



SHEPHERD'S CALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HYDERABAD

VOL: L

NO.01

JANUARY 2023



MARY MOTHER OF GOD
- PRAY FOR US



I WISH ALL THE PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS,
THE FAITHFUL AND ALL BROTHERS & SISTERS.

A VERY HAPPY, GRACE - FILLED & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR - 2023



**HYDERABAD
ARCHDIOCESE
SOCIAL SERVICE SOCIETY
SEMI-CHRISTMAS
CELEBRATIONS
WITH
TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY**



**CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS FOR SPECIALLY-ABLED
AT ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL GROUNDS, SEC'BAD**



SHEPHERD'S CALL

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JANUARY

2023

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 56TH WORLD DAY OF PEACE (1 JANUARY 2023)

***No one can be saved alone. Combatting Covid-19 together,
embarking together on paths of peace***



"Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night" (1 Thes 5:1-2).



1. With these words, the Apostle Paul encouraged the Thessalonian community to remain steadfast, their hearts and feet firmly planted and their gaze fixed on the world around them and the events of history, even as they awaited the Lord's return. When tragic events seem to overwhelm our lives, and we feel plunged into a dark and difficult maelstrom of injustice and suffering, we are likewise called to keep our hearts open to hope and to trust in God, who makes himself present, accompanies us with tenderness, sustains us in our weariness and, above all, guides our path. For this reason, Saint Paul constantly exhorts the community to be vigilant, seeking goodness, justice and truth: "So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober" (5:6). His words are an invitation to remain alert and not to withdraw into fear, sorrow or resignation, or to yield to distraction or discouragement. Instead, we should be like sentinels keeping watch and ready to glimpse the first light of dawn, even at the darkest hour.

2. Covid-19 plunged us into a dark night. It destabilized our daily lives, upset our plans and routines, and disrupted the apparent tranquility of even the most affluent societies. It generated disorientation and suffering and caused the death of great numbers of our brothers and sisters. Amid a whirlwind of unexpected challenges and facing a situation confusing even from a scientific standpoint, the world's healthcare workers mobilized to relieve immense suffering and to seek possible remedies. At the same time, political authorities had to take measures to

organize and manage efforts to respond to the emergency. In addition to its physical aspects, Covid-19 led to a general malaise in many individuals and families; the long periods of isolation and the various restrictions on freedom contributed to this malaise, with significant long-term effects. Nor can we overlook the fractures in our social and economic order that the pandemic exposed, and the contradictions and inequalities that it brought to the fore. It threatened the job security of many individuals and aggravated the ever-increasing problem of loneliness in our societies, particularly on the part of the poor and those in need. We need but think of the millions of informal workers in many parts of the world left without a job and without any support during the time of the lockdown. Only rarely do individuals and societies achieve progress in conditions that generate such feelings of despondency and bitterness, which weaken efforts to ensure peace while provoking social conflict, frustration and various forms of violence. Indeed, the pandemic seems to have upset even the most peaceful parts of our world, and exposed any number of forms of fragility.

3. Three years later, the time is right to question, learn, grow and allow ourselves to be transformed as individuals and as communities; this is a privileged moment to prepare for “the day of the Lord”. I have already observed on a number of occasions that we never emerge the same from times of crisis: we emerge either better or worse. Today we are being asked: What did we learn from the pandemic? What new paths should we follow to cast off the shackles of our old habits, to be better prepared, to dare new things? What signs of life and hope can we see, to help us move forward and try to make our world a better place? Certainly, after directly experiencing the fragility of our own lives and the world around us, we can say that the greatest lesson we learned from Covid-19 was the realization that we all need one another. That our greatest and yet most fragile treasure is our shared humanity as brothers and sisters, children of God. And that none of us can be saved alone. We can also think of the efforts, which in some cases proved truly heroic, made by all those people who worked tirelessly to help everyone emerge from the crisis and its turmoil as best they could. This experience has made us all the more aware of the need for everyone, including peoples and nations, to restore the word “together” to a central place. For it is together, in fraternity and solidarity, that we build peace, ensure justice and emerge from the greatest disasters. Indeed, the most effective responses to the pandemic came from social groups, public and private institutions, and international organizations that put aside their particular interests and joined forces to meet the challenges. Only the peace that comes from a fraternal and disinterested love can help us overcome personal, societal and global crises.

4. Even so, at the very moment when we dared to hope that the darkest hours of the Covid-19 pandemic were over, a terrible new disaster befell humanity. We

witnessed the onslaught of another scourge: another war, to some extent like that of Covid-19, but driven by culpable human decisions. The war in Ukraine is reaping innocent victims and spreading insecurity, not only among those directly affected, but in a widespread and indiscriminate way for everyone, also for those who, even thousands of kilometers away, suffer its collateral effects – we need but think of grain shortages and fuel prices. Clearly, this is not the post-Covid era we had hoped for or expected. This war, together with all the other conflicts around the globe, represents a setback for the whole of humanity and not merely for the parties directly involved. While a vaccine has been found for Covid-19, suitable solutions have not yet been found for the war. Certainly, the virus of war is more difficult to overcome than the viruses that compromise our bodies, because it comes, not from outside of us, but from within the human heart corrupted by sin (cf. *Gospel of Mark* 7:17-23).

5. What then is being asked of us? First of all, to let our hearts be changed by our experience of the crisis, to let God, at this time in history, transform our customary criteria for viewing the world around us. We can no longer think exclusively of carving out space for our personal or national interests; instead, we must think in terms of the common good, recognizing that we belong to a greater community, and opening our minds and hearts to universal human fraternity. We cannot continue to focus simply on preserving ourselves; rather, the time has come for all of us to endeavour to heal our society and our planet, to lay the foundations for a more just and peaceful world, and to commit ourselves seriously to pursuing a good that is truly common. In order to do this, and to live better lives after the Covid-19 emergency, we cannot ignore one fundamental fact, namely that the many moral, social, political and economic crises we are experiencing are all interconnected, and what we see as isolated problems are actually causes and effects of one another. Consequently, we are called to confront the challenges of our world in a spirit of responsibility and compassion. We must revisit the issue of ensuring public health for all. We must promote actions that enhance peace and put an end to the conflicts and wars that continue to spawn poverty and death. We urgently need to join in caring for our common home and in implementing clear and effective measures to combat climate change. We need to battle the virus of inequality and to ensure food and dignified labour for all, supporting those who lack even a minimum wage and find themselves in great difficulty. The scandal of entire peoples starving remains an open wound. We also need to develop suitable policies for welcoming and integrating migrants and those whom our societies discard. Only by responding generously to these situations, with an altruism inspired by God's infinite and merciful love, will we be able to build a new world and contribute to the extension of his kingdom, which is a kingdom of love, justice and peace. In sharing

these reflections, it is my hope that in the coming New Year we can journey together, valuing the lessons that history has to teach us. I offer my best wishes to Heads of State and Government, to Heads of International Organizations, and to the leaders of the different religions. To all men and women of good will I express my prayerful trust that, as artisans of peace, they may work, day by day, to make this a good year! May Mary Immaculate, Mother of Jesus and Queen of Peace, intercede for us and for the whole world.

From The Vatican, 8 December 2022

POPE FRANCIS

PRAYER FOR THE POPE EMERITUS HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI

Pope Francis has requested prayers for his predecessor Pope Benedict as the age-related illness continues to impact his health seriously. My request to all the faithful is to pray for this holy man, whose witness continues to bless the church even today. He is an erudite scholar, whose books have brought the understanding of the message to millions. His contribution to Vatican II, his strong support of the mission of Saint John Paul II, and his intellectual acumen are memorable contributions to the Church today. He remained faithful to the tradition and the teachings of the Church. The whole church prays today for this holy Pope. His words, his life, and his gesture of resigning boldly to further the holiness of the Church - are significant and moving contributions. Joining our dear Pope Francis, we kneel down in prayers, knocking at the heavenly doors, for more excellent health and long life of witness of this Holy Pope. May the protection of our Mother Mary, continue to heal him and bless him with more excellent health.

POPES INTENTION: JANUARY 2023

For Educators: we pray that educators may be credible witnesses, teaching fraternity rather than competition and helping the youngest and most vulnerable above all.





Archbishop's Message



'Arise, shine, for your light has come; and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For darkness covers the earth and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and His glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn (Is.60:1-3).' This was the word addressed through the custodian of the prophecies of Isaiah among the exiles (Deutero-Isaiah) by the Lord God of Israel to *desolate Jerusalem*, even as the Remnant of Israel (elected by Him and educated by Him for their future covenantal life with Him in the Holy Spirit through Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah) were patiently awaiting their exultant exodus from Babylon and safe return to Jerusalem.

Although the *desolate* city of Jerusalem had the joy of receiving this Remnant of Israel into its midst in 537 B.C. and of seeing the *symbolic* Temple of the new covenant built on it over the ruins of the former Temple of the Sinai covenant during the years 536 to 516 B.C., yet it would have to wait another 530 years to witness the *historical* fulfilment of this glorious promise on its own territory. And then, when 'the fullness' of this time arrived, and the perpetual Virgin Mother Mary 'brought forth' and laid in that dark and dingy manger of Bethlehem the Eternal only-begotten Son of the Eternal Father whom She had conceived in the human flesh in Her own inviolate and undefiled womb through the power of the Holy Spirit, then it was that *desolate Jerusalem* silently witnessed the Lord God's promised light '*come over*' her and '*the glory of the LORD*' *risen over her* in a silent, awe-inspiring and most astonishing manner, even as the shepherds related to St. Joseph and to the Virgin Mary and to all those around them, all that they had seen and had been told by 'the Angel of the Lord who stood before them,' : 'Behold I bring you good news of great joy for all the people; for, to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is the Christ the Lord'...and 'suddenly there was with that Angel a multitude of heavenly Angels praising God and saying 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on peace to people of good will' (Lk.2:9-14,16-19).' And how much greater was the astonishment of *desolate Jerusalem* when she witnessed 'the Magi from the East come to Jerusalem asking,' where is the child born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage (Mt.2:2)' to the astounding fulfilment of the Lord God's promise to her (Mt.2:9-11): 'Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn (Is.60:3)'.

Blessed are those and happy Christmas to all those who, during this Christmas season, ponder on all these divine matters concerning our salvation, like our Virgin Mother Mary 'who 'treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart (Lk.2:19).'

Solemnities and Feasts

JANUARY 01ST

BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

Mary's role as mother of God places her in a unique position in God's redemptive plan. Without naming Mary, Paul asserts that "God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Galatians 4:4). Paul's further statement that "God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out 'Abba, Father!'" helps us realize that Mary is mother to all the brothers and sisters of Jesus. Some theologians also insist that Mary's motherhood of Jesus is an important element in God's creative plan. God's "first" thought in creating was Jesus. Jesus, the incarnate Word, is the one who could give God perfect love and worship on behalf of all creation. As Jesus was "first" in God's mind, Mary was "second" insofar as she was chosen from all eternity to be his mother. The precise title "Mother of God" goes back at least to the third or fourth century. In the Greek form *Theotokos* (God-bearer), it became the touchstone of the Church's teaching about the Incarnation. The Council of Ephesus in 431 insisted that the holy Fathers were right in calling the holy virgin *Theotokos*. At the end of this particular session, crowds of people marched through the street shouting: "Praised be the *Theotokos*!" The tradition reaches to our own day. In its chapter on Mary's role in the Church, Vatican II's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* calls Mary "Mother of God" 12 times.

Source: www.franiscanmedia.org



JANUARY 08TH

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

The word Epiphany means manifestation, and it has passed into general acceptance throughout the universal Church, from the fact that Jesus Christ manifested to the eyes of men His divine mission on this day. First of all, when a miraculous star revealed His birth to the kings of the East thus was fulfilled the prophecy that a star would arise from Jacob. (Num24:17) It was understood by these Wise Men that this star was announcing the Saviour-King, destined to be born of the Jews. And they, in spite of the difficulties and dangers of a long and tedious journey through deserts and mountains almost impassable, hastened at once to Bethlehem to adore Him. And there they offered Him mystical presents, as to the King of kings, to the God of heaven and earth, and to a Man whose human nature made Him mortal and subject to sufferings. The second manifestation commemorated by this feast day occurred when He came forth from the waters of the Jordan after having received Baptism from the hands of Saint John, and the Holy Ghost descended on Him in the visible form of a dove. A voice from heaven was heard, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. The third manifestation which the Church's liturgy recalls to us is that of the divine power of Jesus when, at the marriage-feast of Cana, by the first of His miracles He changed water into wine. And at the sight of this prodigy His disciples believed in His Divinity. These three great events, concurring to the same end, the Church has wished to celebrate in one and the same festival.



Source: www.Sanctoral.Com

JANUARY 9TH

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

We come across the Baptism of the Lord which was in fact the beginning of his public ministry. Jesus did not get the baptism like the others as a sign of repentance but as a sign of being one with the sinful humanity in order to liberate it from sin. Father's declaration that he is his beloved Son and the Spirit descending on him reminds us that in our baptism we are united with the Trinity and are made the beloved children of God. In Luke 12: 49 - 51 Jesus again speaks of a baptism he has to undergo indicating his passion and crucifixion which was a baptism to be with the agonizing and suffering humanity. Through his suffering he wanted to save the whole creation. During the Easter season, the liturgy affirms that by his being baptized in the River Jordan Jesus sanctified even the water. Amidst save the environment cries of today the Baptism of the Lord demands all of us to keep away from everything that pollutes the water. Baptism was not only the beginning of his public ministry but it was also a call to his later followers to be baptised to begin a new life in his word. The vision at the Baptism of the Lord resembles in some ways the visions of the Old Testament prophets like Isaiah and Amos. When Jesus identified himself with the ordinary people in his baptism he was telling the Church also to identify itself with the common people to liberate them from all types of sinful structures and cultures.



Source: www. living in faith

JANUARY 25TH

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

Saint Paul's entire life can be explained in terms of one experience-his meeting with Jesus on the road to Damascus. In an instant, he saw that all the zeal of his dynamic personality was being wasted, like the strength of a boxer swinging wildly. Perhaps he had never seen Jesus, who was only a few years older. But he had acquired a zealot's hatred of all Jesus stood for, as he began to harass the Church: "... entering house after house and dragging out men and women, he handed them over for imprisonment" (Acts 8:3b). Now he himself was "entered," possessed, all his energy harnessed to one goal being a slave of Christ in the ministry of reconciliation, an instrument to help others experience the one Saviour. One sentence determined his theology: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:5b). Jesus was mysteriously identified with people-the loving group of people Saul had been running down like criminals. Jesus, he saw, was the mysterious fulfilment of all he had been blindly pursuing. Paul's life became a tireless proclaiming and living out of the message of the cross: Christians die baptismally to sin and are buried with Christ; they are dead to all that is sinful and unredeemed in the world. So Paul's great message to the world was: You are saved entirely by God, not by anything you can do. Saving faith is the gift of total, free, personal and loving commitment to Christ, a commitment that then bears fruit in more "works" than the Law could ever contemplate.



Source: www. living in faith

Archbishop's Engagements

N.B.: You are welcome to meet the Archbishop "In Office Days". However because of last minute appointments, please call the secretary before coming. Ph No. 7207940883.

JANUARY 2023

01. Sun		:	NEW YEAR 2023
02-05. Mon-Thu	(Morning)	:	In Office
06. Fri	09:30 a.m.	:	Festive Mass at Holy Rosary Church, Kethepally, Nalgonda
07. Sat	05:00 p.m	:	Silver Jubilee Celebration at St. Paul's High School, Emjala
08. Sun	10:00 a.m.	:	Festive Mass at Infant Jesus Shrine, Holy Trinity Church , Begumpet
09. Mon	(Morning)	:	In Office
10. Tue	05:30 p.m	:	Annual Day Celebrations at St. Alphonsus High School, Banjara Hills
11. Wed	07:00 am	:	Mass: Midterm General Chapter Assembly at Generalate, Missionaries of Compassion, Aliabad
12. Thu	10:00 am	:	Conference at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bangalore
13. Fri	11:00 am	:	Bible Convention of Shamshabad Diocese at St. Mary's High School Gound
	05:00 pm	:	Annual Day Celebrations at Little Flower High School, Abids
14. Sat	10:30 am	:	Festive Mass, 1 st Holy Communion & Confirmations at St. Sebastian's Church, Sainikpuri
	05:30pm	:	1 st Holy Communion and Confirmations at St. Anthony's Shrine, Mettuguda

15. Sun	10:30 a.m.	:	Annual Feast at Infant Jesus Shrine, Gajwel
16. Mon	10:00 a.m.	:	1 st Holy Communion, Confirmations, Blessing of New Presbytery & Grotto at St. Joseph's Church, Cherlapally
17-19. Tue-Thu	(Morning)	:	In Office
19. Thu	06:00 p.m.	:	Diaconate Ordination and Founders Day Celebrations at Holy Spirit Fathers Provincialate, Ramanthapur
20. Fri	(Morning)	:	In Office
	06:30 p.m.	:	Christian Unity Octave- Prayer Service at St. Mary's Basilica, Sec'bad
21. Sat	10:30 a.m.	:	Silver Jubilee Celebrations of Religious Profession of Rev. Fr. Joshy CMI (Provincial), Fr. Shibu Paul CMI (Principal, Jeevadan High School, Kammareddy), Sr. Stella, Sr. Jessin and Sr. Josmy from FCC Congregation at Sacred Heart Church Kammareddy.
	p.m.	:	Meeting with PIME delegates from Milan.
22. Sun	09:30 a.m.	:	Feast of St. Vincent Pallotti, 1 st Holy Communion and Confirmations at St. Anthony's Church, Mudfort
23-29. Mon-Sun		:	34 th Pleanary Assembly of the CCBI, St. John's National Institute of Health Sciences, Bangalore
30. Mon	10:00 a.m.	:	Festive Mass at Mariagiri Shrine, Srikakulam
31. Tue	(Morning)	:	In Office

28th December, 2022
Archbishop's House

+ Cardinal Poola Anthony
Archbishop of Hyderabad

Communications

A VERY HAPPY, GRACE FILLED & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR- 2023:

I wish all the Priests, Religious, the Faithful and all Brothers & Sisters, A VERY HAPPY, GRACE-FILLED and PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR-2023. May the blessings of God come upon all of you throughout the Year. May it bring us true Peace, Harmony, Joy, Good Health and Prosperity. May our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph continue to help us in every way and bring us ever closer to Jesus Christ our Good Shepherd.

1. ANNUAL RETURNS:

All Parish Priests and Heads of the Institutions are requested to start preparing Annual Returns for the year 2022, from January to December, which are to be sent to Rome in the First Quarter of 2023. Forms of Annual Returns were sent to you by post. If you have not received the forms by 1st January 2023, please contact Chancellor & Procurator or Secretary. Please send the filled in forms by 15th January 2022 to the chancellor & procurator or Secretary, Abp's house, Sec'bad. You may post the form or scan the filled in form and forward to: **archdiohyd@gmail.com**

2. WORD OF GOD SUNDAY:

In his Apostolic Letter *Aperuit illis* issued September 30, 2019, Pope Francis instituted the celebration of Sunday of the Word of God, which is held every year on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time. In 2023, it will be celebrated on the **22 January**. All the Parish Priests are asked to observe Word of God Sunday in your respective parishes by organizing special programmes like, Enthronement of the Bible, Bible Quiz, Distribution of Bibles and Bible connected activities. We encourage you all to organize inter – parish and inter – Deanery competitions or programmes in this regard.

3. ECUMENICAL SUNDAY:

The Parish Priests/Religious/ Heads of the Institutions are requested to observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity from 18th to 25th January, 2023 and the Ecumenical Sunday on 22 January, 2023 (Also Word of God Sunday). Kindly offer prayers for the unity of Christians as desired and prayed by the Lord Jesus Christ himself (cf. Jn.1:21).

4. RECOLLECTION IN JANUARY - 2023

All the Deans are here-by requested to conduct the Recollection at Deanery level for the month of January, 2023. All the Clergy are requested to attend the “Deanery Level Recollection” and if anyone is unable to attend the recollection, please inform the respective Deans. All the Deans are here-by requested to note down the minutes of the meetings with the list of the participants and send a copy of the same to Archbishop's House, Secunderabad.

5. 2ND SUNDAY COLLECTION FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2022

SI No.	Date	Place	Amount	SI No.	Date	Place	Amount
1		Aliabad		51	26-11-2022	Mahendra Hills	1000
2		Alirajpet		52		Mallapur	
3	14-11-2022	Ammuguda	2500	53		Manikonda Mission	
4		Armoor		54		Medchal	
5	26-11-2022	Arogya Nagar (Mission)	300	55		Medipalle	
6	22-11-2022	Arul Colony	8032	56	24-11-2022	Mettuguda	14960
7	07-12-2022	Balaji Nagar	2084	57	06-12-2022	Miyapur	2500
8		Balaiah Nagar		58	13-12-2022	Moula - Ali	9200
9	19-12-2022	Band Lines	6000	59		Mudfort	
10		Bandlaguda Jagir (Kismatpur)		60		Muthangi	
11		Banjara Hills		61		Nacharam	
12		Basuregadi		62		Nandrakal	
13		Bayyaram		63		Narayankhed	
14		Bazar Ghat		64		Nedunoor	
15		Begumpet		65		Neela Camp	
16	21-11-2022	BHEL - MIG	3380	66	06-12-2022	Nizamabad	1500
17	16-11-2022	Bhoiguda	15000	67		Pargi	
18		Bodhan		68	13-12-2022	Patancheru	900
19		Boduppall		69	28-11-2022	Ramachandrapuram	8750
20	16-11-2022	Bolarum	16500	70	14-11-2022	Ramanthapur	3500
21	21-12-2022	Borabanda	6671	71		Ramnagar	
22		Bowenpally		72	22-11-2022	Sadasivpet	1000
23		Cherlapally		73		Sainikpuri	
24		Chintalacheruvu		74	18-11-2022	Sanathnagar	19090
25		Church Colony		75		Sangareddy	
26	14-11-2022	Dayanandnagar	4200	76	15-11-2022	Santhoshnagar	3000
27		Dharmaram		77	22-11-2022	Sappers Lines	1260
28		Emjala		78	15-11-2022	Secunderabad	57110
29		Gaddiannaram		79		Seethaphalmandi	
30		Gagillapuram		80		Shabad	
31		Gajwel		81		Shamshabad	
32	16-11-2022	Gandhinagar	6000	82		Shantinagar	
33	22-11-2022	Garrison (Trimulgherry)	1545	83		Shapurnagar	
34		Ghatkesar		84		Siddipet	
35		Golconda		85		Sultan Bazar	
36		Hyderabad, Gunfoundry		86	15-11-2022	Suraram	3000
37		Jadi Jamalpur		87		Tandur	
38	15-11-2022	Jagadgirigutta	3500	88		Toopran	
39		Jahanuma		89	22-11-2022	Trimulgherry	18130
40		Jogipet		90		Uminthal	
41		Joipet		91		Vanasthalipuram	
42		Kalwakole		92		Venkatapuram	
43		Kamareddy		93		Vikarabad	
44	29-11-2022	Khairatabad	20500	94	14-11-2022	Yapral	3200
45		Kissan Nagar		95		Yeddumylaram	
46		Kukatpally		96	21-12-2022	Yellareddy	773
47	15-11-2022	L. B. Nagar	2411	97		Zaheerabad	
48		Lallaguda					
49	28-11-2022	Lillipur	540				
50		Madinaguda				Total	248036

H A S S S

1. HASSS ORGANIZES MINI-CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS WITH TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY

The Hyderabad Archdiocese Social Service Society (HASSS) began its work with Transgender Community by organizing mini-Christmas celebrations on Dec 21, 2022 at Suraram, Hyderabad with 180 Trans people from Hyderabad to understand what they feel would *'Make Their Lives Better'*. Speaking on the occasion, Fr. Anthony Madanu, Executive Director of HASSS said that the Cardinal Anthony Poola, Archbishop of Hyderabad with his guidance and path-breaking decisions is here to support the Transgender community in their struggle for equality and identity. Despite various attempts to change the lives of transgender people for better in India, the community continues to face discrimination and violence. Hence, Fr. Anthony Madanu, said that HASSS is extremely happy to initiate its intervention with Transgender Community to *'Make A Real Difference'*. The gathering of Transgender Community also was an opportunity for HASSS to interact and learn the difficulties of the Trans people. HASSS recognizes that, from being humiliated and treated badly, to facing unfair rejection, to being subjected to violence and murder, transgender community have had a harrowing life for ages. Corporator of Subashnagar Gudimetla Hemalatha, Suresh Reddy Garu graced the occasion and interacted with Transgender community. Fr Joji Parish Priest of Suraram took active part in the program. Jasmine Garu the GURU of trans people from Suraram was present and highlighted the problems faced by the transgender Community. HASSS also organized a couple of games and sports to encourage fun and play among the Transgender Community. As an expression of sharing on the occasion of Christmas, Dry Ration Kits were distributed to 180 Transgender community people for their short-term sustenance. Trans community people were extremely happy with the kind gesture from HASSS. The program ended with a sumptuous lunch, well appreciated by one and all from the transgender community. HASSS believes that this is not just a one-time activity. HASSS is going to invest in the Education and Livelihood of the Transgender community people in the days to come.

- Fr. Madanu Anthony, HASSS Director.



Pastoral News

1. FAMILY OF FAITH AT HASSS BUILDING ON 1ST DECEMBER 2022



Diploma in Theology Convocation by His Eminence Cardinal Anthony Poola to 21 students who successfully completed 40 credits. Thanks to Family of Faith members for collaborating with St. John's Regional Seminary Ramanthapur for this course.

2. 19TH HAES GAMES AND SPORTS MEET CLOSING CEREMONY AT INFANT JESUS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, SHAMSHABAD ON 3RD DECEMBER 2022



3. CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS FOR SPECIALLY-ABLED AT ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL GROUNDS, SEC'BAD ON 4TH DECEMBER 2022



4. FESTIVE MASS AT OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH, BANDLINES ON 08TH DECEMBER 2022



5. FINAL PROFESSIONS OF CATECHISTS SISTERS OF ST. ANN'S AT EMJALA ON 10TH DECEMBER 2022



6. BLESSING & INAUGURATION OF ST. PATRICK'S HIGH SCHOOL NEW BUILDING AND ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATION, SEC'BAD ON 10TH DEC. 2022



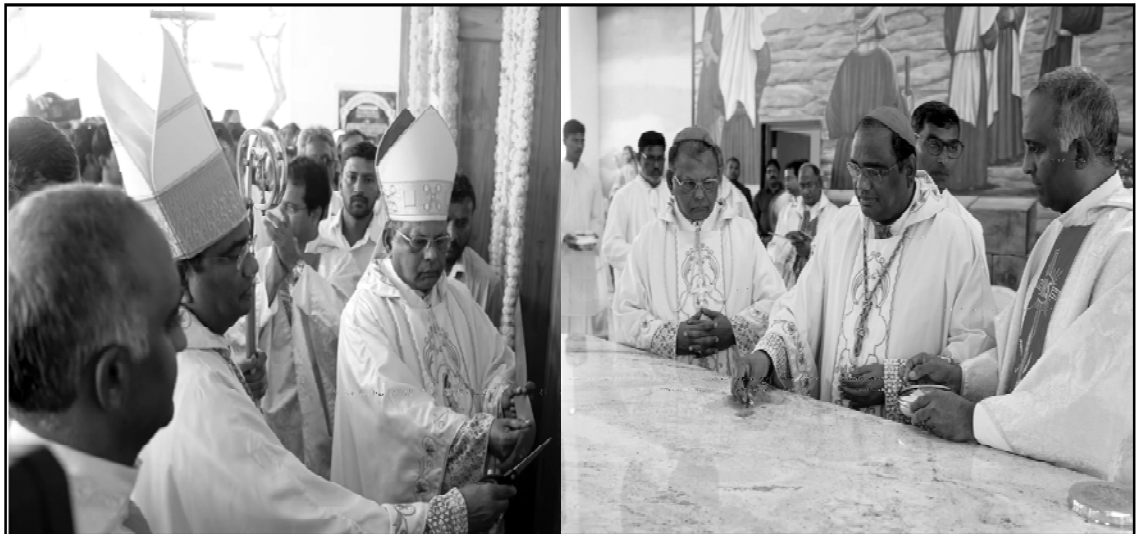
7. FEAST, 1ST HOLY COMMUNION & CONFIRMATIONS AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, KUKATPALLY ON 11TH DECEMBER 2022



8. MASS AT ST. ANTHONY'S SHRINE, GUNTUR ON 13TH DECEMBER 2022



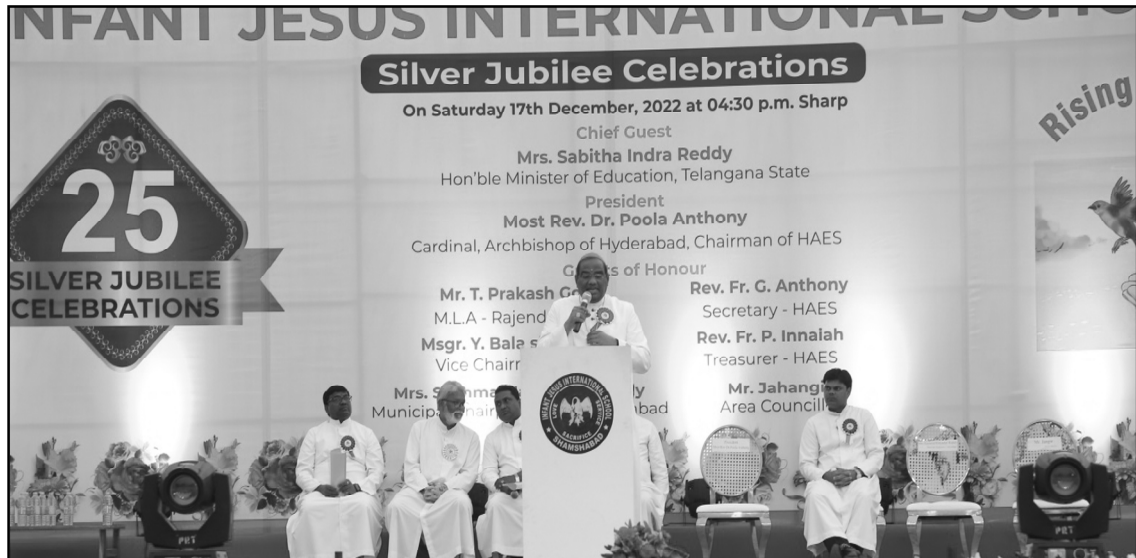
**9. BLESSING & INAUGURATION OF NEW CHURCH,
SANTHANAMATHA SHRINE, PEDDAPARIMI, GUNTUR ON 14TH
DECEMBER 2022**



**10. CRI CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS, SEC'BAD ON 16TH DECEMBER
2022**



11. SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF INFANT JESUS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, SHAMSHABAD ON 17TH DECEMBER 2022



12. CLOSING MASS OF NINE TUESDAYS NOVENA TO ST. ANTHONY AT ST. ANTHONY'S SHRINE, METTUGUDA ON 20TH DECEMBER 2022



13. SEMINARIANS' BENEFACTORS GET-TOGETHER AT ST. MARY'S SCHOOL HALL, SEC'BAD ON 20TH DECEMBER 2022



14. SCIENCE FAIR AT ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, SEC'BAD ON 21ST DECEMBER 2022



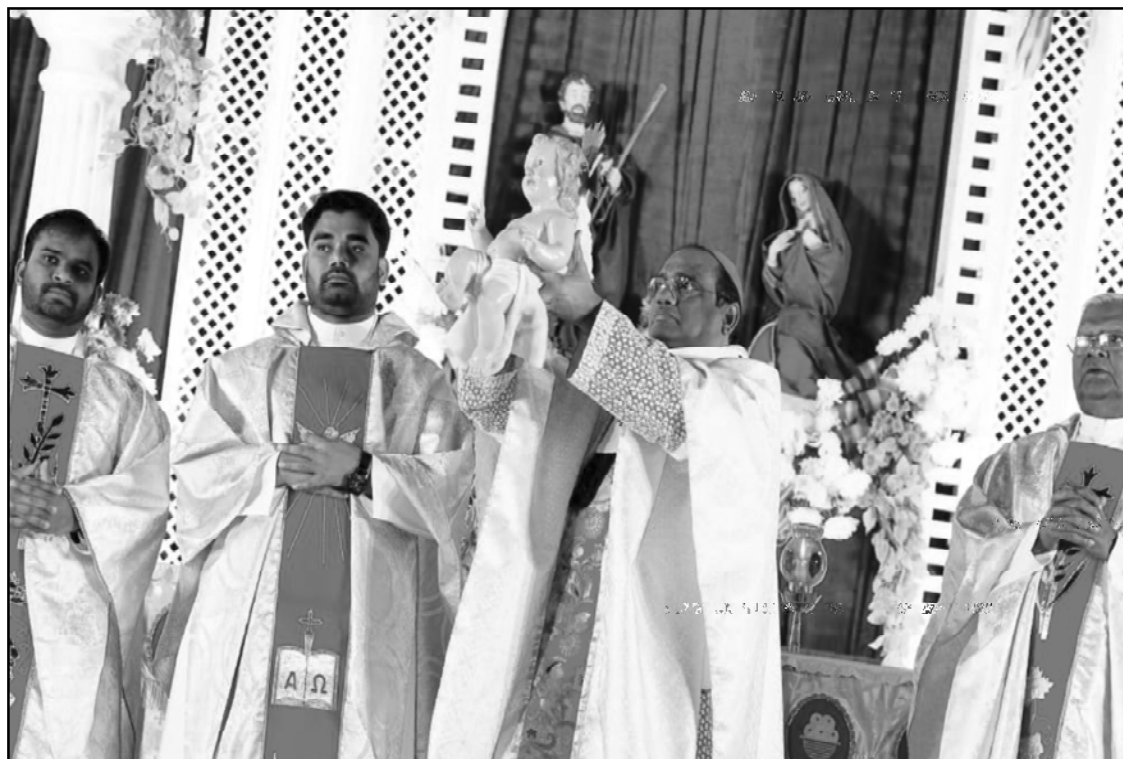
సైన్స్ ఫెయిర్లతో విద్యార్థులలో సృజనాత్మకత



విద్యార్థులతో కార్నినల్ బిషప్ పూల ఆంధోని

రెజిమెంటల్ బజార్, డిసెంబర్ 21 (అంధ్రజ్యోతి): విద్యార్థులలో సృజనాత్మకతను వెలికితీయడానికి సైన్స్ ఫెయిర్లు ఉపయోగపడుతాయని సెయింట్ మేరీస్ స్కూల్ ప్రెసి్ పాల్ ఇన్నయ్య అన్నారు. బుధవారం సీకింద్రాబాద్ సెయింట్ మేరీస్ పాఠశాలలో 137వ సైన్స్ ఫెయిర్ నిర్వహించారు. విద్యార్థులు ప్రదర్శించిన ఎగ్జిబిట్లు ఆకట్టుకున్నాయి. కార్నినల్ బిషప్ పూల ఆంధోని, ఐఐఐటీ సైంటిస్ట్ కరుణాసాగర్ హాజరై ఎగ్జిబిట్లను వీక్షించి వాటి గూర్చి విద్యార్థులను అడిగి తెలుసుకున్నారు. ఆనంతరం చిన్నారులను ఆభిషేకించారు.

15. (CHRISTMAS VIGIL) MASS: ST. MARY'S BASILICA, SEC'BAD ON 24TH DECEMBER 2022



RECEIPT OF LOCAL MASS INTENTIONS		
Date	Parish/Individual	No. of Masses
29-11-2022	Khairathabad	700
05-12-2022	Mettuguda	2000
06-12-2022	Dammaiguda	1000
14-12-2022	Gandhi Nagar	100
15-12-2022	Secunderabad	620
19-12-2022	Garrison	100
19-12-2022	Band Lines	100
		4620

Archdiocesan News

1. FOUNDATION STONE FOR TS CHRISTIAN BHAVAN

Under the benign patronage of Sri K.Chandrasekhar Rao Garu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Telangana State, and Sri.K.Taraka Rama Rao Garu, Hon'ble Minister for IT, MA&UD, Electronics & Communication, Industries & Commerce, the Foundation stone and groundbreaking ceremony for Christian Bhavan, Telangana State was held on



12th December 2022. "In the presence of Sri. Koppula Eshwar Garu, Hon'ble Minister for MW, SCD, DW & SCW, Fr. Raju Alex A.E the Deputy Secretary of TCBC and Executive Secretary of TSFC solemnly blessed the foundation stone at plot No:65 - B, Uppal Bhagayat, Medchal-Malkajgiri District, for construction of Christian Bhavan. Several representatives from many churches participated in the ceremony and the government hopes to complete the construction by next Christmas.

2. CHURCH IN INDIA FINALIZES THE SYNTHESIS FOR THE CONTINENTAL STAGE OF THE SYNOD : BANGALORE 28TH DECEMBER 2022 (CCBI)

The six-member drafting committee of the Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India gathers from 28 to 30 December 2022, at Paalanaa Bhavana, Bangalore, Karnataka, to discern the Document for the Continental Stage, and to produce a 10-page synthesis from the 101 syntheses collected across the country. Earlier,



addressing the draft committee, His Eminence Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrão, President of the CCBI, exhorted that the synthesis has to be the work of the Holy Spirit, not of the individuals present, and care must be taken not to put our own opinion into the text. "The Continental Stage of the Synod for a Synodal Church 2021-2024

began in late October 2022. The message of the Synod is simple: we are learning to walk together and to sit with one another to break the one bread, so that everyone can find their place. Everyone is called to take part in this journey, no one is excluded. We feel called to this so that we can credibly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to all peoples. This is the road we seek to continue along on the Continental Stage as

well.”“The Document for the Continental Stage (DCS) is the fruit of listening and discernment that returns to all local Churches that which emerged from local / national syntheses. It is intended to enable dialogue between local Churches and between the local Church and the universal Church.”“The 10-page synthesis will be sent to the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences (FABC), which will convene the Continental Stage of the Synod in later February 2023. The document that emerges as the fruit of discernment will help the General Secretariat of Synod to create Working Document (Instrumentum Laboris) for the first session in October 2023.”“

- Rev. Dr. Yesu Karunanidhi, National Coordinator, Synod India

3. NINE NOVENA TUESDAYS TOWARDS CHRISTMAS AT ST. ANTHONY'S SHRINE, METTUGUDA

The Miraculous St. Anthony's Shrine at Mettuguda is a place where in thousands of pilgrims from all over the twin cities and the districts of Telugu States flock throughout the year to pray for their needs and thank God for the favours received. In view of the preparation for the Nativity of Christ we had decided to organize nine Novena Tuesdays towards Christmas titled "Giving birth to Jesus in the footsteps of Saint Anthony" beginning on the 25th of October 2022 to 20th December 2022 to encourage the people to grow in their Love for Jesus after the example of St. Anthony of Padua. There were separate themes for each Tuesday parallel to the readings of the day linked with St. Anthony's Life. Rev. Fr. Amaladass OFM the Spiritual Director of the shrine arranged the themes and formulated them in such a way that it would foster great devotion to St. Anthony and inspire virtue to follow Christ the Word made Flesh. The preachers assigned for each Tuesday put in all lot of effort and delivered the theme exceptionally well. A good number of people gave a positive feedback and were inspired to share their personal testimonies. It was a privilege to have the Bishop of Eluru Most Rev. Polimera Jaya Rao to celebrate the penultimate novena mass at 11.30 am on 13 Dec 2022. It was an honor and blessing to have His Eminence Cardinal Anthony Poola the Archbishop of Hyderabad on the last day of the Novena who spoke to us about the greatness of St. Anthony and the goodness of God working in our lives amidst the hurdles of everyday life. The Archbishop also blessed the Statue of St. John Marie Vianney, The Patron of Priests at the confession and counseling room to highlight the priestly spirituality of the Saint and encourage people to pray for the Priests. We are grateful to God for all the blessings he has showered upon us during these novena days through the intercession of St. Anthony. All that is left for us is to marvel at Gods work and rejoice in him for all the favors he bestows on his servants.

- Parish Clergy, St. Anthony's Shrine, Mettuguda.

4. PRISON MINISTRY

The Prison Ministry Telangana under the guidance of the Chairman, His Eminence Cardinal Poola Anthony, Archbishop of Hyderabad will be organizing a

seminar on 14th of January 2023 at Pastoral Center, Gunfoundry, Hyderabad. The Parish Priests are requested to announce in their Sunday announcement for the interested volunteer to give the name to Fr. Dion Isaac, the State Coordinator for prison ministry, Telangana. Please Note Registration is free Qualification: 10th and above (preferably having degree in psychology) Transfer allowance and accommodation will not be provided on that day Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Kindly register your name before 10th of January. Cell no 9949158988, Venue: pastoral center Timings: 10 am to 12.30 pm.

- Fr. Dion Isaac , Coordinator for Prison Ministry

5. BASIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Basic Christian community animators from the Archdiocese of Hyderabad were delighted to receive blessings and gifts from His Eminence Most. Rev. Poola Anthony on 21st at Bishop's house. The animators from different parishes sang carols and prayed for the Archbishop and for the diocese which was appreciated by our Archbishop. The Archbishop cut the cake and felicitated the animators with gifts and asked them to cooperate with the Director and continue the good work they are doing.

6. SYNOD SECOND PHASE

His Eminence Most. Rev. Poola Anthony has set the fire of synod again by inviting Fr. Yesu from Bangalore. Fr. Yesu ,having command on the subject enabled the core team members to understand the document on continental phase .He has sent all the necessary documents on synod to the core team members to discuss very seriously .Fr. David ,Mr. Ashley, Mr. Sylvester and few others have met thrice at Vianney Hall from 5pm to 8pm. After a serious discussion and listening to the voice of the holy spirit the members have consolidated the bullet points and submitted the report to Fr. Yesu at National level by time. We are grateful to his Eminence for helping us to understand this process by inviting Fr. Yesu to guide us.

- Fr. Dion Isaac , Coordinator for Prison Ministry

7. JYOTIRMAI SUNDAY CELEBRATION ON 29TH JANUARY 2023

The Catholic Church in Telugu Region has been celebrating Jyotirmai Sunday on the last Sunday of January every year from the year 2002 onwards. This Year **Jyotirmai Sunday** falls on **29th January 2023**. The purpose of this celebration is to bring more awareness to the people on the aims, objectives and activities of Jyotirmai Society, as the Telugu Regional Pastoral Center (TRPC) and also to raise funds to support Jyotirmai activities.

Under the noble patronage, guidance and with the blessings from His Grace Dr. Prakash Mallavarapu, Archbishop of Visakhapatnam and Chairman of Jyotirmai Society, and from **Telugu Catholic Bishops' Council (TCBC)**, the following theme have been chosen for this year; "**Enlarge the Space of Your Tent**". We will send Posters and Brochures in the first week of January-2023 by Transport. We also will

send soft copies of brochures both in English and Telugu by Email / what's app and hard copies by ANL service. We request you to receive and distribute to all the parishners, sub-stations. Jyotirmai Society is helping the diocese pastorally in various forms, kindly see that the people contribute generously for making the Society Self-Reliant. Kindly make necessary arrangements to contribute and make Jyotirmai Sunday a meaningful celebration. - Fr. M. Anthony, Executive Secretary & Director



జ్యోతిర్మయి ఆదివారం

జనవరి 29, 2023

సినడ్ ఆఫ్ సినోడలిటీ 2021 - 2024

క్రీస్తుతో కలసి సహవాసజీవిత పయనం చేయు శ్రీసభ



Synod

2021

2024

“నీవు వసించు గుడారమును విశాలము చేసికొనుము”

(యెషయా 54:2)





మహా ఘన. ప్రకాష్ మల్లపరపు
విభాగ అధ్యక్షుడు & జ్యోతిర్మయి అధ్యక్షులు



మహా ఘన. డా. తెలగపాటి జోసెఫ్ రాజారావు, SMM
విజయవాడ పీఠాధిపతులు & జ్యోతిర్మయి సహాధ్యక్షులు

జ్యోతిర్మయి ప్రాంతీయ కార్యాలయము - నెలుగు ప్రాంతీయ సువార్తా సేవా కేంద్రము [TRPC]

2/3 సిఫీ విలేజ్, సికింద్రాబాద్ - 500 009

8. THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY, 2023

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME OF THE YEAR 2023

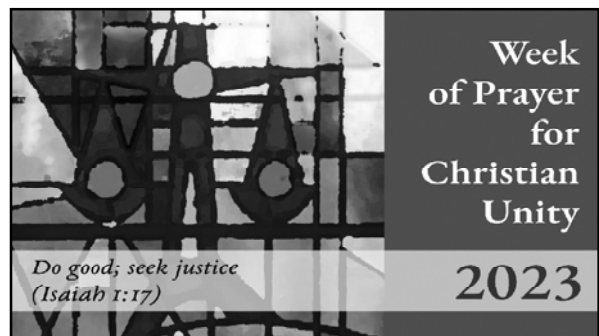
Do good; seek justice (Isaiah 1:17)

Isaiah lived and prophesied in Judah during the eighth century BCE and was a contemporary of Amos, Micah and Hosea. This was towards the end of a period of great economic success and political stability for both Israel and Judah, due to the weakness of the 'superpowers' of the time, Egypt and Assyria. However, it was also a period when injustice, inequity and inequalities were rampant in both kingdoms.

This period also saw religion thriving as a ritual and formal expression of belief in God, concentrated on Temple offerings and sacrifices. This formal and ritual religion was presided over by the priests, who were also the beneficiaries of the largesse of the rich and powerful. Due to the physical proximity and interconnectedness of the royal palace and the Temple, power and influence were centered almost entirely on the king and the priests, neither of whom, for much of this history, stood up for those who were enduring oppression and inequity. In the worldview of this time (one which recurs throughout history), the rich and those who made many offerings were understood to be good and blessed by God, while those who were poor and could not offer sacrifices were understood to be wicked and cursed by God. The poor were often denigrated for their economic inability to fully participate in Temple worship.

Isaiah spoke into this context, attempting to awaken the consciousness of the people of Judah to the reality of their situation. Instead of honouring the contemporary religiosity as a blessing, Isaiah saw it as a festering wound and a sacrilege before the Almighty. Injustice and inequality led to fragmentation and disunity. His prophecies denounce the political, social, and religious structures and the hypocrisy of offering sacrifices while oppressing the poor. He speaks out vigorously against corrupt leaders and in favour of the disadvantaged, rooting righteousness and justice in God alone.

The working group appointed by the Minnesota Council of Churches chose this verse from the first chapter of the prophet Isaiah as the central text for the Week of Prayer: *"learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow" (1:17).*



Isaiah taught that God requires righteousness and justice from all of us, all the time and in all spheres of life. Our world today in many ways mirrors the challenges of division that Isaiah confronted in his preaching. Justice, righteousness and unity originate from God's profound love for each of us, and are at the heart of who God is and how God expects us to be with one another. God's commitment to create a new humanity *"from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages"* (Rev 7:9) calls us to the peace and unity God has always wanted for creation.

The prophet's language with regard to the religiosity of the time is ferocious – *"Bringing offerings is futile, incense is an abomination to me ... When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you"* (vv. 13, 15). Once he has spoken these blistering condemnations, diagnosing what is wrong, Isaiah offers the remedy for these iniquities. He instructs God's people to, *"Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil"* (v. 16).

Today, separation and oppression continue to be manifest when any single group or class is given privileges above others. The sin of racism is evident in any beliefs or practices that distinguish or elevate one "race" over another. When accompanied or sustained by imbalances in power, racial prejudice moves beyond individual relationships to the very structures of society – the systemic perpetuation of racism. Its existence has unfairly benefitted some, including churches, and burdened and excluded others, simply due to the colour of their skin and the cultural associations based upon perceptions of "race".

Like the religious people so fiercely denounced by the biblical prophets, some Christian believers have been or continue to be complicit in supporting or perpetuating prejudice and oppression and fostering division. History shows that, rather than recognising the dignity of every human being made in the image and likeness of God, Christians have too often involved themselves in structures of sin such as slavery, colonisation, segregation and apartheid which have stripped others of their dignity on the spurious grounds of race. So too within the churches, Christians have failed to recognise the dignity of all the baptised and have belittled the dignity of their brothers and sisters in Christ on the grounds of supposed racial difference.

Rev. Dr Martin Luther King Jr memorably said, *"It is one of the tragedies of our nation, one of the shameful tragedies, that 11 o'clock on Sunday morning is one of the most segregated hours, if not the most segregated hour in Christian America"*. This statement demonstrates the intersections between the disunity of Christians and the disunity of humanity. All division has its root in sin, that is, in attitudes and actions that run counter to the unity that God desires for the whole of his creation. Tragically racism is part of the sin that has divided Christians from one another, has caused Christians to worship at separate times, and in separate buildings, and

in certain cases has led Christian communities to divide.

Unfortunately, not much has changed since the time of Martin Luther King's statement. The 11:00 am time slot – the most common time for Sunday worship – often does not manifest Christian unity, but rather, division, along racial and social as well as denominational lines. As Isaiah proclaimed, this hypocrisy among people of faith is an offence before God: *“even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood”* (v. 15).

Learn to do good

In the Scripture passage chosen for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2023, the prophet Isaiah teaches us how we are to cure these ills. Learning to do right requires the decision to engage in self-reflection. The Week of Prayer is the perfect time for Christians to recognize that the divisions between our churches and confessions cannot be separated from the divisions within the wider human family. Praying together for Christian unity allows us to reflect on what unites us and to commit ourselves to confront oppression and division amongst humanity.

The prophet Micah points out that God has told us what is good and what God requires of us: *“to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God”* (Mic 6:8). To act justly means that we have respect for all persons. Justice requires truly equitable treatment in order to address historic disadvantage based on “race”, gender, religion and socio-economic status. To walk humbly with God requires repentance, reparations, and finally reconciliation. God expects us to unite in a shared responsibility for equity for all God's children.

The unity of Christians should be a sign and foretaste of the reconciled unity of the entire creation. However, Christian division weakens the force of that sign, serving to reinforce division rather than bring healing to the world's brokenness which is the Church's mission.

Seek justice

Isaiah counsels Judah to seek justice (v. 17), which is an acknowledgment of the existence of injustice and oppression in their society. He implores the people of Judah to overturn this status quo. Seeking justice requires us to face up to those who inflict evil on others. This is not an easy task and will sometimes lead to conflict, but Jesus assures us that standing up for justice in the face of oppression leads to the kingdom of heaven. *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”* (Mt 5:10). Churches in many parts of the world must acknowledge how they have conformed to societal norms and been silent or actively complicit regarding racial injustice. Racial prejudice has been one of the causes of Christian division that has torn the Body of Christ. Toxic ideologies, such as White Supremacy and the doctrine of discovery, have caused

much harm, particularly in North America and in lands throughout the world colonized by White European powers over the centuries. As Christians we must be willing to disrupt systems of oppression and to advocate for justice.

The year during which the Minnesota writing group was preparing the texts for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was filled with the evil and devastation of oppression in its many forms all over the world. This suffering was greatly amplified in many regions, especially in the Global South, by the Covid-19 pandemic, where even basic subsistence was almost impossible for many, and practical assistance was largely absent. The author of Ecclesiastes seemed to be speaking to the current experience: *“I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them”* (Eccles 4:1).

Oppression is harmful to the entire human race. There can be no unity without justice. As we pray for Christian unity, we must acknowledge current and generational oppression and be resolute in our commitment to repent of these sins. We can make our own Isaiah’s injunction to *“wash yourselves; make yourselves clean”* because *“your hands are full of blood”* (vv. 15, 16).

Rescue the oppressed

The Bible tells us that we cannot separate our relationship with Christ from our attitude towards all God’s people, particularly those considered *“the least of these”* (Mt 25:40). Our commitment to each other requires us to engage in mishpat, the Hebrew word for restorative justice, advocating for those whose voices have not been heard, dismantling structures that create and sustain injustice, and building others that promote and ensure everyone receives fair treatment and the rights that are due to them. This work must extend beyond our friends, family and congregations to the whole of humanity. Christians are called to go out and listen to the cries of all who are suffering, in order to better understand and respond to their stories of suffering and their trauma. Rev. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. often stated that *“a riot is the language of the unheard.”* When protest and civil unrest arise, it is often because the protesters’ voices are not being heard. If churches join their voices to those of the oppressed, their cry for justice and liberation will be amplified. We serve and love God and our neighbour by serving and loving one another in unity.

Defend the orphan, plead for the widow

Widows and orphans occupy a special place in the Hebrew Bible, alongside strangers, as representatives of the most vulnerable members of society. In the context of the economic success in Judah at the time of Isaiah, the situation of orphans and widows was a desperate one as they were deprived of protection and of the right to own land, and therefore the capacity to provide for themselves. The prophet called on the community, as it rejoiced in its prosperity, not to neglect to

defend and nurture the poorest and most vulnerable among them. This prophetic call echoes in our time, as we consider: who are the most vulnerable people in our society?

Whose voices are not being heard in our communities? Who is not represented at the table? Why? Which churches and communities are missing from our dialogues, our common action and our prayer for Christian unity?

As we pray together during this Week of Prayer, what are we willing to do about these absent voices?

Conclusion

Isaiah challenged God's people in his day to learn to do good together; to seek justice together, to rescue the oppressed together, to defend the orphan and plead for the widow together. The prophet's challenge applies equally to us today. How can we live our unity as Christians so as to confront the evils and injustices of our time? How can we engage in dialogue, increase awareness, understanding and insight about one another's lived experiences?

These prayers and encounters of the heart have the power to transform us – individually and collectively. Let us be open to God's presence in all our encounters with each other as we seek to be transformed, to dismantle the systems of oppression, and to heal the sins of racism. Together, let us engage in the struggle for justice in our society. We all belong to Christ.

9. ECUMENISM SUNDAY (January 22, 2023)

INTRODUCTION:

Today is the third Sunday in the Ordinary Time of our liturgical calendar. For us in India it is also the 'Ecumenism Sunday', a day dedicated for special prayers for the unity of all Christians. In fact, from the 18th of this month we have been joining the Christians all over the world praying for Unity among us. We will conclude the Week of Prayer for the Christian Unity on 25th January, the feast of St. Paul's Conversion which calls for the conversion of our hearts for unity. Selfishness and pride coupled with various historical factors have caused division amongst us. The Church continues to suffer from it and requests us, her children, gathered around this altar to pray earnestly to the Heavenly Father to bring all of us back to His Son's one and only fold.

Introduction to the Readings:

Is 8: 23-9:3

In the first reading prophet Isaiah refers to Galilee as 'Galilee of the nations', because this region included people from many nations. Nazareth where Jesus grew up is in Galilee and his ministry extended salvation to all nations. Jesus is the light

that shone on those who were in darkness and ignorance. It is this light our beloved nation is longing for.

1 Cor 1: 10-13, 17

It is natural for people to rally around a leader endowed with extraordinary skills and qualities, especially the gift of oratory. Such a tendency has brought innumerable divisions in the church, because people rallied around great preachers. St. Paul in today's second reading warns the Corinthian Christians not to fall victims of it. They were baptized in the name of Christ who was crucified for them, not Cephas, not Paul, not Apollos. Therefore, Christians then and now are exhorted to rally around Christ, and Christ alone.

Mt. 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

In today's Gospel Jesus begins his public ministry in Galilee in fulfilment of today's first reading. Jesus learns that John has been imprisoned. John came preaching repentance and practiced it himself by austere life. Jesus echoed John's call to repentance and that call continues even today inviting us to repent. Repent for what? Repent for our share of commissions and omissions that has left the One Body of Christ still divided and bleeding.

POINTS FOR HOMILY

(Introduction to each reading given above could be developed to become an integral part of the homily. A few more points are given here)

The Holy Spirit is the uniting force while it is Satan who brings division: divisions in the family, in the parish and in the church. The nascent church that spread to different parts of the world through the efforts of the apostles absorbed different cultures and traditions by Christianising them. These different traditions contributed to the beauty of the One Body of Christ. Unfortunately, these very elements have caused divisions in the same Body of Christ which persist even to this day.

Division is a scandal. Each one of us should take care that differences in language, culture, tradition, status, region, nationality etc., should not divert us from the message of Christ which binds us together as His One Body. Vatican II states that the "Church of Christ subsists in the Roman Catholic Church ... many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity" (LG 8). These gifts present in the other churches are God's gifts to the entire Church. The other churches and ecclesial communities have gifts to offer us and enrich us.

We need to dialogue and come together as one flock of Christ to reap the benefits of all these gifts. "United we stand, divided we fall". The inherent weakness of the Church in the Middle East is on account of the first great division of the Church into East and West in 1054 AD. Various attempts for unity failed and has rendered the Church weak. As a result, Constantinople (the centre of the Eastern Church) fell

and Christianity was almost wiped out from the very city built for Christendom. Once considered as one of the great centers of Christianity, it now has only a negligible presence.

Today the entire region has become an easy target of anti-Christian terrorism. The people in Jesus' home town Nazareth wanted to kill Jesus for his message. Even today numerous martyrs who have been shedding their blood for their faith in Christ. They belong to different churches and ecclesial communities. Pope Francis reminds us that those terrorists who kill Christians do not ask to which church they belong. Their belonging to Christ alone is the reason for their death, most of the time very violent and gruesome. Ecumenism of Martyrdom brings about full communion among the Christians.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Celebrant: Brothers and sisters, gathered around this altar as God's one family let us place all our petitions before our heavenly Father and pray especially for the gift of unity in the church.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for our Holy Father Pope Francis who is reaching out to people proclaiming the "good news to the poor, freedom to the captives, sight to the blind and liberty to the oppressed". May his ministry inspire every Christian to unite as one body to proclaim this message of Christ to the nations. Let us pray to the Lord: **R**

We pray for our bishop N ..., all the bishops of our country and all those consecrated and dedicated to the proclamation of the Gospel. May they strive for the cause of unity among Christians. Let us pray to the Lord: **R**

We pray for the rulers and leaders of our nation. May they strive to effectively protect the unity of the nation freeing themselves from the narrow mindedness and intolerance in the name of caste, community, and creed. Let us pray to the Lord: **R**

We pray for all the persecuted Christians all over the world, and especially in the Middle East and Minnesota. May God strengthen them in their faith and comfort them in their sufferings. May the persecutors be touched by God and the persecution come to an end soon ushering in a new era of peace and brotherhood. Let us pray to the Lord: **R**

We pray for all those who are serving the cause of unity at different levels in the Church. May the Spirit of the Lord inspire and lead them to find ways and means to hasten the much-desired unity among all the Christians. Let us pray to the Lord: **R**

Celebrant: God our Heavenly Father, hear the prayers of your children praying for the gift of unity in the Body of Christ your beloved Son. Grant them the grace to remain united and witness to the Gospel values. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

People: Amen.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. POPE TO VATICAN EMPLOYEES: ALWAYS CONFIDE IN THE LORD AND BUILD PEACE

Pope Francis greets Vatican employees and their families in the Paul VI Audience Hall for the traditional exchange of Christmas greetings, and urges them to build peace in their homes and workplaces.

Addressing Vatican employees with their families during his annual Christmas greetings on Thursday, Pope Francis encouraged them to face the difficulties of life with faith, and to be artisans of peace starting from their own family and workplaces within the Holy See.

Pope to Curia: 'Be vigilant, evil comes back under new guises' **Gratitude for having survived the pandemic**

The Pope started his speech, delivered in the Paul VI Audience Hall, by remarking that we should all show gratefulness to God because, with His help, we have overcome the critical phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that as soon as things improve, we tend to forget to even thank the Lord. "This is not Christian and not even human," he said. Pope Francis noted that, although this critical phase has passed, the pandemic has left its marks: not only in material and economic terms, but also on people's lives and relationships. He, therefore, wished all families first of all "serenity" which, he said, "does not mean that all is well", but peace of mind in facing problems or difficulties.

Serenity is given to us by confiding in God's help

The Pope remarked that this serenity is given to us by our faith in God and by entrusting ourselves to His help, as Mary and Joseph did when giving birth to Jesus in Bethlehem.

"I wish you this: that each one of you has faith in God and that in families there is the simplicity of entrusting themselves to His help, to pray to Him and to thank Him."

The Pope wished peace of mind, especially for children and young people who have been particularly affected by the closures and limitations imposed by the COVID-19 crisis.

Be witnesses and artisans of peace

A second wish Pope Francis expressed was that we all may be "witnesses and artisans of peace".

"At this moment in the history of the world, we are called to feel more strongly the responsibility of each one doing his or her part to build peace," he said, noting that this responsibility is particularly relevant for those who work for the Holy See.

No gossip

The Pope then called upon Vatican employees to be builders of peace starting from their own families and from the environment in which they live and work.

One way of doing so is avoiding gossip, and speaking “behind people’s backs”. If there is something wrong, he said, we should instead be “honest and sincere”.

A special caress to children and the elderly

Concluding, Pope Francis thanked the employees for their precious work in the Vatican, and asked them to bring his “caress” in particular to their children and to elderly parents or relations at home, remarking that they are “the treasure of the family and of society”.

“I thank you for everything you do here, for your work and also for your patience, sometimes, because I know there are situations in which you exercise patience. All of us must go forward with patience, with joy, thanking the Lord for giving us this grace of work.”

2. BRING HOPE TO OTHERS, JUSTICE FOR THE POOR, POPE SAYS AT CHRISTMAS MASS

Pope Francis celebrates Christmas Eve Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Dec. 24, 2022. By: Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christ was born to touch people’s hearts and show that love is the power that changes the course of history, Pope Francis said.

However, the faithful must ask themselves, “Do we want to stand at his side? Do we draw close to him? Do we love his poverty? Or do we prefer to remain comfortably ensconced in our own interests and concerns?” the pope asked in his homily Dec. 24 as part of the nighttime liturgy. “We are called to be a church that worships a Jesus who is poor and that serves him in the poor,” the pope said, calling for a renewed commitment to charitable action and concrete change.

“The church supports and blesses efforts to change the structures of injustice and sets down but one condition: that social, economic and political change truly benefit the poor,” the pope said, quoting St. Oscar Romero. The evening Mass, which is often referred to as “midnight Mass,” has not been celebrated at midnight at the Vatican since 2009. Pope Francis celebrated the “Christmas Mass at Night” at 7:30 p.m., as he did in 2020 and 2021.

The Christmas hymn, “Noel,” was sung during the procession, and the Mass began with the Christmas proclamation, or “kalenda,” of Jesus’ birth. The pope, who was seated to the right of the altar, watched as a cloth was lifted, revealing a statue of baby Jesus. The bells of St. Peter’s Basilica rang loudly announcing the birth of Christ, and several children representing different cultures placed white flowers around the crib of baby Jesus.

In his homily, the pope reflected on the danger of a Christmas filled only with “decorations and gifts, after so much consumerism that has packaged the mystery we celebrate.” “How do we rediscover the meaning of Christmas?” the pope asked. “We need to look to the manger.” “In the manger of rejection and discomfort, God makes himself present.”

“He comes there because there we see the problem of our humanity: the indifference produced by the greedy rush to possess and consume,” he said. It is there that people can discover Jesus’ closeness to humanity, his choice to be present in the poor and marginalized, and his demand for “a concrete faith, made up of adoration and charity, not empty words and superficiality,” Pope Francis said.

The manger, as a feeding trough, can also symbolize a hunger for wealth and power, and people willing to consume “even their neighbors, their brothers and sisters,” he said. “How many wars have we seen,” the pope asked, and how many places treat human dignity and freedom with contempt? “This Christmas, too, as in the case of Jesus, a world ravenous for money, power and pleasure does not make room for the little ones, for so many unborn, poor and forgotten children,” especially those “devoured by war, poverty and injustice,” he said. In Jesus, “every child is present. And we ourselves are invited to view life, politics and history through the eyes of children,” Pope Francis said.

With Jesus — born in a manger — he can become “our food,” feeding a hungry humanity “with his tender love,” he said. “He comes to touch our hearts and to tell us that love alone is the power that changes the course of history.” On Christmas Eve, God is drawing near, the pope said. “From the manger, as food for your life, he tells you: ‘If you feel consumed by events, if you are devoured by a sense of guilt and inadequacy, if you hunger for justice, I, your God, am with you.’”

He said, “God was born in a manger so that you could be reborn in the very place where you thought you had hit rock bottom. There is no evil, there is no sin, from which Jesus does not want to save you. And he can. Christmas means that God is close to us: Let confidence be reborn!” Jesus was born, lived and died in poverty, and he shows “where the true riches in life are to be found: not in money and power, but in relationships and persons,” he said. “Let charity be reborn,” the pope said, and “may we not let this Christmas pass without doing something good” so that a little hope can be “born anew in those who feel hopeless.” “Jesus is not satisfied with appearances” and good intentions, Pope Francis said. Jesus wants concrete faith and the truth, he said. “He asks us to go to the bare reality of things, and to lay at the foot of the manger all our excuses, our justifications and our hypocrisies. Tenderly wrapped in swaddling clothes by Mary, he wants us to be clothed in love.”

NATIONAL NEWS

1. SILVER JUBILEE OF THE EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF CARDINAL OSWALD GRACIAS

Mumbai 18 Dec. 2022 (CCBI) The silver jubilee of the Episcopal ordination of Cardinal Oswald Gracias the Archbishop of Bombay was celebrated on Sunday 18 Dec. 2022 at Holy Name Cathedral, Mumbai. The thanksgiving Holy Mass celebrated at the Cathedral at 6.30pm by Cardinal Gracias and concelebrated by Cardinal Filipe Neri Ferrão, the President of the CCBI and the Archbishop of Goa and Daman, Cardinal Baselios Mar Cleemis, Major Archbishop of Syro Malankara Church, Abp. Andrews Thazhath, the President, CBCI and the Archbishop of Trichur, Cardinal Anthony Poola, Archbishop of Hyderabad and more than thirty Bishops and the hundreds of priests. In his felicitation message Cardinal Filipe Neri said that: "Cardinal Oswald's outstanding leadership qualities have led him to make a lasting contribution to the life of the Church, particularly from the many pivotal positions that Cardinal Oswald occupied along the years at various levels." Cardinal Filipe Neri honoured him with Indian shawl on behalf of the CCBI.

Cardinal Baselios Mar Cleemis and Abp. Andres Thazhath also felicitated Cardinal Oswald Gracias. Pope Francis message was read by Bishop John Rodrigues, Auxiliary Bishop of Bombay. The message of Cardinal George Alencherry was read by Fr. K. T. Emmanuel, Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Bombay. Cardinal George Alencherry was unable to participate the jubilee celebration as he celebrates golden jubilee of his priestly ordination on the same day. Most Rev. Thomas Macwan honoured Cardinal Oswald on behalf of the Western Regional Bishops' Council.

He was the president of the Canon Law Society of India (1987-91, 1993-97), consultor to the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts and General Secretary of CBCI. He has served as President of CCBI (2005-11 and 2013-19) President of CBCI (2010- '14 and 2018-22). He was the President of FABC (2011-18). He participated in the III Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (Oct.2014) on The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization and in the XIV Ordinary General Assembly on The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and Contemporary World (Oct. 2015). On Feb. 15, 2017, Pope Francis granted to Cardinal Gracias the title of Lawyer of the Roman Rota. He participated in the conclave of March 2013, which elected Pope Francis. Pope Francis appointed him as one of the members of the Council of Cardinals on April 13, 2013 to assist the Holy Father the government of the Universal Church. On 24 June 2008 he was appointed President Delegate of the XII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, "The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church" (5-26 Oct. 2008). On 13 April 2013 he was made a member of the Council of cardinals established to advise Pope Francis in the government of the universal Church and to study a plan for revising the Apostolic Constitution on the Roman Curia. Created and proclaimed Cardinal by Benedict XVI in the consistory of 24 Nov. 2007, of the Title of San Paolo della Croce a Corviale (St. Paul of the Cross at Corviale). He was the member of Congregation for Catholic Education and Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts.

- Rev. Dr. Stephen Alathara, Deputy Secretary General, CCBI

Dates & Events to Remember

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| 01. Blessed Virgin Mary,
Mother of God (Sol) | 16. St. Joseph Vaz, Pt (M) |
| 02. Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory
Nazianzen, BPS and Drs (M) | 17. St. Anthony Abbot (M) |
| 03. The Most Holy Name of Jesus(Op. M) | 20. St. Fabian, Pope & Mrtr and
St. Sebastian, Mrtr (Op.M) |
| 08. The Epiphany of the Lord(Sol) | 21. St. Agnes, Vrg & Mrtr (M) |
| 09. The Baptism of the Lord (F) | 24. St. Francis De Sales, Bp and Dr.(M) |
| 14. St. Deva Sagayam Pillai, Mrtr (M) | 25. The Conversion of St. Paul, Ap (F) |
| | 27. Sts. Timothy & Titus, Bps(M) |
| | 28. St. Thomas Aquinas, Pt & Dr (M) |

Happy Birthday Dear Fathers

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| 01. Fr. Pasala Innaiah | 15. Fr. Pidikirala Prahudas |
| 01. Fr. Vemparla Vijaya Shekar | 18. Fr. Madanu Ajith Kumar |
| 02. Fr. Redimasu Anand Rao | 26. Fr. Chinnabathini Jojappa |
| 06. Fr. Pamiseti Praveen Kumar | 28. Fr. Vaddamalla Vinod Kumar |
| 06. Fr. Vedamuthu Kulandai Swamy | |

Happy Ordination day Dear Fathers

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| 02. Fr. Kata Rajulu | 13. Fr. M. H. Wilson Davis |
| 02. Fr. Marneni Arogyam | |

Necrology

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| 02. Fr. Christie Daniel | 15. Fr. Marneni Maraiah |
| 08. Msgr. Kambam Joseph | 17. Fr. Allam Marreddy |
| 11. Fr. George Parathiparambil | 27. Most. Rev. Alfred Fernandez |
| 12. Fr. Francis Perez | |

**MAY ALL THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED,
THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD, REST IN PEACE. AMEN.**

Local news items, which might be of interest to the Archdiocese may be addressed to :

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