone and organizes a party. In contemplating with awe this superabundance of the Father's joy that is freely and boundlessly expressed when his son returns, we should not be fearful of exaggerating our gratitude. Our attitude should be that of the poor leper who, seeing himself healed, leaves his nine friends who go off to do what Jesus ordered, and goes back to kneel at the feet of the Lord, glorifying and thanking God aloud.

Mercy restores everything; it restores dignity to each person. This is why effusive gratitude is the proper response: we have to go the party, to put on our best clothes, to cast off the rancour of the elder brother, to rejoice and give thanks... Only in this way, participating fully in such rejoicing, is it possible to think straight, to ask for forgiveness, and see more clearly how to make up for the evil we have committed. It would be good for us to ask ourselves: after going to confession, do I rejoice? Or do I move on immediately to the next thing, as we would after going to the doctor, when we hear that the test results are not so bad and put them back in their envelope? And when I give alms, do I give time to the person who receives them to express their gratitude, do I celebrate the smile and the blessings that the poor offer, or do I continue on in haste with my own affairs after tossing in a coin?

The second area in which we see how *God exceeds in his ever greater mercy is forgiveness itself*. God does not only forgive incalculable debts, as he does to that servant who begs for mercy but is then miserly to his own debtor; he also enables us to move directly from the most shameful disgrace to the highest dignity without any intermediary stages. The Lord allows the forgiven woman to wash his feet with her tears. As soon as Simon confesses his sin and begs Jesus to send him away, the Lord raises him to be a fisher of men. We, however, tend to separate these two attitudes: when we are ashamed of our sins, we hide ourselves and walk around with our heads down, like Adam and Eve; and when we are raised up to some dignity, we try to cover up our sins and take pleasure in being seen, almost showing off.

Our response to God's superabundant forgiveness should be always to preserve *that healthy tension between a dignified shame and a shamed dignity*. It is the attitude of one who seeks a humble and lowly place, but who can also allow the Lord to raise him up for the good of the mission, without complacency. The model that the Gospel consecrates, and which can help us when we confess our sins, is Peter, **who allowed himself to be questioned about his love for the Lord, but who also renewed his acceptance of the ministry of shepherding the flock** which the Lord had entrusted to him. To grow in this "dignity which is capable of humbling itself", and which delivers us from thinking that we are more or are less than what we are by grace, can help us understand the words of the prophet Isaiah that immediately follow the passage our Lord read in the synagogue at Nazareth: "You will be called priests of the Lord, ministers of our God" (*Is 61:6*). It is people who are poor, hungry, prisoners of war, without a future, cast to one side and rejected, that the Lord transforms into a priestly people.

As priests, we identify with people who are excluded, people the Lord saves. We remind ourselves that there are countless masses of people who are poor, uneducated, prisoners, who find themselves in such situations because others oppress them. But we too remember that each of us knows the extent to which we too are often blind, lacking the radiant light of faith, not because we do not have the Gospel close at hand, but because of an excess of complicated theology. We feel that our soul thirsts for spirituality, not for a lack of Living Water which we only sip from, **but because of an excessive "bubbly" spirituality, a "light" spirituality**. We feel ourselves also trapped, not so much by insurmountable stone walls or steel enclosures that affect many peoples, but rather by a digital, virtual worldliness that is opened and closed by a simple *click*. We are oppressed, not by threats and pressures, like so many poor people, but by the allure of a thousand commercial advertisements which we cannot shrug off to walk ahead, freely, along paths that lead us to love of our brothers and sisters, to the Lord's flock, to the sheep who wait for the voice of their shepherds.

Jesus comes to redeem us, to send us out, to transform us from being poor and blind, imprisoned and oppressed, to become ministers of mercy and consolation. He says to us, using the words the prophet Ezekiel spoke to the people who sold themselves and betrayed the Lord: "I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth... Then you will remember your ways, and be ashamed when I take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and give them to you as daughters, but not on account of the covenant with you. I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I forgive you all that you have done, says the Lord God" (*Ezek 16:60-63*).

In this Jubilee Year we celebrate our Father with hearts full of gratitude, and we pray to him that "he remember his mercy forever"; let us receive, with a dignity that is able to humble itself, the mercy revealed in the wounded flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us ask him to cleanse us of all sin and free us from every evil. And with the grace of the Holy Spirit let us commit ourselves anew to bringing God's mercy to all men and women, and performing those works which the Spirit inspires in each of us for the common good of the entire People of God.

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 50th WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter

The Holy Year of Mercy invites all of us to reflect on the relationship between communication and mercy. The Church, in union with Christ, the living incarnation of the Father of Mercies, is called to practise mercy as the distinctive trait of all that she is and does. What we say and how we say it, our every word and gesture, ought to express God's compassion, tenderness and forgiveness for all. Love, by its nature, is communication; it leads to openness and sharing. If our hearts and actions are inspired by charity, by divine love, then our communication will be touched by God's own power.

As sons and daughters of God, we are called to communicate with everyone, without exception. In a particular way, the Church's words and actions are all meant to convey mercy, to touch people's hearts and to sustain them on their journey to that fullness of life which Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to bring to all. This means that we ourselves must be willing to accept the warmth of Mother Church and to share that warmth with others, so that Jesus may be known and loved. That warmth is what gives substance to the word of faith; by our preaching and witness, it ignites the "spark" which gives them life.

Communication has the power to build bridges, to enable encounter and inclusion, and thus to enrich society. How beautiful it is when people select their words and actions with care, in the effort to avoid misunderstandings, to heal wounded memories and to build peace and harmony. Words can build bridges between individuals and within families, social groups and peoples. This is possible both in the material world and the digital world. Our words and actions should be such as to help us all escape the vicious circles of condemnation and vengeance which continue to ensnare individuals and nations, encouraging expressions of hatred. The words of Christians ought to be a constant encouragement to communion and, even in those cases where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication.

For this reason, I would like to invite all people of good will to rediscover the power of mercy to heal wounded relationships and to restore peace and harmony to families and communities. All of us know how many ways ancient wounds and lingering resentments can entrap individuals and stand in the way of communication and reconciliation. The same holds true for relationships between peoples. In every case, mercy is able to create a new kind of speech and dialogue. Shakespeare put it eloquently when he said: "The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes" (The Merchant of Venice, Act IV, Scene I).

Our political and diplomatic language would do well to be inspired by mercy, which never loses hope. I ask those with institutional and political responsibility, and those charged with forming public opinion, to remain especially attentive to the way they speak of those who think or act differently or those who may have made mistakes. It is easy to yield to the temptation to exploit such situations to

stoke the flames of mistrust, fear and hatred. Instead, courage is needed to guide people towards processes of reconciliation. It is precisely such positive and creative boldness which offers real solutions to ancient conflicts and the opportunity to build lasting peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5:7-9). How I wish that our own way of communicating, as well as our service as pastors of the Church, may never suggest a prideful and triumphant superiority over an enemy, or demean those whom the world considers lost and easily discarded. Mercy can help mitigate life's troubles and offer warmth to those who have known only the coldness of judgment. May our way of communicating help to overcome the mindset that neatly separates sinners from the righteous. We can and we must judge situations of sin – such as violence, corruption and exploitation – but we may not judge individuals, since only God can see into the depths of their hearts. It is our task to admonish those who err and to denounce the evil and injustice of certain ways of acting, for the sake of setting victims free and raising up those who have fallen. The Gospel of John tells us that "the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:32). The truth is ultimately Christ himself, whose gentle mercy is the yardstick for measuring the way we proclaim the truth and condemn injustice. Our primary task is to uphold the truth with love (cf. Eph 4:15). Only words spoken with love and accompanied by meekness and mercy can touch our sinful hearts. Harsh and moralistic words and actions risk further alienating those whom we wish to lead to conversion and freedom, reinforcing their sense of rejection and defensiveness.

Some feel that a vision of society rooted in mercy is hopelessly idealistic or excessively indulgent. But let us try and recall our first experience of relationships, within our families. Our parents loved us and valued us for who we are more than for our abilities and achievements. Parents naturally want the best for their children, but that love is never dependent on their meeting certain conditions. The family home is one place where we are always welcome (cf. Lk 15:11-32). I would like to encourage everyone to see society not as a forum where strangers compete and try to come out on top, but above all as a home or a family, where the door is always open and where everyone feels welcome. For this to happen, we must first listen. Communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance. Listening is much more than simply hearing. Hearing is about receiving information, while listening is about communication, and calls for closeness.

Listening is never easy. Many times it is easier to play deaf. Listening means paying attention, wanting to understand, to value, to respect and to ponder what the other person says. It involves a sort of martyrdom or self-sacrifice, as we try to imitate Moses before the burning bush: we have to remove our sandals when standing on the "holy ground" of our encounter with the one who speaks to me (cf. Ex 3:5). Knowing how to listen is an immense grace, it is a gift which we need to ask for and then make every effort to practice. Emails, text messages, social networks and chats can also be fully human forms of communication. It is not technology which determines whether or not communication is authentic, but rather the human heart and our capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal. Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarization and division between individuals and groups. The digital world is a public square, a meeting-place where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in a meaningful discussion or unfair attacks. I pray that this Jubilee Year, lived in mercy,

“may open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; and that it may eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 23). The internet can help us to be better citizens. Access to digital networks entails a responsibility for our neighbour whom we do not see but who is nonetheless real and has a dignity which must be respected. The internet can be used wisely to build a society which is healthy and open to sharing.

Communication, wherever and however it takes place, has opened up broader horizons for many people. This is a gift of God which involves a great responsibility. I like to refer to this power of communication as “closeness”. The encounter between communication and mercy will be fruitful to the degree that it generates a closeness which cares, comforts, heals, accompanies and celebrates. In a broken, fragmented and polarized world, to communicate with mercy means to help create a healthy, free and fraternal closeness between the children of God and all our brothers and sisters in the one human family.

From the Vatican, 24 January 2016

“Let us not stay imprisoned within ourselves, but let us break open our sealed tombs to the Lord so that he may enter and grant us life.

Let us give him the stones of our rancour and the boulders of our past, those heavy burdens of our weaknesses and falls. Christ wants to come and take us by the hand to bring us out of our anguish. This is the first stone to be moved aside this night: the lack of hope which imprisons us within ourselves. May the Lord free us from this trap, from being Christians without hope, who live as if the Lord were not risen, as if our problems were the centre of our lives. We see and will continue to see problems both within and without. They will always be there. But tonight it is important to shed the light of the Risen Lord upon our problems, and in a certain sense, to “evangelize” them. Let us not allow darkness and fear to distract us and control us; we must cry out to them: the Lord “is not here, but has risen!” (v. 6). He is our greatest joy; he is always at our side and will never let us down.”

POPE FRANCIS

“The issues and challenges you discuss are not faceless. For each of you can articulate the hopes and dreams, the challenges and sufferings, which mark the people of your country. In these days, you will learn much from one another, and will remind each other that, behind every difficulty our world is facing, there are men and women, young and old, people just like you. There are families and individuals whose lives are daily shaped by struggles, who are trying to care for their children and provide not only for their future but also the basic necessities for today. So too, many of those affected by our world’s greatest problems of violence and intolerance have become refugees, tragically forced from their homes, and denied their land and their freedom. These are the people who need your help, who are crying out for you to hear them, and who are supremely worthy of our every effort on behalf of justice, peace and solidarity. Saint Paul tells us that we are to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep (cf. Rom 12:15). In the end, our

strength as a community, on every level of life and social organization, lies not so much in our learning and personal ability, but in the compassion we show for one another, in the care that we exercise especially for those who cannot care for themselves."

Pope Francis

"We are Muslims, Hindus, Copts, Evangelicals and Catholics, but we are all brothers and children of the same God who want to live in peace, integrated. All of you have a story of so much suffering, but you also have a heart that is open, that wants brotherhood and peace. Let us all together, each in their own religious language, pray to God and ask for brotherhood, peace and goodness. Let us remember, it is good to live together as brothers, with our cultures and traditions. And this has a name: peace and love."

Pope Francis *greeted, went among the hundreds of migrants present in Rome and shook the hand of each and every one of them, also greeted an Imam from a nearby Muslim community on Holy Thursday*

Message of
Msgr. Henryk M. Jagodzinski,
representative from the Apostolic Nuncio

SPIRITUALITY OF UNITY: (The conference to the Priests of the Diocese of Eluru, Nirmalagiri Shrine, 23 March 2016)

Your Lordship, dear priests, first of all I will to transmit you the greetings from His Excellency Msgr. Salvatore Pennacchio, Apostolic Nuncio in India and Nepal, who has sent me as his Personal



Representative to your Diocese. Through him we experience the visible bonds of union with the Holy Father and with the entire Catholic Church. I would like to express my profound gratitude to Your Lordship Msgr. Jaya Rao Polimera for his kind invitation and hospitality during these days which I have until now spent in your Diocese. I would like say also thank you all my brothers in priesthood for your friendship and for the warm welcome which you showed me. With some of you I had the possibility to have a personal meeting. Thank you for your witness to the unity and for your care and love to our common Mother,

the Catholic Church. As your brother I would like to share with you a reflection on the spirituality of ecclesial unity.

It does not happen very often in real life that someone knows beforehand the moment of his own death. However, as you know, in our imagination, sometimes, this may happen for different reasons.

In the last moments of their life, people try to say or do something they consider the most important. This was the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, who knew the moment of his death. *On the day before he was to suffer*, as we say during every Mass at the consecration, the Lord established the sacrament of the Eucharist, which we call also the Sacrament of Unity. The Eucharist is the sacrament and source of the unity of the Church. This concept has been underlined since the beginnings of the Christian tradition and is based on the signs of the bread and wine. The *Didache*, a writing composed at the dawn of Christianity, states: *"Just as this broken bread was first scattered on the mountains and, after being harvested, became one reality, so may your church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom"* (9,1).

In the High Priest's prayer reported by St. John in his Gospel at chapter 17, the Lord Jesus prays for the unity of those who will believe in him:

I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17,20-23).

That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. We can say that this prayer is the testament of the New Testament. Just before his passion, the Lord conveyed to his Apostles the most important things. One of them is the unity of his Church that has been built on the Apostles, who are the foundation of it. The model for the unity among the followers of Jesus is the union between the Son and the Father. This unity is expressed in a triple relation: knowledge, love and communion. Communion must be a union in faith, in service and in mutual love. Unity comes from above; its origins are free and invisible. But unity has a visible target: *that the world may believe*. Maybe sometimes we ask ourselves: why some people do not believe in Jesus or have lost their faith? Why our parishioners no longer attend the church? One of the reasons could be that sometimes we give the impression that we are divided. Unity is a victory of the power of God against sin and division.

The successor of St. Peter, the Holy Father Pope Francis, during the catechesis at his weekly General Audience on Wednesday 27 August 2014, said that he sins against unity, such as jealousy, envy, and hostility come about when we place ourselves at the centre; and they even occur in our parish communities. The Pope underlined that in Christian community division is one of the worst sins because it comes not from God but from the Devil. God's will, stressed Pope Francis, *"is that we grow in our capacity to welcome one another"*. Concluding his Catechesis, the Holy Father asked that we all examine our consciences and look for forgiveness *"for the times when we have given rise to division or misunderstanding in our communities, and may our relationships mirror more beautifully and joyfully the unity of Jesus and the Father"*. What does it mean to live the spirituality of unity? It means to try to build in our own environment the unity of the Church according to the model that Jesus left us in the Gospel. It means to build unity with the concrete persons who are around me.

This conscience of the strict connection between the Eucharist and unity was present in the life of the Church from the beginning, not only in recent times. The Bishop and martyr St. Ignatius of Antioch, executed in Rome in 107, exhorted the faithful of Philadelphia in Asia Minor to unity: “*one is the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, one is the chalice in the unity of his blood, one is the altar, just as one is the Bishop*” (EP. Ad Philadelphenses, 4).

These words have a great meaning especially in the life of every priest, who is an alter Christus (another Christ). Pope Benedict XVI, during the General Audience on 21 Jun 2009 said: *As an alter Christus, the priest is profoundly united to the word of the Father who, in becoming incarnate took the form of a servant, he became a servant (phil 2:5-11). The Priest is Christ, in the sense that his existence, configured to Christ ontologically, acquires an essentially relational character: He is in Christ, for Christ and with Christ, at the service of humankind. Because he belongs to Christ, the priest is radically at the service of all people: he is the minister of their salvation, their happiness and their authentic liberation, developing, in this gradual assumption of Christ's will, in prayer, in “being heart to heart” with him. Therefore this is the indispensable condition for every proclamation, which entails participation in the sacramental offering of the Eucharist and docile obedience to the Church.*

Nobody becomes a priest for himself but for Christ to continue his mission of salvation of the human race. And a priest does not do this work by himself, but in unity with the whole Church, which is the mystical body of Christ, and with the particular Church where the priest is serving. As you know, every priest should be incardinated in one particular Church or Institute of Consecrated Life or Apostolic Life and be in communion with his Superior. This is not only a juridical necessity, but first of all it is the will of Christ, who founded his Church as a hierarchically structured community. Every spirituality has its consequences in real life. The priests can celebrate the Eucharist because they are united with their bishop.

The above mentioned St. Ignatius wrote in his Epistle to the Ephesians: “*Wherefore it is fitting that you should run together in accordance with the will of your bishop which thing also you do. For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore in your concord and harmonious love, Jesus Christ is sung. And many by man, become a choir, that being harmonious in love, and taking up the song of God in unison, you may with one voice sing to the Father through Jesus Christ, so that He may both hear you, and perceive by your works that you are indeed the Members of His Son. It is profitable, therefore, that you should live in an unblameable unity, that thus you may always enjoy communion with God (c.4)*”.

Notice that unity and harmony, for St. Ignatius, are made possible by the hierarchical order. St. Ignatius is not teaching that unity is realized by ‘flattening’ the authority to some form of egalitarianism. Rather, for him it is precisely in the communion of each person, acting in accordance with his appointed office, that true harmony is made possible. He also puts unity as a condition to live communion with God.

Saint John Paul II, described in very clear way the spirituality of communion in his Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennia ingénué*:

(43). Before making practical plans, we need to promote a spirituality of communion, making it the guiding principle of education wherever individuals and Christians are formed, wherever ministers of the altar, consecrated persons, and pastoral workers are trained, wherever families and communities are being built up. A spirituality of communion indicates above all the heart's contemplation of the mystery of the Trinity dwelling in us, and whose light we must also be able to see shining on the face of the brothers and sisters around us. A spirituality of the profound unity of the Mystical Body, and therefore as "those who are a part of attend to their needs, to offer them deep and genuine friendship. A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, who has and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a "gift for me". A spirituality of communion means, finally, to know how to "make room" for our brothers and sisters bearing "each other's burdens" (Gal 6:2) and resisting the selfish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy. Let us have no illusions: unless we follow this spiritual path, external structures of communion will serve very little purpose. They would become mechanisms without a soul, "masks" of communion rather than its means of expression and growth. (44). Consequently, the new century will have to see us more than ever intent on valuing and developing the forums and structures which, in accordance with the Second Vatican Council's major directives, serve to ensure and safeguard communion. How can we forget in the first place those specific services to communion which are the Petrine ministry and, closely related to it, Episcopal collegiality? These are realities which have their foundation and substance in Christ's own plan for the Church, but which need to be examined constantly in order to ensure that they follow their genuinely evangelical inspiration

This afternoon we will celebrate the Chrism Mass, which is one of the principal expressions of the fullness of the priesthood of the Bishop, and signifies the close unity of the priests with him. This message of unity between the Bishop and the priests will be highlighted when we will renew our commitment of priestly service. During this moment, all of us priests will stand as one and speak with one voice in response to the questions asked by the Bishop. These are the same questions we were asked when we were ordained priests. I believe that every one of the present here remembers the day of his ordination, and remembers the promises he made at the moment of the ordination, of chastity and obedience to the Bishop. With the passing of time, we see that the priestly promises are costly, but at the same time they are at bargain prices. We must stand up for who we are, and never stop sharing the Word of God. We must be faithful to these promises until the last moment of our life, because this means to be faithful to Christ. The spirituality of unity means to live th communion with our own bishop in a concrete manner.

Saint Pope John Paul II, in his Post-Synodal apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* said: (28) "Among the virtues most necessary for the priestly ministry must be named that disposition of soul by which priests are always ready to seek not their own will, but the will of him who sent them (cf. Jn. 4:34; 5:30; 6:38)." It is in the spiritual life of the priest that obedience takes on certain special

characteristics. First of all, obedience is “apostolic” in the sense that it recognizes, loves and serves the Church in her hierarchical structure. Indeed, there can be no genuine priestly ministry except in communion with the supreme pontiff and the Episcopal college, especially with one’s own diocesan bishop, who deserves that “filial respect and obedience” promised during the rite of ordination. This “submission” to those invested with ecclesial authority is in no way a kind of humiliation. It flows instead from the responsible freedom for the priest who accepts not only the demands of an organized and organic ecclesial life, but also that grace of discernment and responsibility in ecclesial decisions which was assured by Jesus to his apostles and their successors for the sake of faithfully safeguarding the mystery of the Church and serving the structure of the Christian community along its common path toward salvation.

To follow Jesus means to take our own cross and follow him (Mt 16,24-5). When we became priests, we did not put any condition for our priesthood or ministry: so how can we put some condition after the ordination? I will be a good priest, obedient, in communion with my bishop, only if I can do what I want. It doesn’t work like that. It is true that sometimes it is very difficult to realize our vocation and we are suffering for different reasons, but it is not impossible. When the Lord gives us also the grace to fulfil it. Saint Pope John Paul II speaking about priestly virtues said that it is necessary to have a *disposition of soul by which priests are always ready to seek not their own will*. Outer obedience must not be like it is in the army, but through the commitment of our soul. Just like our Lord who Prayed at Gethsemane “not my will be done, but yours” (Lk 22,42). Maybe sometimes we must ask ourselves: what am I really looking for in my life? For a Christian the answer is very simple: in my life I try to become a saint. It should be the same for the priests: becoming a saint. For us, the priests, the way to sanctity will be realized in our priesthood. How to fulfil our vocation? We must accomplish the will of our Lord Jesus Christ in our life, who also prayed to his Heavenly father: *that all of them may be one*.

COMMUNICATIONS

THANK YOU

I take this opportunity to thank all of you for your active participation and renewing your Ministerial Priesthood promises, during the Chrism Mass. It’s a great opportunity for the Pastoral Clergy of Eluru Diocese to come together to reflect upon the wonderful gift of our ‘Priesthood’.

I also personally thank you for your greetings, wishes and prayers you offered for me, while anticipating my Priestly Ordination day. A special note of thanks to Msgr. Henryk M. Jagodzinski, representative from the Apostolic Nuncio, Rev. Fr. Babu George, Chancellor, Rev. Fr. I. Michel, MC, Rev. Fr. Koppula Rayappa and Rev. Fr. Jesu Rajan, for their excellent coordination in making the day’s programme an appealing celebration. May the Risen Lord Bless you and give you the best in your Mission.

+ **Jaya Rao Polimera**

SUBMISSION OF YOUR LAST WILL TO THE CHANCERY OFFICE

Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters,

Taking into consideration of the previous instances, I hereby inform the Priests and Deacons of Eluru diocese that you are obliged to submit your last wills to the chancery office with immediate effect. You are also requested to include an inventory of your personal property and how you want it to be dispersed.

Regarding the Religious Priests/Brothers/Sisters, working in the diocese of Eluru, it is understood that you must stand confirmed that you submit the same to the person concerned.

Please confirm that your letters are reaching directly to the Chancellor or to me in person (not to any of the persons or offices in Bishop's House.) The safest way is to hand over to me directly. Priests, who are far, kindly do not post them in ordinary. Chose a decent/confidential postal or courier source, which brings directly to me and stand confirmed that you will be informed immediately after receiving your post in my hands.

The 'last will' serves a variety of important purposes. So, writing a will is an essential necessity for the smooth running of any diocese/organization etc.,. The last will become the person's identity, a legal document after death. No one needs a special definition to know about "the last will". The last will is a document in which a person specifies the method to be applied in the management and distribution of his belongings after his death.

Thank you

+ Jaya Rao Polimera

Appendix:

Some useful and important information regarding the importance of the last will

DOCUMENTS

There are several documents that you are encouraged to execute to ensure that your wishes will be known and to avoid any confusion in the event of a serious medical condition and/or death. A basic description of each document is listed below and a copy of each is included as an appendix. These documents exist in other formats and may be used instead of the documents provided.

A. LAST WILL AND TRUST DOCUMENTS

You should have a copy of your current will or trust in a marked, sealed envelope. The sealed file, or a note stating where your will can be found, should be sent to the Bishop and will be kept in your confidential personal file in the Chancery vault. Also include an inventory of your personal property and how you want it dispersed. Please keep in mind that brother priests should be the executor, without restrictions, for a brother priest's will.

B. DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR GENERAL USE

You are also encouraged to execute a General Durable Power of Attorney. This legal document provides the name of a person who would assist you in handling your financial and other non-medical affairs. This is especially important to ensure the prompt payment of bills during times when you are unable to do so yourself. Please keep in mind that brother priests should be the executor for a brother priest's will.

A copy of your General Durable Power of Attorney should be completed and sent to the Bishop and/or Chancellor to be placed in your confidential file. It will only be referenced if a serious situation arises. A General Durable Power of Attorney Document is attached as Appendix B.

C. DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR HEALTH CARE

You are encouraged to execute a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care. This legal document provides the name of the person who will make medical decisions for you in the event you become physically or mentally unable to make them for yourself and this is certified in writing by your physician. The person named in this document will use the Directive to Physicians to help guide medical decisions.

The original Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care should be given to the individual designated and a copy sent to the Bishop and/or Chancellor to be placed in your confidential file.

It will only be referenced if a serious medical situation arises. A Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care and its related Disclosure Statement Form are attached as Appendix C.

D. DIRECTIVE TO PHYSICIANS

A Directive to Physicians is a legal document which you provide to your physicians and family regarding your medical care when you are unable to speak for yourself due to a serious condition. The document states your religious and moral beliefs and provides a general understanding of the medical treatments/interventions you would want done and those you would not want done at the time of terminal illness and imminent death. A Directive to Physicians is a supplemental document to your Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care. A copy of your Directive to Physicians should also be sent to the Bishop and/or Chancellor to be placed in your confidential file. It will only be referenced if a serious medical situation arises.

E. ORGAN/TISSUE DONATION

For organs/tissue to be utilized for donation they must be retrieved shortly after death. A completed organ/tissue donation form allows your donation wishes to be known and followed. An Organ/Tissue Donation Form is attached as Appendix E, if you choose to give the gift of life to someone. A copy of your Organ/Tissue Donation Form should be sent to the Bishop and/or Chancellor to be kept in your confidential personal file in the Chancery vault. Make sure your Durable Power of Attorney For Health Care knows of your wishes regarding organ/tissue donation and has a copy of a completed form if you desire to be a donor.

F. LIST OF PRIEST'S PERSONAL EFFECTS

Each priest should have some type of record of personal effects. This can be done by a written list or some type of audio/video recording. For priests living in rectories this is especially important so that there is clear knowledge of what is the personal property of the priest and what is the property of the parish. You may wish to include on the list how you want your personal effects dispersed after your death. A sample list of priest's personal effects is attached as Appendix F. A copy of your personal effects should be included with your will in a sealed envelope.

G. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRIEST'S FUNERAL FORM

Priests are strongly encouraged to have current Instructions for Priest's Funeral Form completed. It is the best way to ensure that your desires are fulfilled concerning your funeral arrangements, including funeral home used, funeral liturgies and place of burial.

It should be on file at the Chancery. The sealed file should be sent to the Bishop and/or Chancellor and will be kept in your confidential personal file in the Chancery vault.

Your attention please

The Church Laws and the Civil Laws are very strict regarding the moral conduct and financial matters. If anyone is caught up in their moral and financial matters they themselves are held responsible.

Canon law is the body of laws and regulations made by ecclesiastical authority (Church leadership). It is the system of laws and legal principles made and enforced by the Church's hierarchical authorities to regulate its organization to direct the activities of Catholics toward the mission of the Church.

So also, a civil law is a comprehensive system of rules and principles usually arranged, accessible to citizens.

"Keep the rules and the rules will keep you."

IMPORTANT CIRCULAR FROM THE HOME MINISTRY

This is to bring to the kind notice of everyone in the diocese. The following information regarding the Income Tax Department tracking movement of funds in the individual hands and institutions.

"Fighting black money (Project Insight): I-T dept to mine PAN data, trace fund flow trail; Kept closely under wraps, a new project being readied by the Income Tax Department ahead of the upcoming Budget could provide fresh ammunition to the NDA Government's fight against domestic black money. Code named 'Project Insight', the scheme is focused on extensive data mining and the processing of the details available about the country's 22.94 crore PAN (permanent account number) allottees, with the specific intention of monitoring fund flows across identities and accounts.

ENGAGEMENTS OF BISHOP IN APRIL - 2016

1 st	Fri to 2nd Sat	On mission work
3 rd	Sun 5.30 pm	Mass at Jubilee Nagar
4 th	Mon 9.30 am	1. First & Final professions of Little Sisters of Christ at Janampet
	5.30 pm	2. Mass for the Jubilee of Vimala convent at Tanuku
5 th	Tue 6.30 pm	Diocesan shrine festal Mass at Nirmalagiri by Bishop JayaRao Polimera
6 th	Wed 6.30 pm	Diocesan shrine festal Mass at Nirmalagiri by Bishop Thelagathoti Joseph Raja Rao, Bishop of Vijayawada
7 th	Thu 10.30 am	Laying of foundation stone for village chapel at Ratnalakunta
8 th	Fri 10.00 am	Blessing & inauguration of Casa Santa Formation house of Guvanellian Sisters at Vidhya nagar, Eluru
	5.30 pm	Silver Jubilee of Fr. Polimetla Joachim, Vijayawada diocese
9 th	Sat	BISHOP'S OFFICE
10 th	Sun	Occupied
11 th	Mon 10.30 am	Priestly ordination of HGN brothers at Nidadavole
12 th	Tue 9.30 am	Meeting with the Deacons of Eluru diocese
13 th	Wed 10.30 am	Silver Jubilee of Fr. L. Felix at Kalipatnam
14 th	Thu 10.30 am	First Profession of Holy Family Brothers at Vanguru
15 th	Fri 10.30 am	Jubilee of Rev. Fr. Rayappa at Warangal
16 th	Sat	Not Available
17 th	Sun 9.30 am	Mass & Confirmations at Nidadavole parish
18 th	Mon 10.00 am	Meeting for the in-charges of all the Commissions at Bishop's House
19 th	Tue 7.00 am	Diocesan vocation camp at St. John's Minor Seminary Pinakadimi
20 th	Wed	BISHOP'S OFFICE
21 st	Thu	BISHOP'S OFFICE
22 nd	Fri	BISHOP'S OFFICE
23 rd	Sat	BISHOP'S OFFICE
24 th	Sun	Occupied
25 th	Mon 10.30 am	Consecration and Dedication of Our Lady of Velankanni parish Church at Vegavaram
26 th	Tue 10.30 am	Priestly Ordinations of MC Brothers at Sanigudem
	6.00 PM	Sagarathara Velankanni Matha Feast at Samaladivi
27 th	Wed 10.00 am	Chapel blessing at Nalgonda
28 th	Thu 6.30 pm	Annual Parish Feast at Bhimavaram parish
29 th	Fri	BISHOP'S OFFICE
30 th	Sat 6.30 pm	Godavari Mary Matha Feast at Vegeswarapuram parish

TENTATIVE ENGAGEMENTS OF BISHOP IN MAY - 2016

1 st	Sun	Mass at St. Mary's Church, Hyderabad
4 th	Wed 10.00 am	Chapel blessing at Chodimella of Janampeta parish
5 th	Thu 10.30 am	Silver Jubilee Mass of Sr. K. Mary Rani at Bhimavaram
7 th	Sat 10.30 am	Chapel blessing at Ananthapalli of Nallageral parish
19 th	Thu 10.00 am	Priestly ordination of Dn. Uyyuru Suresh Babu at Venkatadrigudem
15 th - 31 st		Not Available

ONE-MONTH-TELUGU-COURSE

Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters, greetings of peace and joy from St Francis College, Janampet, Eluru! This is to inform that we are going to organize *one-month intense Telugu Language course* in May 2015. The basics in Telugu language like grammar, speaking, reading and writing etc. will be covered during this course. The total fee for the tuition, boarding, study material, food, picnic etc. is 8,000/-; it will be less for the day-scholars. Thank you for your encouragement in the past. Please do help us help you do your ministry better in this land. For further details please contact Fr Lourdu Showry (09618066562) and/or Fr John Paul (08985945925, kalinga.cap@gmail.com) before 10th April 2016.

- Fr Lourdu Showry, OFM Cap, Rector, St Francis College, Janampet

Jubilerians of 2016 Beginning of the Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee Year of His Lordship Jaya Rao Polimera (1992-2016)

Golden Jubilee Year of Fr. Mathew Koilidam: Rev. Fr. Mathew Koilidam, the Golden Jubilerian, was ordained on 02/04/1966. He is celebrating his Golden Jubilee this year. Hearty congratulations dear Father.

I am happy to inform the Diocese about the beginning of the sacerdotal Silver Jubilee Year of His Lordship Jaya Rao Polimera on April 2, 2016. Let us have the joy of having a meaningful celebration at the end of his Jubilee year. He was ordained on 02-04-1992 at Our Lady of Fatima Cathedral, Warangal.

Golden Jubilee Year of Fr. Mathew Koilidam

I am also happy to bring to your kind notice that along with His Lordship the 1992 batch namely: Rev. Fr. Gumpula Balashowry, parish Priest of Vangayagudem, Rev. Fr. Kuchipudi Gnananamdam, Parish Priest of Borrapalem, Rev. Fr. Pudota Balaswamy Peter, parish Priest of St. Michel's Parish, Pension Line, Rev. Fr. S. John Peter, Parish Priest of Kadakatla, will be celebrating their Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee Year. Let us wish the jubilerians heart congratulations and best wishes.

- Fr. Babu George, Chancellor

Diocesan Vocation camp: The Eluru Diocesan vocation camp for those who have completed X Class, Intermediate and Degree will be conducted from 18th April Morning to 19th April 2016 at St. John's Minor Seminary, Pinakadimi! The prospective candidates are invited to attend the camp with the following certificates:

1. Parents' Catholic Marriage,
2. Baptism certificate,
3. The Parish Priest's recommendation letter.

The candidates with previous seminary history (ex-seminarians) are not eligible for admission. All the parish Priests are hereby requested to kindly announce about this vocation camp in your respective parishes and encourage the young boys to opt for the vocation to diocesan Priesthood. Kindly encourage the potential candidates from your parish to attend the camp.

For further details, please contact: St. John's Minor Seminary, Pinakadimi. Thanking you and wishing you a Blessed and fruitful Easter Season!

- Fr. Inje Paul, Rector, St. John's Minor Seminary, Pinakadimi

Admission Notice from MOTHER VANNINI COLLEGE/SCHOOL OF NURSING

For academic Year: 2016-2017

MOTHER VANNINI COLLEGE/SCHOOL OF NURSING (Recognized by INC & A.P. Nursing Council and Affiliated to NTR University, Vijayawada), run by Daughters of St. Camillus is happy to give this information.

Admission Eligibility

- B.Sc (N) 4 years with 50% in aggregate (Science group)
- GNM 3 ½ years with 50% in aggregate (Any group)

NB: Prospectus and Application forms are available at the College or can be downloaded from the website on payment of Rs. 300/- by cash or demand draft in favor of "MOTHER VANNINI COLLEGE OF NURSING" for BSc(N) and "MOTHER VANNINI SCHOOL OF NURSING" for GNM, payable at TADEPALLIGUDEM.

For more details contact: Mother Vannini College/School of Nursing, K.N. Road, Tadepalligudem, W. G. Dt. Web: www.mothervanninicollegeofnursing.com, Email: vcontpg@yahoo.com

ATTENTION TO THE HEAD MASTERS of RCM High SCHOOLS IN THE DIOCESE OF ELURU: you are hereby requested to send the Mark list of the SSC for the academic year 2015-2016 to the DGM. Please send your mails to: fr.g.moses@gmail.com , or frayappaeluru@gmail.com

GUANELLIAN VOCATION CAMP

Servants of Charity (Guanellian Priests and religious) are happy to inform you that the vocation camp will be conducted on **April 20-23, 2016 in GUANELLA BHAVAN, KOPPAKA, ELURU**. Those who are willing to serve the Lord as religious and priests are most welcome. The eligible candidates are those who have passed SSC, Intermediate and above. Hence we request the concerned parish priests and religious to inform the youngsters of this event and collaborate with us in promoting vocations. For further details kindly contact, Fr. Sunil Francis: 8886140742, 08812-215032
Fr. Shantham, SDC, 9705538170

KALA DARSHINI SUMMER COURSE- 2016

Greetings from Kala Darshini! As the month of May is fast approaching, I want to bring to the notice of all our priests and faithful the details of Kala Darshini Summer Course. May I request you to print the following information in your respective newsletter for the benefit of all those who want to attend this course. Kala Darshini organizes Summer Course every year in the month of May to train the clergy, religious, seminarians, catechists, teachers and students in liturgical music, dance and other fine and folk arts. The institute is all set to organize the 35th Summer Course this year. Here are some important particulars about the Summer Course.

Kala Darshini Summer Course 2016 starts on 1st of May in the campus of Kala Darshini, Andhra Loyola College, Vijayawada. The admission starts on 1st morning and the classes commence from

2nd morning. The training is offered primarily in Vocal music, Key board, Guitar, Tabla, Drawing, Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi. All those who prefer to learn an instrument like Guitar, Keyboard or Tabla are expected to bring their own instrument. Kala Darshini does not provide any instrument for rent. The minimum age for admission is 12 years. One should have completed twelve years. Kindly do not seek for admission to children below 10 years. The course fee is Rs 5000/- (Tuition fee Rs 2000/- and hostel fee Rs 3000/-). The course concludes on 30th evening with the closing function. Limited seats are available for girls. Hence, kindly reserve your seat by contacting the director before 25th April, 2016.

For more details contact:

Rev. Fr. Koti Ravindra, sj, Director, Kala Darshini,
Andhra Loyola College, Vijayawada- 520008, Krishna Dt. A.P.

Phone: 0866-2473250; Cell: 9000921092. Email:kotiravindra@yahoo.com, kotiravindra@gmail.com
- Fr. D. Ravi Sekhar SJ, Director, Kala Darshini

Your attention please!

Change of telephone Number: Fr. Jose Kaimlett, Founder Mo. Compassion: 08812-297630

Lenten campaign – 2016 (DIOCESE OF ELURU)

Lent is a time when we 'reclaim' our Faith, and as our lives are enriched, we are moved to reach out to enrich and empower the lives of others. Your little contributions are going to be a great blessing for many people, who are most deserving. I call upon your generosity to help sustain the mission of universal Church. So, make a difference with your generous contributions.

1. LENTEN CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUNGER AND DISEASE

"In the life of the body a man is sometimes sick, and unless he takes medicine, he will die. Even so in the spiritual life a man is sick on account of sin. For that reason he needs medicine so that he may be restored to health; and this grace is bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance."

-St. Thomas Aquinas

An appeal is made especially during this period of Lent so that our Catholics may contribute more generously from their little acts of self-denial and self sacrifice towards our sick and suffering brethren. The Parish Priests are requested to send the Lenten Campaign collection to the Procurator's office.

2. HOLY THURSDAY COLLECTION: it is meant to support the expenses for the maintenance of the structures of the Holy See. It has to be sent to the Vatican. Therefore the Parish Priests are requested to send the Holy Thursday collection separately to the Procurator's office.

3. GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION: Good Friday collection is meant for sacred places in Holy Land. It also has to be sent to the Vatican. Therefore the Parish Priests are requested to send the collection to the Procurator's office, specifying the purpose.

+ Jaya Rao Polimera

10 MBBS seats are reserved for Dalit Christians

Dear Friends, I have received 2 Emails from Fr. AXJ. Bosco, SJ with happy news. 10 seats have been allotted to Dalit Christian students in St.John's Medical College. All the details about the requirements, entrance test dates and the procedures are given below.

St. John's Medical College, Bangalore

Good news: 10 MBBS seats will be reserved for Dalit Christians, 10 seats for Tribal Christians and 20 seats for the nuns working in rural areas.

<http://stjohnsadmissions.in/mbbs.html>

MBBS Entrance Test 2016-17

Applications are invited for admission to MBBS Degree Courses for the Academic Year 2016-17.

Applications will be available from 02-03-2016

Total Seats – 150

The ENTRANCE TEST will be conducted ONLINE on 22-05-2016 (Sunday) in several cities across the country.

Late date for Applying: 30-04-2016

Important Dates: MBBS 2016

March 02, 2016 - Applications Available Online

•April 30, 2016 - Last date for Submitting Application Forms Online

•May 09 to 21, 2016 - Issue of Hall Ticket Online

•May 22, 2016 - Entrance Test (at various Centres across India)

•June 20, 2016 - Announcement of 1st Interview List

•July 04 to 7, 2016 - Interview for 1st List Candidates

•July 12, 2016 - Announcement of 2nd Interview List

•July 25 to 30, 2016 - Interview for 2nd List Candidates

•August 03, 2016 - Announcement of Final Results

•August 08 to 12, 2016 - Admissions

•August 22, 2016 - Classes begin

For Queries please contact :

Email: sjmc.admission@stjohns.in, Online

MBBS Application Form Toll-Free

Helpline: **1800-209-0215**, (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm Only),

SC, ST, BC Commission of CBCI to CELEBRATE 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF DR. AMBEDKAR on May 23, 2016-03-31

The SC, ST, BC commission of CBCI, is happy to inform you that we will be celebrating the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar in a meaningful way on **23rd May 2016** in New Delhi.

1. A **National seminar** will be conducted on useful topics on Ambedkar and the empowerment of Dalit Christians

2. **National Award** has been announced and the awardees are selected from all the regions through the Regional SC commission secretaries.

3. **Regional Essay competition** is announced for the high school and the higher secondary/ Junior college students
4. **National essay competition** is announced for the college students

Most Rev. Dr. Salvatore Pennacchio the Apostolic Nuncio, His Eminence Baselios Cardinal Cleemis, president of CBCI, Most Rev. Neethinathan, Chairperson for CBCI office for SC/BC, bishops and civil and political leaders will grace the occasion.

Celebration of such kind will tell the public that the Indian Catholic Church is committed for the cause of the Dalits and marginalised in the Indian society.

“Discrimination against anybody on the basis of caste is a sin against God and humanity”
CBCI General Assembly, Varanasi 1998

GOOD FRIDAY DECLARED BANK HOLIDAY THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF FTC:

A united effort of Christians in Telugu speaking states

As you may be aware, the Governments of A.P. and T.S. did not include Good Friday falling on 25th March 2016 in the list of holidays of the year 2016 to be observed by banks and other financial institutions under section 25 of Negotiable Instruments Act 1881. This has happened for the first time in the twin Telugu States. Even last year, both of them had declared it a bank holiday. Most of the States and Union Territories, except a few BJP ruled states, declared Good Friday a bank holiday.

A letter dated March 14, 2016 was sent to both the Chief Ministers of A.P. and T.S. requesting them to declare Good Friday a bank holiday by Archbishop of Hyderabad Most Rev. Thumma Bala who is the President of Telugu Catholic Bishops' Council (TCBC) and FTC. A similar letter was also sent by CSI Moderator Bishop Rt. Rev. G. Dyvasirvadam who is the President of Andhra Pradesh Federation of Churches (APFC) which is a state unit of FTC. Other organizations like Christian Social Forum and Bankers' associations had also made an appeal.

On March 16, 2016, Fr. Anthoniraj Thumma, Executive Secretary of FTC, had met the Chief Minister of A.P. Sri Nara Chandrababu Naidu and submitted the representation of FTC urging him to take into consideration the significance of Good Friday, a sacred day of prayer and fasting, and to declare it a holiday under section 25 of Negotiable Instruments Act 1881. He also followed it up by lobbying with both the Governments through various ministers, legislators and officials.

We are pleased to inform you that by the grace of God we succeeded in our efforts in getting the Notifications issued on 22-03-2016 by both the Telugu States declaring Good Friday a bank holiday. Archbishop Most Rev. Thumma Bala as the President of TCBC and FTC addressed a thanking letter dated 23-03-2016 to the both the Chief Ministers of for issuing the GOs.

Thanks to all those who worked towards this noble cause.

Synopsis of the Chronicles of Bishop's Diary in March - 2016

1st Tue 10.30 am participated for the Blessing & Inaugural Mass of new Cathedral at Khammam diocese

2nd Tue-9thWed attended CBCI Meeting at Bangalore

10th Thu BISHOP'S OFFICE

11th Fri BISHOP'S OFFICE

12th Sat 9.00-12.30 pm Bishop's Office, 6.00 pm attended for the Annual day celebrations of Deepthi E.M.School at Kovvuru

13th Sun 9.30 am celebrated Mass at Kovvuru parish

14th Mon 11.00 am blessed the new Chapel & celebrated Mass at Pinakanametta of Vegesvarapuram

15th Tue BISHOP'S OFFICE

16th Wed BISHOP'S OFFICE

17th Thu BISHOP'S OFFICE

18th Fri BISHOP'S OFFICE

19th Sat 8.00 am celebrated St. Joseph's Festal Mass at St. Joseph Dental college, 10.30 am celebrated St. Joseph's Festal Mass at Nagunidevunipadu, 4.30 pm celebrated

Golden Jubilee Mass for Nirmala Sisters at Jangareddigudem

20th Sun 9.45 am celebrated Palm Sunday mass at Kalipatnam

21st Mon BISHOP'S OFFICE

22nd Tue 9.30 am attended for the Clergy Recollection & celebrated Chrism Mass at Nirmalagiri

23rd Wed 10.30 am conducted Consulter's meeting

24th Thu 6.30 pm celebrated Holy Thursday Mass at St. Theresa's Parish at Eluru

25th Fri 7.00 am participated for the way of the Cross at Holy Family Brothers, Vanguru, 10.30 am participated for the way of the Cross at Dharmajigudem, 12.00 pm celebrated Good Friday: Liturgical service at Nadipalli parish

26th Sat 10.30 pm celebrated Easter Vigil Mass at Vijayrai Parish

27th Sun 10.30 am Easter Sunday Mass at Jalipudi Parish

27th Sun to 2nd Sat April Conference in the Holy Land.



OBITUARY FR. RATHNARAJ BODELA (1959 – 2016)

Rev. Fr. Rathnaraj, 57, a Priest of Eluru Diocese, presently working as the parish Priest of Holy Redeemers Parish, Annadevarapeta and Vicar's Forane of Nirmalagiri Vicariate, died of heart attack today (March 9, 2016 (Wed) at 8.30pm at Annadevarapeta parish.

His early life

Fr. Bodela Rathnaraj was born on 20-08-1959, at Denduluru to Bodela Sundara Rao & Mariamma as the second child. He has one elder brother (Anandra Rao) & two younger Brothers (Yesebu & Jeeva). He studied his elementary schooling at RCM Elementary School, Denduluru. Later appeared for Night-School at Denduluru to complete his High school studies.

Seminary Studies

After completing SSC, Rev. Fr. Prottolo Galigi, PIME, the then Parish Priest of Denduluru, sent him to the seminary to the erstwhile diocese of Vijayawada. He completed his minor seminary at Angel's Minor Seminary, Nuzvid, Intermediate at Loyola College, Vijayaeada & reGENCY at St. Xavier's Boarding, Eluru.

He completed his philosophy & Theology at St. Charles Seminary, Nagpur, and was ordained Priest by late Most Rev. John Mulagada, on 03-04-1989, at Nirmalagiri Shrine.

Priestly journey:

1. Assit., PP, Bhimavaram – 1989
2. PP, Akividu (1989 to 1995),
3. South Africa Mission (1995 to 2000),
4. PP, Amalapuram (2000 to 2002),
5. PP, Cathedral, Eluru (2002 – May 2015),
6. PP, Annadevarapeta May 1, 2015 onwards.

May his soul rest in peace!

FROM SJDC DESK

Women's Day Celebrations at SJDC

The women empowerment committee at St. Joseph Dental College observed the women's week from 8th to 11th of March 2016 in view of International Woman's day. This was organised by the Department of Pedodontics & Preventive Dentistry.



On 8th March to mark the beginning of woman's week, unveiling of Women's cell notice board was done which displayed the impressive

achievements of women at SJDC. The following events were organised exclusively for girls.

Date	Event	Incharge
9-3-16 (Wednesday 2 to 4 PM)	Quiz competition	Department of OMR
10-3-16 (Thursday 2 to 4 PM)	Fun Games	Department of Community Dentistry

Funds raised for charity through contributions from all the women teaching staff were utilised for the needs of Mother Theresa Home at Vangayagudem. Our team visited the inmates on 10-3-16 and fulfilled their requirements.

To mark the conclusion of these programmes, the woman's day celebration was held on Friday the 11th of March at 2pm in the SJDC auditorium. All the teaching faculty including Principal, Rev Fr Nelli George, faculty from nursing college, all UG and PG students attended the programme. The chief

guests for this occasion were Mrs. Sailaja Potluri (Principal, CR Reddy Women's College) and Mrs. Sunkara Padmasri (AP State Mahila Congress president)

Later all the women teaching faculty were invited on to the dais to felicitate the chief guests, Dr. Sowjanya (Professor, Pedodontics) and Mrs. Racheal (Receptionist). Prizes for the winners in the women's week events were given and certificates were awarded to all the UG girls who donated blood in the donation camp organised by the Red Cross society.

Re-Creational Games Competition for non-teaching staff

Re-Creational Games Competition was held on 17th & 18th March 2016 for all the Non-Teaching staff working under VDMC Trust to boost up the morale of the employees. All the staff actively participated and made the programme a Grand success.

St. Joseph Feast

The feast of St Joseph was celebrated at the St. Joseph Dental College on 19th March 2016. Solemnity mass was celebrated by Most Rev. Bishop Jaya Rao Polimera, Bishop of Eluru and Chairman of the institute along with Rev. Fr. Nelli George, Secretary & Correspondent, Fr. Amruth, Correspondent, St. Joseph College of Nursing, Fr. Katam Balthazar, Adminstrator of St. Joseph General Hospital. There was also



garlanding of the statue of St. Joseph and setting up of Traditional St. Joseph's Altar.

After the Mass, there was the "Lamp Lighting Ceremony" for 1st Year Nursing Students, which was presided by His Lordship Jaya Rao Polimera, Rev. Frs. Nelli George, Amruth Raj & Balthazar, Dr. Sleeva Raju, Principal, St. Joseph Dental College, Mrs. Sri Devi, Principal, St. Joseph College of Nursing. Later Nursing College and Dental College Students collectively performed cultural Programmes. Prizes for the winners of the re-creational games competition for non-teaching staff were distributed by dignitaries on the dias.

Root Canal Awareness Week: Root canal awareness week is being observed from 27th March to 2nd April 2016. The people of Eluru were educated regarding root canal treatment by the Department of Conservative Dentistry & Endodontics by conducting a rally on March 27th in the streets of Eluru.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF STUDENTS

1. Dr. Mounika PG in Dept. of Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopedics has achieved 2nd "Best Clinical Paper" at IOS 21st PG Convention held at Amritsar
2. Dr. Anusha PG in Dept. of Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopedics has achieved 2nd "Best Paper Research" at IOS 21st PG Convention held at Amritsar
3. Dr. Ravi Kumar, PG in Dept. of Conservative Dentistry & Endodontics has achieved "Best Paper" at IACED-IES 17th PG Convention held at Bhopal.

KONASEEMA AT THE LORD'S WAY CARRYING THE CROSS

The event of the Way of the Cross at Kona Seema Level that has been stabilized into a regular Lenten feature in the Parish of Amalapuram was held on Friday 11th March 2016. It is heartening to note that the Faith of our people could stand the trial of sufferings, as they in big number gathered,



walked and accompanied Jesus, in spirit, in his determined last journey to Golgotha in Jerusalem on that 'Good' Friday, some of them walking all the way to Amalapuram from their Parishes, some of the aged ones still keeping track of the procession, some handicapped people holding on to the processional drive, some walking barefoot through the hot-lit road...

The pious procession, becoming longer by every minute, made its winding way down

the town through the market places, giving least inconvenience to the general traffic. The songs and prayers echoed the prayerful sentiments of the participants. The Fathers from all these Parishes stirred up the glowing spirit of the marchers with their individually marked messages at each of the 'Stations' along the way. One could sight many turning to be a Simon of Cyrene or Veronica in competing to offer water to the sun-scorched faces and parched throats. It was a unique spiritual experience to many and a sense of internal peace and well-being was seen in most of the attendants. The procession, over two hours, culminated in the Church and climaxed in the Concelebrated Eucharist led by Fr. Paschali and preached by Rev. Fr. Ch. Innaiah. It was also a moment of proud satisfaction to Amalapuram Parishioners who spelt out their generosity in providing meals for all the processionists. The Parish profusely thanks all the

Fathers and amply wishes all the Faithful with the Resurrected Lord's Easter Blessings.

- Fr Chandana Samy, SJ, Amalapuram

NEWS BYTES

NUNCIO URGES TO PROMOTE LAITY, ECUMENISM

The one-day meeting discussed matters affecting the Latin Catholic Church in India.

Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal inaugurating the 28th Plenary Assembly of the CCBI. Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, the Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal, exhorted the Church in India to promote the lay leadership and ecumenism while opening the plenary assembly of Latin rite bishops. "There is a need for constant dialogue and sustained formation of the laity in a transparent, credible and accountable manner so that they may truly understand their role in the Church," he said at the opening of the plenary assembly of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) of the Latin Church.

He said it was "crucial to recognize the dignity of the laity and their participation in the mission and decision making of the Church so that they become sharers in Christ's mission". Stressing the need for ecumenism, the nuncio said in "a time of increasingly marked secularization, and religious

discriminations, **Christians have to be united among themselves and extend a united and true common witness to the nation.**"

CCBI president Cardinal Oswald Gracias appealed to pray for the persecuted Christians in the world, especially for those Christians in the Middle East and expressed the concern of the Indian Church for the those who killed in the Friday's terrorist attack in Yemen.

"We feel the pain even more because one of the sisters is our very own from Jharkhand," he said referring to the attack on the house managed by Missionaries of Charity which left 16 people dead, including four MC nuns. "This killing was senseless but will bear fruit. We pray the blood they shed will bring peace and the presence of Jesus Christ to the strife torn area," said Cardinal Gracias.

Bishops also requested the authorities to take steps for the release of the missionary Salesian Father Thoams Uzhunnalil, an Indian priest, who is reportedly missing after the terror attack.

The conference, having 131 Latin rite dioceses and 180 bishops, is the largest Episcopal Conference in Asia and fourth largest in the world.

Mother Teresa will be canonized September 4

After months of anticipation, the date of Mother Teresa's canonization has finally been announced. It falls on Sept. 4, which this year will also mark a special jubilee for workers and volunteers of



mercy. Though it's been rumored for months that Mother Teresa's canonization will take place Sept. 4, the Vatican made the date official during a March 15 consistory of cardinals.

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu Aug. 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia. After joining the Sisters of Loretto at age 17, she was sent to Calcutta, where she later contracted tuberculosis, and was sent to rest in Darjeeling. In 1950, the Missionaries of Charity were born as a congregation of the Diocese of Calcutta. In 1952, the government granted them a house from which to continue their mission of serving Calcutta's poor and forgotten. She died Sept. 5, 1997, and was beatified just six years later by St. John Paul II Oct. 19, 2003.

Odisha Church to celebrate Martyrs Day on August 30: The Catholic bishops of Odisha have decided to celebrate Martyrs Day on August 30 every year. The day follows the feast of the beheading of St John the Baptist, said Archbishop John Barwa of Cuttack-Bhubaneswar who heads the Catholic Church in the eastern Indian state. This decision was taken at the meeting of Odisha Bishops' Regional Council (OCBC) in February. However, the Council announced the date only on March 10.

Ranchi auxiliary elected new CBCI Secretary General: The bishops also re-elected Cardinal Baselios Cleemis as president for a second term of two years. The Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) has elected Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas, auxiliary bishop of Ranchi archdiocese as its new secretary general. Bishop Mascarenhas replaces Archbishop Albert D'Souza of Agra, who served as CBCI Secretary General for the last six years.

Mercy moves us closer to God: Pope Benedict XVI said that Pope Francis' speaking of mercy is a way of moving faithful closer to God. The Pope Emeritus said this in a rare public interview to *Avvenire*, the newspaper of the Italian Bishops' Conference, published on March 16, reported Vatican Radio.

Jesuit Fr Jacques Servais, a renowned theologian, conducted the interview which focused on two highly controversial issues in the post-Conciliar era: the right understanding of Christ's unique and universal act of salvation with respect to those who do not profess Christian faith, and the right understanding of the primacy of mission in the life of the Church with respect to dialogue.

Catholic Church grows faster than global population: The number of Catholics has increased at a faster rate than the rest of the population, newly released statistics by the Vatican reveal. Over the course of nine years, the number of Catholics worldwide has increased by 17.8 per cent, compared to the global population, which increased by 17.3 per cent. From 2005 to 2014, the number of Catholics grew from 1.12 billion to 1.27 billion.

These and other statistics, released by the Vatican on March 5, are contained within the 2016 Pontifical Yearbook, and the 2014 *Annuarium Statisticum Ecclesiae*.

Pakistan church condemns attack on government employees: The Catholic Church of Pakistan has strongly condemned a March 16 terrorist attack in Peshawar that killed at least 16 people and injured another 30. A bomb exploded inside a bus carrying government employees going to work. The attack took place in the center of Peshawar, a major city in northwestern Pakistan, on one of its busiest streets congested with morning traffic. Some 50 people were in the vehicle. The wounded remain in critical condition. The blast was caused by a bomb planted inside the bus. The top part of the bus was blown off and had to be cut to pull out the injured. A group linked to the Pakistani Taliban said it carried out the attack in revenge for death sentences given to 13 of its fighters on March 15. The Pakistani city was the scene of other deadly attacks by terrorist groups linked to the Taliban, like one in December 2014 against a military school that killed 148, mostly children.

A Brief Report: 32nd General Body Meeting of CBCI, India, March 2nd to 9th, 2016, Bangalore

The Catholic Bishops Conference of India, CBCI, meets every two years and it is called Plenary Assembly or The General Body Meeting. Usually, these meetings are held for eight days. The CBCI consists of the bishops of the dioceses of all the "Three sui juris Churches," namely, Latin, the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara. At present we have 171 archdioceses/dioceses and the total number of Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and Auxiliary Bishops is 178 (?). All the emeritus archbishops and bishops are also members of the CBCI and they can attend the biennial General Body Meetings of the CBCI. This year about 182 bishops and archbishops attended to the Meeting.

At these CBCI biennial Meetings one *relevant or important area* concerning the Church's Life and Mission in India is taken for special reflection and deliberations. There will be scientifically and systematically prepared inputs in the form of talks and papers entrusted to the known resource persons from different parts of India. Floor discussions and workshop discussions are the dynamics of the deliberations in this first part which will normally take the first three days of the Meeting. Depending on the subject under consideration, the drafting committee is entrusted with the task of preparing the statement or summary or policy framework. During the last two days, the document

prepared by the drafting committee is thoroughly discussed and deliberated. The final draft comes out as an approved statement by the General Body only after at least two or three presentations of the draft. At this year's CBCI General Body Meeting the subject taken up was, "**RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH IN INDIA TO THE PRESENT DAY CHALLENGES.**"

In the study and reflection, discussions and deliberation of the above subject the member bishops actively participated and shared their experiences in the prevailing political, social and economic realities in their respective dioceses and regions. Based upon the "position paper prepared by the CBCI core team and taking into consideration the feedback from different regions and the National CRI, the main challenges and concerns were identified and listed. There were two workshops in eight groups on the listed topics facilitated by the questionnaire prepared by the drafting committee. These workshops were able to elicit opinions/responses from all the member bishops of the CBCI. All this happened in the first three days of the General Body Meeting. Grouping the challenges the Church and the nation are facing today under different headings, the discussions were focused on what and how should be the response of the Church. The drafting committee did this commendable work of preparing a six page compact document. The document has presented the following areas/concerns/issues to which the responses of the Church are proposed:

1. Challenges within the Church and within the country; 2. Restating the vision and mission of the Church in India; 3. Family Life; 4. Renewal of Consecrated Life; 5. Lay faithful and the Mission of the Church; 6. Church and the Marginalized and weaker sections within the Christian Community, Dalits, Tribals, Differently challenged/abled, place of women, etc; 6. Youth Apostolate; 7. Ecumenism and Inter-Religious Dialogue; 8. Education Apostolate of the Church; 7. Care for the Earth, Our Common Home; 8. A New Way of Being for an Effective Response to the prevailing challenges; 9. The role of the Bishops and Priests in the New Way of Being Church. The other days of the Meeting are spent to listen to the reports of all the CBCI Commissions, Offices, National Centers or Institutions like Caritas, St. John's Medical College, NBCLC, etc. The presentations give a brief summary of activities and accomplishments in the last two years and also highlight the difficulties or problems they face. Then we have also presentations of reports from 13 Ecclesiastical Regions, giving a brief account of what has been happening in different regions and highlighting the specific challenges or issues and problems each region is facing. This exercise rather tedious is for almost three days. But the reports and sharing from different commissions and regions are very enriching and mutually strengthening!

The final draft of the document will be published soon by the CBCI Secretariat and will be given in our monthly Newsletter. We have to continue to strive as a Church and keep reading the signs of the times in order to be effectively present as the Church, the Sacrament of Salvation in the present day India. As we all know, we are in rather difficult and uncertain days and as a Christian Community cannot compromise on our Evangelizing mission in this our beloved nation, India!

**SC, ST, BC Commission of CBCI to
CELEBRATE 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF DR. AMBEDKAR
on May 23, 2016-03-31**

The SC, ST, BC commission of CBCI, is happy to inform you that we will be celebrating the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar in a meaningful way on **23rd May 2016** in New Delhi.

1. **A National seminar** will be conducted on useful topics on Ambedkar and the empowerment of Dalit Christians

2. **National Award** has been announced and the awardees are selected from all the regions through the Regional SC commission secretaries.

3. **Regional Essay competition** is announced for the high school and the higher secondary/ Junior college students

4. **National essay competition** is announced for the college students

Most Rev. Dr. Salvatore Pennacchio the Apostolic Nuncio, His Eminence Baselios Cardinal Cleemis, president of CBCI, Most Rev. Neethinathan, Chairperson for CBCI office for SC/BC, bishops and civil and political leaders will grace the occasion.

Celebration of such kind will tell the public that the Indian Catholic Church is committed for the cause of the Dalits the marginalised in the Indian society.

**“Discrimination against anybody
on the basis of caste is a sin against God and humanity”**

- CBCI General Assembly, Varanasi 1998

The continuing struggle of Christians in Pakistan

Muslim militants often attack Pakistan Christians considering them to be associated with ‘Christian nations’

Pakistani Christians mourn the death of a blast victim of the March 27 suicide bombing in Lahore.



Pakistan is once again in the news over its attack on religious minorities. A terrorist attack targeting Christians killed more than 70 people in Lahore as Pakistani Christian families were celebrating Easter in a public park.

This is not the first time that Christians in the Islamic country have been targeted and observers say that as things stand this won't be the last time.

Recent attacks: Christians are the most persecuted religious minority in Pakistan. In recent years, Christians braced continuous deadly terrorist attacks in the country leaving hundreds of them dead.

Two bomb blasts at churches in Lahore in March killed 14. A twin suicide bomb attack at a Peshawar church in 2013 left around 80 dead. In 2009, nearly 40 houses and a church were burnt by a mob in Gojra town in Punjab, with eight people burned alive. In 2005, hundreds of Christians had to flee their homes in Faisalabad as churches and Christian schools were set on fire by a mob claiming Christians had burned pages of the Quran.

Major reason for attacks: Pakistani Christians have been the target of several terrorist attacks since the United States, viewed by many Pakistani Muslims to be a Christian nation, attacked Afghanistan in October 2001. The deposed fundamentalist Islamic regime of Afghanistan has many supporters across the border in Pakistan. Most Pakistanis view the United States and Western European countries as Christian, and Muslim militants consider Pakistani Christians to be associated with those “Christian nations.”

Birthdays

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Rev. Fr. Chintagunta Inniah | 01-04-1947 | 4. Rev. Fr. Babu George | 03-04-1989 |
| 2. Rev. Fr. Rachuri Balaswamy | 07-04-1976 | 5. Rev. Fr. Koppula Rayappa | 03-04-1989 |
| 3. Rev. Fr. Talari Mokshanand | 14-04-1968 | 6. Rev. Fr. Bodela Ratna Raj | 03-04-1989 |
| 4. Rev. Fr. Katam Balthazar | 23-04-1972 | 7. Rev. Fr. Maddala Vijaya Kumar | 03-04-1989 |
| 5. Rev. Fr. Parise David | 25-04-1972 | 8. Rev. Fr. Nelli George | 03-04-1989 |
| 6. Rev. Fr. Taluri Diwakar | 25-04-1979 | 9. Rev. Fr. Melchior Raju | 03-04-1989 |
| 7. Rev. Dn. Hetchu Yesuratnam | 31/05/1988 | 10. Rev. Fr. Savariyar Jeya Prakash | 03-04-1989 |

Ordinations

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Most Rev. Bp Jaya Rao Polimera | | 11. Rev. Fr. Boddu Francis | 04-04-2005 |
| Priestly Ordination | 02-04-1992 | 12. Rev. Fr. Nitta Thambi | 05-04-2011 |
| 2. Rev. Fr. Koiladam Mathew | 02-04-1966 | 13. Rev. Fr. Marapatla Joseph | 27/04/2015 |
| 3. Rev. Fr. Anthony Christu Raj | 03-04-1989 | 14. Rev. Fr. Chigurupalli Suresh | 27/04/2015 |
| | | 15. Rev. Fr. Busi Yesupadam | 27/04/2015 |
| | | 16. Rev. Fr. Hetchu Yesuratnam | 27/04/2015 |
| | | 17. Rev. Fr. Jujjuvarapu Michel | 27/04/2015 |
| | | 18. Rev. Fr. Varigeti Kiran Kumar | 27/04/2015 |

TO PONDER

A farmer came into town and asked the owner of a restaurant if he could use a million frog legs. The restaurant owner was shocked and asked the man where he could get so many frog legs! The farmer replied, 'There is a pond near my house that is full of frogs - millions of them. They all croak all night long and they are about to make me crazy!' So the restaurant owner and the farmer made an agreement that the farmer would deliver frogs to the restaurant, five hundred at a time for the next several weeks. The first week, the farmer returned to the restaurant looking rather sheepish, with two scrawny little frogs. The restaurant owner said, 'Well.... where are all the frogs?' The farmer said, 'I was mistaken. There were only these two frogs in the pond. But they sure were making a lot of noise!'

Next time you hear somebody criticizing or making fun of you, remember, it's probably just a couple of noisy frogs. Also remember that problems always seem bigger in the dark which seem almost overwhelming like a million frogs croaking?

Have a good Laugh

Only one question

One Day a scholar came to the court of Emperor Akbar and challenged Birbal to answer his questions and thus prove that he was as clever as people said he was.

He asked Birbal: "Would you prefer to answer a hundred easy questions or just a single difficult one?"

Both the emperor and Birbal had had a difficult day and were impatient to leave.

"Ask me one difficult question," said Birbal.

"Well, then, tell me," said the man, "which came first into the world, the chicken or the egg?"

"The chicken," replied Birbal.

"How do you know?" asked the scholar, a note of triumph in his voice.

"We had agreed you would ask only one question and you have already asked it" said Birbal and he and the emperor walked away leaving the scholar gaping.

Being clever is not enough. It is important to know how and when to make use of it. That's wisdom.

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Bp Jaya Rao blessing a new village chapel at Pinakanametta of Vegesvarapuram parish.

Photo Gallery of Holy Week & Easter - 2016



Palm Sunday celebrations at Kalipatnam parish on March 20, 2016.



Good Friday celebrations at Nadipalli parish on March 25, 2016.



Maundy Thursday celebrations at St. Theresa's Parish on Mar. 24, 2016

Easter Vigil celebrations at Vijayarai parish on Mar. 26, 2016

CHRISM MASS - MARCH 22, 2016

