

The Shepherd Speaks

The Month of October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary and every year we celebrate the feast of the Holy Rosary on 7th October. The devotion to the Holy rosary has been promoted by the Popes in order to rely on the powerful intercession of Mother Mary. All of us should remember that the Rosary prayer is dear to all the children of Mother Mary, and this prayer is considered a family prayer, wherein all the members of the family are gathered together for the recitation of the rosary. Those who recite the 5 decades of Rosary in the church, as a family at home, as a religious community, or as a pious fraternity, or in general whenever several persons have gathered together for a good purpose, a plenary indulgence is granted; and in other circumstances a partial indulgence.

The rosary should be recommended to the faithful and its nature and importance explained. St. Teresa of Kolkata, such a busy person always at the service of the sick and abandoned, would fix a rosary to her clothes so that she could recite several rosaries throughout her work and travel. This has been in the life of saints and our recent Popes. Let us then begin this in our life and in the parish and community where we live. Hence we have every reason to foster and promote this family rosary in our parishes.

I request you, dear Fathers, to continue the devotion of praying the Rosary during this month of October by encouraging your parishioners to pray it daily in their respective homes, before the celebration of the daily Eucharist in our churches and chapels and, wherever there is the custom, before the Grotto of Our Lady.

The Mission Sunday will be celebrated on 22nd October this year and the Theme chosen is: *Mission at the heart of the Christian faith*. The Mission Sunday reminds all Catholics to commit themselves to building a better world for all God's people, a world where everyone has all they need to live a dignified and fulfilling life. It is the day on which we reflect on the urgency of proclaiming the Gospel in our times. Missionary activity is a response to the love with which God loves us. It is God, who is Love, who leads the Church towards those who are yet to know more about his merciful and compassionate love. Besides the prayers and sacrifices, as every year, let us come forward to offer our financial assistance meant exclusively for missionary activities.

I am truly aware of the great interest and enthusiasm all of you are taking to celebrate the Mission Sunday meaningfully and successfully. Last year, our Archdiocesan contribution to the missions was: Rs. 21973752.00/. We secured 2nd place out of 170 Dioceses in India in collecting funds for the missions. Kindly make this announcement in the parishes and the institutions, and congratulate and thank our people on my behalf. I thank you for this honour and achievement. Please invite the members of the religious communities, heads of the institutions and your parishioners to be generous towards the cause of the missions through their precious prayers, sacrifices and contributions. Hence, I request you to give proper orientation to create zeal for missions among the people, to design a well-planned strategy and the use of different methods to generate more funds for the missions.

The new Archdiocesan Directory will be published on 4th October, 2017. In our earnest efforts to publish this Directory, we have made concerted and consistent efforts to get accurate and reliable data on all aspects and facets of service and the mission being done in the Archdiocese by the Priests, Religious and Lay faithful in their parishes, communities, institutions and

organizations. And the diverse ways in which they are trying to meet the challenges of our time are clearly visible in these pages. Hence, this Directory is an invaluable record of what has been done and is being done by all in the Archdiocese of Bangalore.

“Connecting” enhances our relationship as members of the Church and strengthens our Christian bonding and fellowship. When we make our phone numbers, addresses, email IDs available to others on the directory, we show our goodwill and availability to reach out to them. It is a matter of pride to know that we belong to the one Church and that we work under the one banner of Jesus Christ.

As we all know, preparing and publishing a Directory is an arduous task, and we therefore express our gratitude to Secretariat Staff who compiled data and assisted us in its publication.

We are also grateful to the Brilliant Printers for the professional printing work.

Our earnest desire is that everyone purchases a copy of this Directory and thus become part of this enriching experience!

The Archdiocesan Directory 2017-18 will be available from 04.10.2017 at all our leading Catholic Book Stalls at the rate of Rs. 150/- for a copy. Please don't delay in buying your copy. If there are any mistakes or suggestions, kindly inform the Chancellor.

We would like to draw your attention to the more recent widespread epidemic, a killer addiction which is infecting universally, both laity and the consecrated. It is much overlooked, but an ever-growing menace of pornography. It is actively pervading children, teens, youth, married, religious and priests alike and spreading like a wild fire through mobile phones and internet. The multi-billion-dollar industry of pornography is thriving in this modern world. Pope Francis' call for the Church to be a “field hospital” is a call many in the Church need to hear – and to follow. Yes, it is an affectionate call for those wounded morally in today's technological world. Pastors and Teachers need to alert all those under their pastoral care about the grave dangers of pornography, and by highlighting the dignity and respect to the human body and person.

Reflection: One fine morning, a young boy while going to school learnt the Lesson of Life, at his Bus Stop. A little boy named Dhruv, was all ready to go to school with his bags and lunch box ready for the day. While waiting for his bus, he was startled by a strange voice calling him from his back. He immediately turned around to know who is there! To his surprise, a little child, very lean and thin with soiled clothes was expressing to him in his juvenile voice. Dhruv in an annoying gesture asked “Who are you and what do you want from me?” The little boy with his muted voice asked him for help. But Dhruv wondered about it and said: “How Can I? I am a little boy and don't have anything to contribute. My parents are at home who actually might do something for you or else, the best thing you do is ask your parents to help. My parents never deny me for any kind of help”.

The little boy said, “I am even younger than you and I don't have parents to ask for help. I am all alone in this whole world and live here in the Streets.” Dhruv felt pity for him but still was unable to understand how he can be helpful to the little child. So, he again asked him curiously that how, how can I help you?

The little boy with his smudged tiny fingers pointed towards the lunch box, Dhruv was carrying and asked ‘what do you have in this box?’ Dhruv replied, “it's my lunch box for the school. My mom packs it for me every day with tasty-tasty food items. Today, I have not seen what it contains.” Listening to this, the minor's eyes stuck to the box Dhruv was carrying and his mouth filled with water.

Dhruv slowly tried to realize what the little one wants but yet to get confirmed, he questioned, “Tell me, what you want?”. Staring continuously at the Lunch Box, the little lad whispered, “can you give something of it to eat. I have not eaten anything since last two days. I am dying out of hunger.”

Though Dhruv was too young to understand his situation and to think about it maturely but in his innocence, he instantaneously opened his box and handed over to the little boy. The time it was offered to the junior, a strong noise was heard. Dhruv’s school bus was blowing horn and all those waiting in the stop were rushing to enter the bus. In a hurry, Dhruv left his lunch box with the little boy and boarded into the bus. After he realized that he has left his carry box, he turned around to ask for it. But then he could not utter a single word from his mouth when he saw the happiness and smile that a piece of bread brought on the face of his new friend.

That small moment made Dhruv a mature child as if he has understood everything in life and all the ifs and buts of living. By showing a kind gesture to one who was in need, Dhruv has earned all the pleasure of life. He then appreciated the fact that he is very lucky to have parents who support him all the time, provide him with the basic amenities of life. But, there are people who struggle so much for fulfilling the basic needs of life. From that very moment it became the purpose of his life to help the one in need in some or other ways.

We need to learn to give. Parents and educators should teach their children to be sensitive to the sufferings and plight of the less fortunate children around them and also motivate them to share whatever they could with those who are in need of some basic needs such as food, clothing, books and toys.

Learning to share can be a challenge for young children, especially at first. But sharing is a skill they need to practice and to develop throughout their childhood. We can help our children learn to share by giving them opportunities to practise. Praise and encouragement for good sharing will help too.

If your children don’t share well, you can try practising together at home/school/parish and talking about what you’re doing. Another strategy is to stay nearby when your children play with others, encouraging them so they don’t forget to share.

Here are a few Bible Quotes to inspire us:

- “Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help” (*Isaiah 58:7*).
- “If you have two shirts, give one to the poor. If you have food, share it with those who are hungry” (*Luke 3:11*).
- “When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality” (*Romans 12:13*).
- “Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. And don’t forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God” (*Hebrews 13:15-16*).

May I convey my best wishes and God’s blessings to all of you!

+ Bernard Moras
Archbishop of Bangalore