



Archdiocese of Bangalore
CIRCULAR



St. Francis Xavier
Patron of Archdiocese
Pray for Us

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Dear Rev. Fathers / Sisters / Brothers / Lay Faithful,

1. THE LENTEN SEASON

We have already started the Holy Season of Lent on Ash Wednesday. This season reminds us of our duty to review our Christian life and make it conformed to the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus started His public Ministry by fast and prayer. The spiritual strength that he gained due to His union with the Father enabled him to overcome the temptations. This should inspire us to spend these 40 days of Lent fruitfully by fast, penance, prayer, alms giving, charity, and meditating on the Gospels specially the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. Let us keep up the practices of Way of the Cross, attending daily Mass, adoration, retreat, pilgrimages and service to our neighbour. This would be a fitting preparation for the celebration of Easter.

The parish priest and the faithful are requested to plan several spiritual activities fitting to the Lenten Season. We have a good custom to hold the annual retreat during the season. Masses can be offered at home for the sick provided the sick person is a terminally ill, bed ridden and unable to go to the Parish Church for Mass. In some parishes the house blessings are also conducted. All the spiritual exercises will help the faithful to deepen their spiritual and prayer life. When there is slackness towards the Sacraments and family prayer, I request the pastors to give more attention to this group of people. Our Holy Father Pope Francis asks us to pay special attention to such persons. His words will touch and anoint them.

Please the Annexure-I for Pope Francis' Message for Lent 2017.

a. Lenten Fasting and Abstinence

The Regional Catholic Bishops call for all Catholics 14 years and older to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and the Fridays of Lent. Catholics who are 18 to 59 years old are expected to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting refers to the quantity of food eaten. Traditionally, fasting calls for refraining from eating between meals and consuming only one full meal per day.

The following suggestions are pro+posed by the Episcopal Conference:

1. Attending Mass
2. Making at least a 15 minute-visit to the Blessed Sacrament
3. Reading the Bible for 15 minutes
4. Meditation on the Passion of the Lord for 15 minutes
5. Making the Way of the Cross
6. Missing Breakfast or any one meal
7. Making strictly vegetarian meals (avoiding fish and egg as well)
8. Giving 10% of one's daily earnings in Charity

b. In our Archdiocese

- i. The days of fast and abstinence are – Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On these days of fast and abstinence, the faithful take only one meal and also abstain from meat.
- ii. The days of abstinence are all Fridays of the year. On days of abstinence the faithful abstain from taking meat, and do some works of piety or charity determined by the Episcopal Conference mentioned above.

2. ADMISSION TO SCHOOLS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE (Priority to all Catholics including Local Catholics)

All the Managers/Correspondents/Headmasters/Headmistresses/Principals of all the Catholic Schools (Archdiocesan and as well all institutions run by the Religious) in the Archdiocese are hereby requested to follow strictly the Archdiocesan policy for Education.

- 1.0: **Directives and Guidelines** to the Managers/Provincials/Headmasters and Headmistresses of our Colleges and Schools in this Archdiocese, regarding the admissions of students and collection of donations/capitation fees/development fees.
- 1:1: No Catholic student should be denied admission to our schools irrespective of marks and inability to pay fees etc.
- 1:2: Financial help should be found to assist the economically poor students. Educationally weak children should be helped with special coaching classes.
- 1:3: It should be the earnest Endeavour of our institutions to make the economically poor and socially backward the main beneficiaries without standing on reputation and false prestige on the pretext of maintaining the academic standard.
- 1:4: Wherever an entrance test is conducted, Catholic children may be given special consideration so that they may stand a chance of being admitted without much problem.

2:0 The order of priority, as given here-below, may be followed:

1. Catholics – all are to be admitted.
 2. Christians
 3. SC's / ST's: belonging to other communities
 4. Students of other religious minority communities, and
 5. Others
- 2.1: No School/Institution in our Archdiocese is permitted to collect donations and capitation Fees for admissions. However, 'Development' fees as permitted by Rules of Education Department may be collected and proper receipts be issued to the parents of the students.
- 2.2: Free-ship or concessions to the deserving students should be given after ascertaining the financial status of the parents.
- 2.3: Children who suffer certain disabilities like physically handicapped, polio victims, etc. irrespective of their religion should be specially considered for admission.
- 2.4: Special efforts should be made to enroll the children of the Dalit Catholics and slum dwellers in our Catholic schools.
- 2.5: Managements of our Catholic Schools in our Archdiocese are to take special care not to unnecessarily impose a financial burden on the parents of the children by prescribing costly uniform and books. Frequent change of school uniform is to be strictly avoided. Let nobody in society feel that our schools are meant only for the 'elite' and the rich. But let everybody feel that our schools emanate a spirit of simplicity, openness and poverty, which are exemplified in the life, and works of Our Lord Jesus Christ. They should be the guiding principles of our schools in our Archdiocese.

3. ADMISSIONS TO THE MINOR SEMINARY

Candidates seeking admission to Bhakthi Bhavan (Archdiocesan Minor Seminary) are expected to submit their applications to the Director, Bhakthi Bhavan as soon as the results of the X Std./PUC/Graduation are announced. Application forms are available with the Rector and also at the Reception Desk – Archbishop's House. Each candidate should fill the prescribed form in his own handwriting, attach the marks card and a letter of recommendation from the Parish Priest, and submit/send it to the Rector. After scrutinizing the applications, the candidates will be called for an interview at the Archbishop's House. The interview is scheduled for

the 2nd week of May. The Parish Priests are requested to encourage vocations from their parishes and to recommend the right candidates after ascertaining their motivation, conduct, intellectual capacity and family background.

The Address of Bhakthi Bhavan:

Rector
Bhakthi Bhavan
Da Costa Square
St. Thomas Town P.O.
Bengaluru - 560 084
Tel: 080-2547 1356

4. BCCRS – LENTEN PROGRAM – “FAST & PRAY” – 2017 **(40 Days round-the-clock Prayer at the Bridgettine Convent, Bengaluru)**

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. 3 This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,” (1 Tim 2:1-3).

“Bangalore Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services, in association with the Proclamation and Evangelisation Commission of the Archdiocese of Bangalore, is organising the sixth annual Prayer and Intercession, running 24 hours of 40 Days of Lent. In the past years, we have had the participation from religious organisations under CRI, Seminarians, School Children, Nurses from various hospitals, Youth and Laity from all language groups.

This year the theme is “Lord, bless the WORLD, our NATION and the CHURCH”. As usual it will be held at the Bridgettine Convent, #10, Brunton Road (off MG Road), Bengaluru - 560 025. The programme will begin at 11 AM on the 1st of March (Ash Wednesday), with Holy Mass, and will conclude on 9th April at 11 AM (Palm Sunday) with Holy Mass, both these Masses will be celebrated by The Most Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras, Archbishop of Bangalore.

Intercession and Worship at the convent of Brigitta will be in Kannada, Tamil, English, Konkani and Malayalam from 8 AM to 10 PM by the laity and by the Religious from different Congregations from 10 PM to 8 AM. Intentions for Intercession have been listed to help intercessors to pray in a systematic, consistent and efficient manner. The faithful, religious sisters, brothers and priests are encouraged to participate in this Lenten Intercessory Programme and to become the Prayer Warriors.

This year the BCCRS will also collaborate with the CRI as they plan to organise Night Vigils in 18 CRI Zones in the Archdiocese.

For more details, please contact: Mr. Cherian Ramapuram, Mob: 9880433433, E-mail: cherian.ramapuram@orangecounty.in

5. OSWALD CARDINAL GRACIAS, ARCHBISHOP OF BOMBAY APPOINTED TO ROMAN ROTA

“The Holy Father has granted the title of Lawyer of the Roman Rota to Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Metropolitan Archbishop of Bombay, India issued by the Holy See Press Office on Wednesday, February 15, 2017”.

The Sacred Roman Rota is part of the great system of government established in Rome, by which the Pope discharges the duties which devolve on him as Head of the Catholic Church. The government is covered by three sections: the administrative, the executive and the judicial. The Rota belongs to the judicial section: it is one of the tribunals through which the Pope exercises his sovereign power of administering justice in ecclesiastical matters. Its sole function is to hear and decide according to the law, cases duly submitted to it. It is not sure how the court came by its name, but the Latin word Rota means a wheel or circle, and the Court may have received its name from the round table at which the judges sat.

The Rota consists ordinarily of ten judges whose official title is ‘*Auditores*’: they are of equal status and authority, and the senior, or Dean, as he is called, obtains precedence, but no jurisdiction, over the other judges. The appointment of a judge is made by the Pope in person. The qualifications required by law for the office are that the candidate be in priest’s orders, have obtained the doctorate in canon and civil law, be of mature age, and be distinguished for moral integrity, prudence, and legal skill.

The Archdiocese of Bangalore congratulates His Eminence on his prestigious appointment to the Roman Rota by the Holy Father.

6. PASTORAL CONSULTATION AND CHRISM MASS

The Annual Pastoral Consultation will be held on **Thursday, 6th April, 2017 from 9.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. at Paalanaa Bhavana**. The topics for the Pastoral Consultation will be published in my next month’s Circular. If the Archdiocesan Clergy and the Religious working in our parishes and Institutions have any suggestions for the forthcoming Pastoral Consultation, please send them to me by the 10th March, 2017.

The Pastoral Consultation will conclude with the Chrism Mass at St. Francis Xavier’s Cathedral at 5.00 p.m. Please mark this date in your diaries and make it convenient to participate in the Pastoral Consultation. The Archdiocesan Clergy and the Religious Priests working in our parishes and institutions are expected to participate in it.

7. NEW OFFICE BEARERS OF CCBI

At the recently concluded 29th Assembly of the CCBI, the following Office-bearers were elected:

President: His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay

Vice President: Most Rev. George Antonysamy, Archbishop of Madras-Mylapore

Secretary General: Most Rev. Anil Joseph Thomas Couto, Archbishop of Delhi

Deputy Secretary General: Rev. Fr. Stephen Alathara

Please the Annexure-II for the Final Statement of 29th CCBI General Body Meeting.

8. THE NEW KANNADA MISSAL

The long awaited Roman Missal in Kannada is at last ready. By a Decree dated 25th of October 2016, the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, Rome, has given its *recognitio* to the Missal prepared by the Karnataka Regional Commission for Liturgy. The Missal was officially released by Most Rev. Bernard Moras, Archbishop of Bangalore and President of KRCBC on Monday, 27th of February in Mysore, at the end of the Mass of the episcopal ordination of the new Bishop of Mysore. Copies of this Missal, will be made available to all the ten dioceses (Latin Rite) of Karnataka at the earliest as per their order. ***It has been decided that the new Missal will be officially introduced throughout the region of Karnataka from April 16, 2017, Solemnity of Easter.***

The new Missal will be available at the Finance Office Archbishop's Bishop's House. You may please collect it from there. It is highly recommended that not only all parishes but also religious houses within our region should have a copy of this Missal and keep it for use in their respective Houses. The cost per copy will be Rs. 2000:00. It will be made available from 01.04.2017.

The celebration of the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of all Christian life. While we thank the Lord for the precious gift of the Kannada Roman Missal to the Church in Karnataka we also place on record the painstaking and dedicated services of Mgr. J. B. Xavier, the Regional Secretary and his team of collaborators for making available to the local Church this monumental work. Along with the Missal a booklet containing the Order of the Mass (priced at Rs. 10:00) is now available for instructing our people and preparing them to follow the new Missal. This calls for a prior liturgical formation of our people at all the levels: the parish, the deanery and the diocesan levels. Active participation of the faithful in the celebration of the Eucharist is the primary goal of the liturgical renewal and indispensable source of the Christian spirit.

9. PRESERVING RELIGIOUS HERITAGE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE

The preservation, conservation and management of religious heritage will not only add to the timeline of that particular Institution, but it also helps the future generation to look with pride the past cultural and religious heritage of that institution

in a given era. These articles for the general public are always something exotic and fascinating while for the people of God there is an instinctive connection with lived faith and tradition and a sense of ownership.

It was proposed at the last Meeting of the College of Consultors that we collect and preserve religious articles that have historical and religious significance at a common place. A Committee comprising the Vicars General, Chancellor, Estate Committee, and a Team of Priests, Religious and Lay Faithful has been formed. This Committee will meet shortly and draw up a few guidelines to take this commendable project forward, besides discussing the complexity involved in the future management of this proposed exhibition. The articles that will be procured will be displayed at the Paalanaa Bhavana.

10. DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH

It is not necessary to highlight the role of St. Joseph in the history of salvation and his powerful intercessory powers. Although we do not read his words in the scriptures, his sacred silence speaks volumes about his humility, obedience, responsibility and difficulties.

The Inaugural Mass of the Pontificate for Pope Francis took place on March 19, Saint Joseph's Day. St. Joseph is one of Pope Francis' **most beloved saints**. He explained why during his trip to the Philippines in January, 2015. *"I have great love for Saint Joseph, because he is a man of silence and strength. On my table I have an image of Saint Joseph sleeping. Even when he is asleep, he is taking care of the Church! Joseph's rest revealed God's will to him. In this moment of rest in the Lord, as we pause from our many daily obligations and activities, God is also speaking to us."*

Pope Francis advised people to leave a "note" under the image of the saint for help whenever they have a problem. What Pope Francis advises us is that like Saint Joseph, once we have heard God's voice, we must rise from our slumber; we must get up and act. Our Christian faith does not distance us from the world. On the contrary, it brings us closer. He overcame the difficulties of life because he rested with God.

St. Joseph is a model father for the Christian family. May St. Joseph, being the patron and head of our families, protect our families and make them like the Holy family of Nazareth. And, let us, therefore cultivate a special devotion to him.

Since this year the 19th March falls on a Sunday, the feast of St. Joseph will be celebrated on the 20th March. Let us pray to St. Joseph that he may inspire us to deepen our faith in God and motivate us to do our responsibilities with utmost care and devotion and, above all, to lead a holy life and to have a peaceful death to obtain the eternal reward.

11. THE ARCHDIOCESAN FAMILY COUNSELLING SERVICES

The Blessing and the Inauguration of the Archdiocesan Family Counselling Services was done on 20th February, 2017 at Paalanaa Bhavana. The Family

Counselling Services will be provided by a Team of experienced Counsellors who also stand out for living an exemplary family life. The Counselling Services will commence from March 01, 2017 and Counsellors will be available between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

Today, more than ever, the couples and the parents who face difficulties in playing their respective roles need guidance and counselling. We also invite families facing difficult days in their relationships to utilise the services of the counselling centre to help themselves reignite the spark that would bring the light back into their family lives.

Parishioners having relevant qualifications, skills and experience in family counseling, and wish to volunteer to be on the panel of counsellors are requested to contact: Rev. Fr. Arul Raj, csc Contact No.: 9448436583.

12. INFORMATION

i. International Women's Day (March 8th)

On the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8th March, it is appropriated to remind ourselves of the role of women in our life, in the family, the Church and society. Let us recognize and duly acknowledge the contributions of women for the progress of our society and Church in particular. Often, we fail to admit that we are a part of the gender biased society that does not give the rightful place to women in the society. Thanks to all those who work for women's development in our Archdiocese, particularly the Women's Commission. A Happy Women's Day!

ii. Clergy Retreat

Annual Clergy Retreat for the Archdiocesan Clergy will be held at St. Gasper Retreat Center, Kithaganuru, K.R. Puram, in two batches:

- a) I Batch 24th April to 28th April, 2017
- b) II Batch 1st May to 5th May 2017

I cordially invite all our Archdiocesan Clergy to take part in the annual retreat without fail. Kindly register at the earliest your names with my Secretary, Rev. Fr. Panneer Selva Kumar.

iii. Annual Financial Returns

Kindly collect Annual returns from the Finance Office. The Parish Priests and the Heads of the Institutions are requested to fill in these forms and send them to

the Finance Office by 30th April 2017. This would facilitate our Archdiocesan Auditors to prepare the Statements of Accounts to be filed with the Income Tax Department. Kindly extend your fullest cooperation in this regard.

iv. Annual Statistics – 2016

The Annual Statistics Sheets for the year 2016 have already been dispatched to Parish Priests and Superiors of Religious Houses – Men/Women. Kindly update the statistics of your parish/institution, fill in the details as in the sheets and return them to the Chancery as early as possible. We are required to send the updated statistics to the Holy See. Those who have not yet received the sheets, kindly collect the same from the chancery office Archbishop's House.

v. 4th Anniversary of the Petrine Ministry of Pope Francis

On 19th March, Pope Francis will celebrate his fourth anniversary of his pontificate. During these years, he has brought in a lot of changes and re-thinking in the life of the universal and local churches. His Encyclical, *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Apostolic Exhortation, *Lumen Fidei*, *LAUDATO SI* and other writings, discourses and daily homilies are indeed very inspirational and call for total renewal within and outside. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and bless him by giving him good health and long life. Let us assure him of our filial love, loyalty and obedience. May I request all of you to offer special prayers for the Pope on 19th March.

vi. Preparation for the Final Examinations

The Heads of the Institutions are requested to focus on the forthcoming examinations and motivate their students to perform well. Please advise the students to concentrate on their studies and do well in their examinations. Kindly remember, among other ministries, the Church considers the educational ministry as an important one as it shapes and molds the character of our children and youth by imparting spiritual and intellectual knowledge to them.

I request all the Parish Priests and institutional heads to conduct special prayer service for the students who are appearing for the final examinations.

vii. Remittance of Collections due to the Archdiocese

There are a few statutory collections, which are to be sent to the Archdiocese, such as Second Sundays, Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Holy Childhood, Mission Sunday, Peter's Pence, St. Peter the Apostle, Hunger and Disease, Vocations Sunday. Besides, the stipends for Cumulative, Binated and Trinated Masses are also expected to be sent to the Archdiocese. The Parishes/Institutions that are yet to forward these collections are requested to send them immediately.

viii. Salvation Run

A SALVATION RUN is being planned on Palm Sunday starting from St. Francis Xavier Cathedral at 6.30 am with the participation from Christians of all denominations. I encourage all Christians to participate in large numbers uniting to proclaim our salvation through Jesus Christ. The theme: "I BELONG to JESUS" will be marked on T-shirts for those who register.

Those willing to participate may register online on www.salvationrunners.com

The core message of the SALVATION RUN is "We all are sinners and stand under the judgment of God. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We may believe that we are good enough to win God's favor or that we can perform certain religious acts to counterbalance our bad deeds. But the Bible states that we are all condemned, for "there is no one righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:10).

What did JESUS do? He died on the cross as the complete sacrifice for our sins and took upon himself the judgment that we deserve. We need to realize what Christ has done to make our salvation possible. For God loves us, and Christ came to make forgiveness and salvation possible.

13. THANK YOU

I express my gratitude to those who wished me and sent me their prayerful wishes and cordial greetings on the occasion of my 20th Episcopal Ordination Anniversary. If I could carry on the onerous task of shepherding the flock of this vast Archdiocese, it is mainly due to your prayers, support and cooperation. Kindly continue to do so in the years to come. On my part, I do remember all of you in my daily prayers and the Eucharistic Celebration.

Wishing you a fruitful Lenten Season and invoking God's blessings.

Yours sincerely,



✠ **Bernard Moras**
Archbishop of Bangalore

ANNEXURE 1

Pope Francis' message for Lent 2017 **The Word is a gift. Other persons are a gift**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain goal of Easter, Christ's victory over death. This season urgently calls us to conversion. Christians are asked to return to God "with all their hearts" (Joel 2:12), to refuse to settle for mediocrity and to grow in friendship with the Lord. Jesus is the faithful friend who never abandons us. Even when we sin, he patiently awaits our return; by that patient expectation, he shows us his readiness to forgive (cf. Homily, 8 January, 2016).

Lent is a favorable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. At the basis of everything is the word of God, which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply. I would now like to consider the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (cf. Lk 16:19-31). Let us find inspiration in this meaningful story, for it provides a key to understanding what we need to do in order to attain true happiness and eternal life. It exhorts us to sincere conversion.

1. The other person is a gift

The parable begins by presenting its two main characters. The poor man is described in greater detail: he is wretched and lacks the strength even to stand. Lying before the door of the rich man, he fed on the crumbs falling from his table. His body is full of sores and dogs come to lick his wounds (cf. vv. 20-21). The picture is one of great misery; it portrays a man disgraced and pitiful.

The scene is even more dramatic if we consider that the poor man is called Lazarus: a name full of promise, which literally means "God helps". This character is not anonymous. His features are clearly delineated and he appears as an individual with his own story. While practically invisible to the rich man, we see and know him as someone familiar. He becomes a face, and as such, a gift, a priceless treasure, a human being whom God loves and cares for, despite his concrete condition as an outcast (cf. Homily, 8 January, 2016).

Lazarus teaches us that other persons are a gift. A right relationship with people consists in gratefully recognizing their value. Even the poor person at the door of the rich is not a nuisance, but a summons to conversion and to change. The parable first invites us to open the doors of our heart to others because each person is a gift, whether it be our neighbor or an anonymous pauper. Lent is a favorable season for opening the doors to all those in need and recognizing in them the face of Christ. Each of us meets people like this every day. Each life that

we encounter is a gift deserving acceptance, respect and love. The word of God helps us to open our eyes to welcome and love life, especially when it is weak and vulnerable. But in order to do this, we have to take seriously what the Gospel tells us about the rich man.

2. Sin blinds us

The parable is unsparing in its description of the contradictions associated with the rich man (cf. v. 19). Unlike poor Lazarus, he does not have a name; he is simply called “a rich man”. His opulence was seen in his extravagant and expensive robes. Purple cloth was even more precious than silver and gold, and was thus reserved to divinities (cf. Jer 10:9) and kings (cf. Jg 8:26), while fine linen gave one an almost sacred character. The man was clearly ostentatious about his wealth, and in the habit of displaying it daily: “He feasted sumptuously every day” (v. 19). In him we can catch a dramatic glimpse of the corruption of sin, which progresses in three successive stages: love of money, vanity and pride (cf. Homily, 20 September, 2013).

The Apostle Paul tells us that “the love of money is the root of all evils” (1 Tim 6:10). It is the main cause of corruption and a source of envy, strife and suspicion. Money can come to dominate us, even to the point of becoming a tyrannical idol (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 55). Instead of being an instrument at our service for doing good and showing solidarity towards others, money can chain us and the entire world to a selfish logic that leaves no room for love and hinders peace.

The parable then shows that the rich man’s greed makes him vain. His personality finds expression in appearances, in showing others what he can do. But his appearance masks an interior emptiness. His life is a prisoner to outward appearances, to the most superficial and fleeting aspects of existence (cf. *ibid.*, 62).

The lowest rung of this moral degradation is pride. The rich man dresses like a king and acts like a god, forgetting that he is merely mortal. For those corrupted by love of riches, nothing exists beyond their own ego. Those around them do not come into their line of sight. The result of attachment to money is a sort of blindness. The rich man does not see the poor man who is starving, hurting, lying at his door.

Looking at this character, we can understand why the Gospel so bluntly condemns the love of money: “No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or be attached to the first and despise the second. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money” (Mt 6:24).

3. The Word is a gift

The Gospel of the rich man and Lazarus helps us to make a good preparation for the approach of Easter. The liturgy of Ash Wednesday invites us to an experience quite similar to that of the rich man. When the priest imposes the ashes on our heads, he repeats the words: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return”. As it turned out, the rich man and the poor man both died, and the greater

part of the parable takes place in the afterlife. The two characters suddenly discover that “we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it” (1 Tim 6:7).

We too see what happens in the afterlife. There the rich man speaks at length with Abraham, whom he calls “father” (Lk 16:24.27), as a sign that he belongs to God’s people. This detail makes his life appear all the more contradictory, for until this moment there had been no mention of his relation to God. In fact, there was no place for God in his life. His only god was himself.

The rich man recognizes Lazarus only amid the torments of the afterlife. He wants the poor man to alleviate his suffering with a drop of water. What he asks of Lazarus is similar to what he could have done but never did. Abraham tells him: “During your life you had your fill of good things, just as Lazarus had his fill of bad. Now he is being comforted here while you are in agony” (v. 25). In the afterlife, a kind of fairness is restored and life’s evils are balanced by good.

The parable goes on to offer a message for all Christians. The rich man asks Abraham to send Lazarus to warn his brothers, who are still alive. But Abraham answers: “They have Moses and the prophets, let them listen to them” (v. 29). Countering the rich man’s objections, he adds: “If they will not listen either to Moses or to the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone should rise from the dead” (v. 31).

The rich man’s real problem thus comes to the fore. At the root of all his ills was the failure to heed God’s word. As a result, he no longer loved God and grew to despise his neighbor. The word of God is alive and powerful, capable of converting hearts and leading them back to God. When we close our heart to the gift of God’s word, we end up closing our heart to the gift of our brothers and sisters.

Dear friends, Lent is the favorable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbor. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take. May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God’s word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need. I encourage all the faithful to express this spiritual renewal also by sharing in the Lenten Campaigns promoted by many Church organizations in different parts of the world, and thus to favor the culture of encounter in our one human family. Let us pray for one another so that, by sharing in the victory of Christ, we may open our doors to the weak and poor. Then we will be able to experience and share to the full the joy of Easter.

From the Vatican, 18 October 2016

Feast of Saint Luc the Evangelist

Francis

ANNEXURE 2

Promoting the Joy of Love In Our Families

Message of the 29th CCBI Plenary Assembly to the Church in India

We, two Cardinals, 136 Archbishops and Bishops, representing the 132 dioceses of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI), gathered at the Pastoral Centre, Bhopal, for our Plenary Assembly from 31st January to 8th February 2017 to deliberate, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, on the theme **“Promoting the Joy of Love in our Families”**. The choice of this theme was prompted by the epoch-making Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*¹ (Joy of Love), which was the outcome of the 2014 and 2015 Synods on the Family. The Apostolic Exhortation reviews the current situation of families in the light of the Church’s perennial teaching on marriage and family especially, with regard to unity and indissolubility of marriage (cf. Mt. 19:3-6; Eph. 5:22-31) with a view to building up stable, fruitful and joyful families and offering help to those who do not fully meet the Christian ideal of marriage and the family. Our Lord Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd always remains as a model of our ministry to the family. Indeed the family is God’s precious gift to human society and to the Church.

The theme of the family as the “Domestic Church” has been the subject of frequent reflection by the Bishops of India.² Aware that “the welfare of the family is decisive for the future of the world and of the Church” (AL 31), the 29th Plenary Assembly (2017) took up this theme for reflection anew.

At our current Plenary Assembly, we were fortunate to have His Eminence Lorenzo Cardinal Baldisseri, the Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, Rome, who enlightened us on the historical background and the thrust of *Amoris Laetitia*. We were enriched by the frank and faith-filled sharing of some Catholic couples from various parts of our country – a couple who had been present at the 2015 Synod; a father of a mentally challenged child; a single-parent, and others who spoke with utter sincerity and openness about their marital journey with all its ups and downs, joys and sorrows. We were edified by their deep faith in God, their prayer life nourished by the Word of God and participation in the Holy Eucharist, and their dedication to ministry in the Church as lay people. We realize that these couples who spoke to us are just a few of the many Catholic families which, despite many difficulties, remain faithful to the Church’s teaching on marriage and make possible for their children a truly Christian upbringing. Such families are nurseries of vocations for the priesthood and religious life. Seeing this,

¹ Hereafter referred as AL

² In 2005, the 17th Plenary Assembly held in Ranchi took the family as the main topic of reflection. The Pastoral Plan of the Church in India formulated at the 2013 CCBI Plenary Assembly, on the 25th anniversary of the CCBI, had a section on the family. The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) from 28th November to 4th December 2016, deliberated on the theme of the family.

we are filled with joy in the Spirit and would like to thank our families for the service they render to the Church and to society.

At the same time, we are aware that there are some shadows. More than 300 million people in our country are subject to poverty and deprivation, especially in the rural areas, with little access to basic health services, educational facilities and employment opportunities. Many of them are afflicted by evils such as domestic violence and alcoholism. Among the poor, women and children are the ones who suffer the most. A large number of families have not been sufficiently catechised. Migration too has had a strong impact on marriage and family life. The media, with all its beneficial effects, have often exercised a deleterious influence on family life.

Part of the problem is that ordained ministers are not adequately equipped to help families cope with the complex problems they face (cf. *AL* 202). Priests also need to know how to harness, for the pastoral care of families, the many Family Movements and Associations with which the Church is blessed.

As pastors responsible for our faithful, we took into serious account the varied and diverse situations regarding marriage and family across various regions of our country. We have sketched out a **Plan of Action** which will be made specific and implemented in stages by each diocese, according to its needs and resources. As Bishops, primarily responsible for the family apostolate, we wish to state:

1. The content of our pastoral plan for families will always include the “culture of life” (cf. Gen.1:28, 3:20; *Evangelium Vitae* 87).
2. We will focus, in the first place, on adequate **Preparation for Marriage**, updating, wherever necessary, the present Marriage Preparation Courses. We want to emphasize especially Christian Family Education programmes in our schools and colleges with a view to helping young people discover the dignity and beauty of marriage (cf. *AL* 205-216), without minimising the call to priestly and religious life.
3. Priests and religious will keep in touch with families through regular family visits and devise structures for **accompanying** couples, especially in the first years of marriage (cf. *AL* 217-238). We will enlist the help of experienced married couples, Parish Family Cells, SCC(BEC) networks and the Family Movements and Associations in our dioceses. Wherever needed and feasible, we will establish Family Service Centres with counselling facilities to help couples facing difficulties.
4. In particular, with a careful process of **discernment** we will reach out to those who for several reasons feel **estranged from the Church** (divorced, divorced and civilly remarried, cohabiting partners, etc.). We keep in mind the words of Pope Francis: “what is urgently needed today is a ministry to care for those whose marital relationship has broken down” (*AL* 238). We want all to feel the maternal love of the Church in such a way that they experience the merciful embrace of the Father from which no one is excluded.

5. We will ensure that our priests, religious, catechists and pastoral workers receive better training for family ministry. In particular we will insist that seminarians “receive a more extensive interdisciplinary and not merely doctrinal formation in the areas of engagement and marriage” (AL 203) and will have exposure to family situations under the guidance of their formators.
6. We realize that there are certain **families that need special care**: families living in dire poverty, families with spouses of two different religious traditions, single parent families, families with differently abled children, grieving and bereaved families, migrant families, families with sick and elderly members (cf. AL 247-253). We pledge to support and accompany these families in whatever way possible.
7. Responding to the call of Pope Francis, we will show a respectful attitude to those who have not been provided with adequate pastoral care such as transgenders, people with different orientations, etc.

Dear families in Christ, Pope Francis so well says: “The Joy of Love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church” (AL 1). We ourselves experienced this joy while deliberating on the family in the light of the Holy Spirit. You are God’s precious gift to the Church. We are grateful to Pope Francis for so courageously highlighting the need of a merciful approach to families especially to those living in difficult situations.

Along with other Christian families and those of other faiths, you are called to journey together to become witnesses of God’s tender love and mercy in this world, which has been revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

May Mary, the Queen of the Families and St. Joseph her chaste spouse intercede for our families to enable them to live in justice, peace, love and joy in the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 14:17).

Sd/-

Oswald Cardinal Gracias

President, Conference of Catholic Bishops of India

Sd/-

Filipe Neri Ferrão

Vice President, CCB

Sd/-

Varghese Chakkalakai

Secretary General CCBI

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2017

1) CLERGY SECURITY FUND

1	10.02.17	Fr. Anthony Prasad	Mylasandra	25,000.00
2	13.02.17	Fr. William Patrick	Rajajinagar	4,000.00
3	13.02.17	Fr. Anthony Swamy	Robertsonpet KGF	15,000.00
4	15.02.17	Fr. Joseph Francis B	Malleswaram	5,000.00
5	15.02.17	Fr. Deva Kumar I	St. Mary's Town	21,000.00
6	27.02.17	Fr. Kiran Kumar B	Champion Reef KGF	30,000.00

2) HUNGER AND DISEASE CAMPAIGN Dated 20.03.2016

(To be sent to Caritas, Delhi)

1	04.01.17	St. John the Baptist Church	Vijayanagar	6,188.00
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3) HOLY LANDS COLLECTIONS Dated 25.03.2016

(Towards Holy Land maintenance)

1	04.01.17	St. John the Baptist Church	Vijayanagar	7,135.00
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4) EASTER SUNDAY COLLECTIONS Dated 27.03.2016

(Towards extension of Mission works in our Archdiocese)

1	04.01.17	St. John the Baptist Church	Vijayanagar	9,312.00
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5) VOCATION SUNDAY COLLECTIONS Dated 17.04.2016

(For the Maintenance of Major and Minor Seminarians of our Archdiocese)

1	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	7,896.00
2	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00

6) SOCIETY OF ST PETER, APOSTLE Dated 26.06.2016

(Towards the up keep of Seminarians in the whole world)

1	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	9,940.00
2	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00
3	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	1,677.00
4	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	5,420.00

7) CATHOLIC INFORMATION BUREAU (C.I.B) Dated 10.07.2016

(For the spread of Good News in the Archdiocese of Bangalore)

1	01.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Sannenahalli	310.00
2	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	8,332.00
3	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00
4	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	1,950.00
5	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	6,560.00

8) AFRICAN MISSION Dated 14.08.2016**(Towards Mission work in Africa)**

1	11.01.17	St. Francis Xavier Church	Somanahalli	2,345.00
2	01.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Sannenahalli	330.00
3	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	9,118.00
4	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00
5	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	2,560.00
6	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	6,433.00

9) PETER'S PENCE COLLECTIONS Dated 18.09.2016**(Towards Holy Father's Charity)**

1	01.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Sannenahalli	300.00
2	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	9,849.00
3	11.02.17	Immaculate Heart Church	Kalena Agrahara	21,929.00
4	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00
5	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	1,980.00
6	20.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	T.C. Palya	27,640.00
7	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	7,087.00
8	24.02.17	St. Anne's Church	Mestripalya	1,357.00

10) MISSION SUNDAY COLLECTIONS Dated (16.10.2016)**(Towards World Mission Works)**

1	31.01.17	St. Theresa 's BACQ Public School	Byrathi	19,000.00
2	31.01.17	D S S Convent	Kothanur	4,500.00
3	01.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Sannenahalli	20,000.00
4	01.02.17	Sacred Heart Church	Richmond Road	7,47,324.00
5	03.02.17	Good Shepherd Church	Murphy Town	1,00,010.00
6	09.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	15,000.00
7	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	39,757.00
8	09.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Karubele	10,000.00
9	10.02.17	Mother of Mines Church	Oorgaum KGF	12,275.00
10	10.02.17	Holy Trinity Church	Mylasandra	30,000.00
11	15.02.17	Bhakti Bhavan	Da Costa Layout	22,483.00
12	20.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	T.C. Palya	3,68,234.00
13	21.02.17	St. Jude's Church	R.T. Nagar	1,28,000.00
14	21.02.17	St. Jude's Church	Naganapalya	40,000.00

15	23.02.17	St. John's Medical College Hospital	Sarjapura Road	40,000.00
16	24.02.17	St. Anne's Church	Mestripalya	14,369.00
17	28.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Lingarajapuram	22,280.00
18	28.02.17	Infant Jesus Church	Vijayapura	6,700.00

11) HOLY SEE MAINTENANCE Dated 20.11.2016
(Towards the Maintenance of the Holy See)

1	01.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Sannenahalli	310.00
2	01.02.17	Sacred Heart Church	Richmond Road	32,370.00
3	03.02.17	Good Shepherd Church	Murphy Town	5,685.00
4	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	7,230.00
5	10.02.17	Annunciation Church	Nandidurg Road	6,956.00
6	11.02.17	Immaculate Heart of Mary Church	Kalena Agrahara	24,000.00
7	14.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Basavanapura	4,160.00
8	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00
9	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	2,335.00
10	20.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	T.C. Palya	26,650.00
11	22.02.17	St. Theresa's Church	Theresapura	260.00
12	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	5,875.00
13	23.02.17	St. Ignatius Church	Begur	18,500.00
14	24.02.17	St. Anne's Church	Mestripalya	1,348.00

12) CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS Dated 25.12.2016
(Maintenance of Retired Priests of Archdiocese)

1	01.02.17	Christha Prabhalaya Epiphany Church	Jayanagar	36,600.00
2	01.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Sannenahalli	870.00
3	01.02.17	Sacred Heart Church	Richmond Road	36,870.00
4	02.02.17	St. Rita's Church	Kunigal	600.00
5	03.02.17	Good Shepherd Church	Murphy Town	8,906.00
6	04.02.17	St. Gasper Church	Kithiganur	950.00
7	09.02.17	St. Mary's Church	Hegde Nagar	15,785.00
8	09.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Karobale	2,000.00
9	10.02.17	St. Francis De Sales Church	Hebbagodi	39,450.00
10	11.02.17	Immaculate Heart of Mary Church	Kalena Agrahara	15,678.00
11	13.02.17	Holy Trinity Church	Sahakara nagar	8,670.00

12	14.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Basavanapura	4,685.00
13	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	1,500.00
14	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	9,329.00
15	20.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	T.C. Palya	47,350.00
16	21.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Magadi	2,328.00
17	21.02.17	St. Vincent Pallotti Church	Banaswadi	70,000.00
18	22.02.17	St. Theresa's Church	Theresapura	688.00
19	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	7,895.00
20	23.02.17	St. Ignatius Church	Begur	29,400.00
21	23.02.17	St. Pius X Church	Kammanahalli	92,990.00
22	24.02.17	St. Anne's Church	Mestripalya	1,216.00
23	28.02.17	St. Teresa of Kolkata Church	Boopasandra	15,480.00

13) HOLY CHILDHOOD COLLECTION Dated 14.02.2016

(To be sent to PMS towards up keep of deprived children)

1	13.02.17	St. Paul the Hermit Church	V. Nagenahalli	10,032.00
2	13.02.17	St. Thomas Church	Kanaka nagar	6,606.00
3	13.02.17	St. Theresa's Church	J C Road	8,317.00
4	14.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Basavanapura	5,125.00
5	14.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Briand Square	22,690.00
6	14.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Tumkur	500.00
7	15.02.17	Holy Family Church	Ramamurthy nagar	52,000.00
8	15.02.17	Immaculate Conception Church	Railway Colony	17,100.00
9	15.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Gangondanahalli	6,210.00
10	15.02.17	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Ramanagara	725.00
11	15.02.17	St. Michael's Church	Shanthi nagar	8,941.00
12	16.02.17	Holy Rosary Church	Venkatala	39,370.00
13	16.02.17	St. Theresa's Church	Robertsonpet	27,190.00
14	16.02.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Hoskote	5,941.00
15	17.02.17	St. Rita's Church	Kanakapura	800.00
16	18.02.17	St. Peter's Church	Doddaballapur	3,600.00
17	20.02.17	St. Joseph's Church	Chinthamani	964.00
18	21.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Kadesanhalli	1,850.00
19	21.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	Magadi	1,970.00
20	21.02.17	St. Francis De Sales Church	Hebbagodi	38,640.00
21	21.02.17	St. Francis De Sales Church	Malur	1,045.00
22	21.02.17	St. Peter & Paul Church	Rayapuram	3,000.00
23	21.02.17	Assumption Church	Rajajinagar	37,095.00

24	21.02.17	St. Vincent Pallotti Church	Banaswadi	1,20,000.00
25	21.02.17	St. Peter & Paul Church	Rayapuram	3,000.00
26	22.02.17	St. Theresa's Church	Theresapura	336.00
27	22.02.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	8,640.00
28	23.02.17	St. Ignatius Church	Begur	17,500.00
29	23.02.17	St. Anthony's Church	New Guddadahalli	11,300.00
30	24.02.17	St. Anne's Church	Mestripalya	1,605.00



Prayer Fasting Works of Love



**40
Days**