

We have begun the month of June dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. This solemnity is celebrated on 23rd June. These days there is a lot of enthusiasm and re-awakening of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A number of churches and chapels in religious houses have the whole day adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

The first devotion began with the apparition of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St Margaret Mary and the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was popularized after the apparition of Our Lady to the three children at Fatima. Since this year the solemnity of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist is celebrated on the 24th June, the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Blessed Virgin Mary will not be celebrated.

I request the Parish Priests to explain to the people about these devotions. Many of our parishioners have cultivated the Nine First Fridays and five first Saturdays devotions. I request the Heads of the Educational Institutions to arrange confessions for our school children/college students on first Thursdays every month. Let us inculcate these devotions in our children and youth by giving importance faith formation and its implementation in their lives, which I have been instructing all the time.

Faith Formation in the Parishes/Schools/Educational Institutions

We have been stressing on the systematic Faith Formation Classes for children and youth in our parishes and educational institutions. It is sad to note that some parishes have taken lightly this important pastoral duty. In some places the Catechism classes on Sundays are cancelled and/or re-scheduled for silly reasons. Except during summer holidays, the catechism classes should begin on 1st Sunday of June (4th June 2016), and should go on uninterrupted at least for 35 Sundays of the year. Let us inculcate the love for faith in our growing children and youth. As I always mentioned in the past, please take special care of the School and Parish catechism classes.

As you are aware, The Commission for Catechetics & Bible animates teaching Catechism in all the Catholic Institutions (Schools and Colleges) of the Archdiocese. This year the Commission will facilitate all the catechetical activities and faith formation programmes in the parishes too. All of us need to extend our helping hand and co-operation to promote this ministry in our Archdiocese.

i. Parish Faith Formation Classes: There has been confusion about the syllabus for Parish Faith Formation Classes. The regional Commission for Catechetics has come up with one set of text books for Stds. 1-10 in Kannada and English, which we have already implemented in our ABE and Non-ABE Schools. Therefore the syllabus for the Parishes need not be the same as of the schools as they will be overlapping for the students. Thus the Catechetical Commission has prescribed a unanimous syllabus for the academic year 2016-17 for all the Parishes of our Archdiocese, which may be strictly followed. Kindly follow ***God With Us Series*** for Parish Catechism classes for English medium students, and for vernaculars contact the Commission's Office for details.

ii. School Catechism: The Karnataka Regional Commission for Catechetics has come up with one set of text books that are faithfully followed in all the Schools in the region. All the Catholic students studying in our ABE and Non-ABE Schools (including those run by the religious) must register themselves with the Commission for Catechetics and should take part in the common examination. An exclusive detailed Circular has been sent to all the Schools about the Commission's activities for the new academic year. Kindly take note of these directions and join hands with the commission to revitalize the catechetical apostolate.

iii. *College Students:* The Archdiocesan Commission for Bible and Catechetics has made an attempt to bring the Faith Formation activities of the **PU Colleges (or XI & XII Stds), Community Colleges, School of Commerce, Nursing Colleges, Teachers' Training Institutes, Tailoring/Craft Institutes and the ITI Institutes** run by the Priests and the Religious in our Archdiocese under one umbrella of our Archdiocesan Catechetical activities. The official texts for College Catechism are: *YOUCAT and DOCAT*.

Meritorious Students to be honoured by the A.B.E.

The Archdiocesan Board of Education (ABE), as in the past, will honour all the Catholic boys and girls who have secured more than 80% marks in 2017 SSLC/ICSE/CBSE and XII/II PUC examinations. To enroll for the Student's Felicitation Programme the following details are to be furnished: Marks Card attested copy the Head of the Institution along with any two Contact numbers and e-mail ID; and a Letter from the Parish is a must. For more information, the Students may contact either the Parish Priest or Head of the Institution.

PENTECOST – A Special Night Vigil

The Bangalore Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (BCCRS) of our Archdiocese is organizing a multi-lingual Night Vigil on the Feast of the Pentecost at St. Patrick's Church premises on 3rd June 2017 (Sat.) from 9.30 p.m. to 4th June 5.00 a.m. (Sunday). The Vigil Service in English, Kannada, Malayalam and Konkani will be conducted at St. Patrick's Church Campus, and the Tamil Service will be at Sacred Heart Church, Richmond Road.

I cordially invite all the Priests, Religious and Laity in the Archdiocese of Bangalore to come together to participate in this Night Vigil, and pray for our Archdiocese. Let us be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and go out and spread the Good News of Salvation to all in our Archdiocese.

Reflection: A popular speaker started off a seminar by holding up a 100 rupee note. A crowd of 200 had gathered to hear him speak. He asked, "Who would like this 100 rupee note?" 200 hands went up.

He said, "I am going to give this money to one of you but first, let me do this." He crumpled the bill up. He then asked, "Who still wants it?" All 200 hands were still raised.

"Well," he replied, "What if I do this?" Then he dropped the currency note on the ground and stomped on it with his shoes.

He picked it up, and showed it to the crowd. The note was all crumpled and dirty.

"Now who still wants it?" All the hands still went up.

"My friends, I have just showed you a very important lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth a 100. Many times in our lives, life crumples us and grinds us into the dirt. We make bad decisions or deal with poor circumstances. We feel worthless. But no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value. You are special – Don't ever forget it!"

Dear Friends, this simple story tells us that our lives are unique, precious and valuable. Henry Miller has said: "*Don't look for Miracles, YOU yourself are the Miracle!*" We believe that there is something special about human beings. Being human is not the same as being anything else in the cosmos - different in nature from being a rock, a tree, a spider or a lion. We have been created 'in the image of God'. That means we share something of the nature of God - we know the difference between good and evil, we have the ability to be creative, we have a capacity to love and seek justice, and we have a nature which is in some way eternal. Therefore, let us take

our lives seriously and make it more valuable by dedicating it for the greater glory of God and for the service of our fellow beings.

With best wishes and God's blessings,

+ Bernard Moras
Archbishop of Bangalore