



XXV/10

March 2018

**My dearest Sisters,**

Loving greetings from the provincial house Bangalore!

In continuation with our monthly reflection on communion, Compassion and commitment, this month I would like to reflect together with you on two **Habits of highly effective religious.**

As the scholastic year is coming to an end as well as many of you will be making the annual spiritual retreat in the coming months. I thought it opportune to reflect little about our own life as consecrated religious and to renew our personal lives especially during this year of our Silver Jubilee.

• **HABIT 1 : A HOLY PERSON DEEP INSIDE**

First and Foremost the Fundamental Quality - Personal Holiness, Personal Prayer Life

Frequently on Her Knees at the feet of the Lord, Rooted in the Word of God

Always seeks the will of God in everything above personal will.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) - 459 "The Word became flesh *to be our model of holiness*: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."

1 Peter 1:15–16 – “but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “**Be holy, for I am holy.**”

How to achieve Personal Holiness? Holiness need to be practised in meditation and prayer Spending time with the Lord, Achieved when In Service of God, Need to be continuously perfected

• **HABIT 2: A LOVER OF THE EUCHARISTIC JESUS**

Enjoys Participating in the Eucharist daily. Encourages Eucharistic adoration and spirituality in the community. Remember the highest vocations from parishes with daily Eucharistic adoration. (*Survey in USA*)

St Padre Pio – The Eucharistic Saint, He had a lifelong love affair with Our Lord Jesus in the Eucharist. To him, the Eucharist was the centre of all spiritual benefits. He began his preparations for Mass hours before the Mass began. He would constantly ask his fellow Friars what time it was. He always thought it was time to begin Mass, even though it might have been two hours early. "But as he started vesting for Mass, his body began to bend forward. As he slowly approached the altar, his body stooped over more and more as if he was being crushed under a heavy cross beam on his shoulders; his steps dragged, his face took on the sorrow of his Lord and Saviour. As the mystery of the Sacrifice of the Mass unfolded, Padre Pio reached the pinnacle of suffering at the moment of Elevation of the Host in Consecration.

Let us make sure that we spent quality time on our knees in front of the Blessed Sacrament and thus acquire personal holiness.

-----**CELEBRATIONS**-----

**SOLEMNITY OF ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

Humble, **SILENT** fidelity to Jesus Christ and his Blessed Mother is the mark of Joseph.

The hidden-ness of Joseph encourages us to seek holiness of life through the ordinary events of daily life. St. Joseph is the model of those humble ones that Christianity raises up to great destinies. Let us look at Joseph as a model of an educator, who guards and accompanies Jesus in his path of growth 'in wisdom, age and grace. The Silence of Joseph echoes in a world of noise turning a discord of self-love into a melody of self-surrender.

**The silence of Joseph** is a seed which bears the fruit of holiness and courage.

**The silence of Joseph** drowns the din of sorrow and silences the wailing of the weak

**The silence of Joseph** draws the world to a cave in Bethlehem where God is born as man and man is born again

**The silence of Joseph** draws us to our knees in worship of the Word made flesh in whose presence all words of men lose their meaning

**The silence of Joseph** directs a symphony of silence which stills the universe in adoration of the One in Whom the New creation has come.

**I wish each one of you a very Happy Feast of St. Joseph our patron. May dear St. Joseph shower down many spiritual and temporal blessings on each one of us and our dear ones.**

### **SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD**

When we reflect on the Annunciation to Mary, and her acceptance of the angel's message, we also reflect on our own vocation -- our own calling from God. In the Lord's Prayer, we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" -- an echo of Mary's "Be it done unto me according to your word." Each time we commit ourselves to embracing God's call and accepting His will, we mark a new point on the path of our relationship with Him. For the rest of her life, Mary pondered her extraordinary encounter with God, turning the weight of the angel's message over and over again in her heart. From the manger to the cross, Mary's life was radically changed -- her relationship with God profoundly deepened -- the moment she said "Yes."

Mary received and welcomed God's Word in the fullest sense -- becoming impregnated with it, and bearing it to the world. Angels might not appear in our doorsteps, but we do encounter God in each of our daily prayers, and he whispers to us a similar invitation: Will we accept His love and bring it joyously to those around us? Will we trust in His providence, even when we can't see the path ahead? Amid the noise of everyday life, will we listen for and embrace his call?

### **HOLY WEEK**

With the liturgy of the Passion Sunday on 25<sup>th</sup> of this month we enter into the holy week, which is the last week of the 40 days season of Lent and the week preceding Easter. In Holy Week we focus on the last week of Christ's life, remembering especially His passion and resurrection. In spite of Jesus' identity with the nature of God, he did not insist on his status. He first of all took on himself in the fullest sense our human nature -- "like us in all things, but sin". But, even more, he reached down to the lowest level, the lowest class of human beings -- the servant, the slave. That was still not the end. He let go of all human dignity, all human rights, let go of life itself to die, not any "respectable" form of death, but the death of a convicted criminal in shame and nakedness and total abandonment.

### **PALM SUNDAY**

Palm Sunday is the commemoration of our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem five days before His crucifixion. Jesus, for his part, does not strike back, he does not scold, he does not

accuse or blame. He begs his Father to forgive those who “do not know what they are doing. “Jesus seems to be the victim but all through he is, in fact, the master. He is master of the situation because he is master of himself.

So, as we go through this day and this week, let us look very carefully at Jesus our Saviour. We watch, not just to admire, but also to learn, to penetrate the mind, the thinking, the attitudes and the values of Jesus so that we, in the very different circumstances of our own lives, may walk in his footsteps.

### **HOLY THURSDAY**

Holy Thursday is the commemoration of the Last Supper of Jesus Christ. Before this supper, Jesus surprised his disciples by washing their feet, this task was normally done by a servant. Jesus Christ taught his followers that everyone should love one another in humble ways.

Jesus commanded to all his disciples that they should love and serve one another. During the ‘Last Supper’, Jesus passed round bread and wine and also mentioned saying that the bread was his body broken for them and the wine was his bloodshed for them. During the Passover meal, Jesus breaks bread and gives it to his disciples, uttering the words, “This is my body, which is given for you.” Further he passes a cup filled with wine and says, “This is my blood...” It is believed those who eat of Christ’s flesh and blood shall have eternal life. Let us meditate on the Last Supper and Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf.

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

“It is finished”; and he bowed his head and handed over his spirit”. On Good Friday, the entire Church fixes her gaze on the Cross at Calvary. Each member of the Church tries to understand at what cost Christ has won our redemption. In the solemn ceremonies of Good Friday, in the Adoration of the Cross, in the chanting of the 'Reproaches', in the reading of the Passion, and in receiving the pre-consecrated Host, we unite ourselves to our Saviour, and we contemplate our own death to sin in the Death of our Lord. The Church - stripped of its ornaments, the altar bare, and with the door of the empty tabernacle standing open - is as if in mourning. In the fourth century the Apostolic Constitutions described this day as a 'day of mourning, not a day of festive joy,' and this day was called the 'Pasch (passage) of the Crucifixion.'

### **EASTER**

Our Easter Celebrations form the heart of our Christian living. Our faith is deeply rooted and finds its real meaning in the resurrection of Jesus. St Paul says that, if Christ is not risen, then all our believing is in vain. The celebration of Easter reminds us that we have the same mission as Peter and Mary Magdalene and the other disciples of Jesus. Christ is risen, and has promised to take us with him. This life is not the end; we too will be transformed in endless life and beauty. I extend to all of you my best wishes for a joyful and peace filled Easter. May we too rise with Jesus to give glory to the living God.

## **----- COMMUNICATIONS -----**

### **NEW OFFICE BEARERS OF CBCI**

At the recently concluded 33<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the CBCI the following Office - bearers were elected.

President: His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias

Vice President I: Most Rev. Joshua Ignathios

Vice President II: Most Rev. Mar George Njaralakatt

Secretary General: Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas SFX

The theme of the General Body Meeting was: “United in diversity for a Mission of Mercy and Witness: ‘I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” (Mt 28: 20)

## **THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PRE SYNODAL MEETING**

1. This is an event in which the young will be the actors and the protagonists. We will not only talk about “them”, but rather they will recount themselves: with their language, their enthusiasm and their sensitivity. The next Synod of Bishops is intended to be, in fact, not only a Synod “on” young people and “for” young people, but also a Synod “of” young people and “with” young people.
2. A key word, repeated several times by the Pope, is “listening”. In this pre-Synodal Meeting we will listen to young people “live”, directly, so as to try to better understand their situation: what they think about themselves and adults, how they live their faith and what difficulties they encounter in being Christians, how they plan their lives and what problems they encounter in discerning their vocation, how they see the Church today and how they would like it to be, etc.
3. Among the young people to be listened to, there will be in particular those who come from situations of hardship and from the “existential peripheries”, young people who often do not have the opportunity to be heard to make their situation and their expectations known. Then there will be young non-Catholics, not Christians and non-believers, because young people will be listened to, as far as possible, “at 360 degrees”.
4. The pre-Synodal Meeting will be an opportunity to put ourselves in step with the young: keeping in mind that the Synod is by definition a “journey taken together”, we want to show what it means in a real sense to walk together with young people, all young people without exception.
5. Walking with young people also means identifying specific pastoral paths, which enable the Christian communities to consolidate their youth pastoral projects, adapting them to the needs of today’s young people.
6. At the pre-Synodal Meeting, together with the young people, some parents, educators, priests, pastoral workers and experts in the world of youth will take part, to listen to those who live alongside the young and have the “tools” to interpret their situation from the inside and in depth.
7. In this way we also wish to propose a method of intergenerational exchange and collaboration, encouraging dialogue between young people and adults, who often struggle to communicate with each other in everyday life.
8. The pre-Synodal Meeting intends to inspire dynamics of participation based on the encounter between cultures, living conditions, faiths and disciplines, developing a model that can be repeated in different ecclesial realities.

9. We will ask ourselves how to help young people to seek and find the meaning of their life, in the light of the specific vocational perspective that Pope Francis wanted to give to the Synod journey.

10. Finally, the pre-Synodal Meeting will draw up a shared document, which will be delivered to the Pope on Sunday, 25 March and will be incorporated, together with the other contributions received, in the *Instrumentum laboris*, the document the Synod Fathers will study next October.

### **WORLD FEAST OF GRATITUDE - 2018**

It is a special time of joy for our sisters in Paraguay who with the slogan: ***“With the young, let the chords of life vibrate, witnessing to the joy of following Christ”*** solicit us to give greater visibility to the joy and the beauty of the vocation to be more and more “a response of salvation to the profound hopes of the young people” (C 1).

It is in this climate that we prepare to celebrate, at the world level, the Feast of Gratitude to Mother for the ceaseless gift of herself to the young, the Institute, and the Church.

***The Paraguayan harp*** was chosen as a symbol of the nation, of their collective historic memory, of the bilingual reality of Guaranì and Spanish, of the natural panoramas, and of the rich heritage of folkloric traditions. Its melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and poetry, evoke in the listener the values of the Paraguayan people. Our Sisters in the Paraguayan Province propose that we live the **Word of Jesus (taken from the passage of John 15: 1-17) "Remain in my love" that translates into the commitment to:**

- ❖ **To Pray in community every month, from the 15th to the 24th, the Novena to Mary Help of Christians for vocations, accompanied by gestures of charity among ourselves;**
- ❖ **To Guarantee concrete mediations of accompaniment of the young in every Province and educating community.**

To share this commitment, each Province is invited to send documentation on the experience realized to awaken in the young God’s Plan for their life. This can be done through a one-minute video, and/or photographs with suitable captions.

### **SINCERE THANKS**

To Sr. Monica and the provincial house community for their availability and generosity in welcoming the retreatants and offering a conducive atmosphere for prayer and reflection from 2-9<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

### **WISHES AND PRAYERS**

Best wishes and prayers to all our students who are appearing for Class X and Plus Two as well as our sisters who are appearing for their public examinations.

### **COURSES AND SEMINARS**

- Sr. Valsa Mathew, Sr. Vincy Jacintha and Sr. Vineetha Williams will be undergoing a Training on “Financial Management in Church Organizations” for priests and sisters. Organized by USM Community Indore from March 14 to 17, 2018.
- Sr. Lissy Esson and Sr. Dayana Rodrigues will be participating in the National level Vocational Training programme on capacity building for the seven Indian provinces from 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018 at Mazzarello Youth Centre, Wadala, Mumbai.



## HEART FELT CONDOLENCES PRAYERS

- To Sr. Mary Joseph and Sr. Molly at the passing away of their paternal aunt Mrs. Mariakutty aged 83 on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018
- To Rt. Rev. Mallavrapu Prakash, D.D. the bishop of Archdiocese of Visakhapatnam at the demise of Most Rev. K. Mariadas Bishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Visakhapatnam and former Bishop of Guntur diocese.
- To Sr. Jayanthi at the loss of her beloved Mother Bala Therejamma (68) on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2018
- To Sr. Sumathi Bulla at the demise of her maternal grand Father.
- To the Provincial and Confreres of the Dimapur Province at the death of Fr. Mathew Narimattam (85) on 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2018 at Dimapur.

## REQUEST FOR PRAYERS

- For the good health of Sr. Constance Gomez, Sr. Liza Philip, Sr. Veronica Gali
- For the Mother of Sr. Praveena Madhavan who is ill.
- For the sick and ailing parents and dear ones of our sisters
- For the urgent needs of the province

Let me conclude with the thought of Pope Francis: During the Easter Vigil we will celebrate once more the moving rite of the lighting of the Easter Candle, drawn from the “new fire”, this light will slowly overcome the darkness and illuminate the liturgical assembly. May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.

Yours affectionately,

*Sr. Celine Jacob*

Sr. Celine Jacob  
Provincial

**WISH YOU ALL HAPPY FEAST OF ST JOSEPH! & Meaningful celebration of Passion Week!**

