



Archdiocese of Bangalore

CIRCULAR



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No. 164

JANUARY 2018

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

1. MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD – JANUARY 1ST

Pope Pius XI gave this new feast of the Divine Maternity of Mary to the universal Church in the year 1931, the fifteenth centenary of the Council of Ephesus. It commemorates the dogmatic proclamation by the third Ecumenical Council, held at Ephesus in 431, declaring Our Lady as “Theotokos” – really and truly “God- Bearer,” or Mother of God.

All this is true because the mystery of the divine maternity is a consequence of a deeper mystery—namely, the union in Christ of two complete natures, the human and the divine, in one Divine Person. Nature answers the question “What is it? And person answers the question “Who is it? But who was that man born of Mary? He was and is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. One and the same Person, who is always God in eternity, now has another nature. Mary, to be sure, did not give Him his divine nature, but she did give him his human nature. Just as we derive our body and blood from our parents, so did Jesus from His unique parent, Mary. This privilege of Mary –namely, her dignity as Mother of God—is the foundation of all her other titles, dignities, and graces. It is the first title by which she is recognized in the Litany. Mary is Virgin of Virgins, the unique virgin – mother who miraculously gave birth to Her Son without ever losing the attribute of Virginity, because Her Son is God and the Son of God, Who has a Father in eternity and none in time. May the Mother of God intercede for us!

2. THE NEW YEAR 2018

The Book of Ecclesiastes (3:1-8) declares that to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven – “A time to be born, and a time to be die; a time to plant , and time to pluck up that which is planted”. Time is a precious gift and an opportunity, so is a new year. It is said, “*If you love life, don’t waste time, for time is what life is made up of*”. The New Year is an opportunity to do our best in the promotion of a culture of love, respect, cooperation and achievement, may an opportunity to be our best, let us make the best of it and be our best. Bright New Year to you!

I wish all of you a blessed and grace-filled New Year 2018. May God grant us and all people, peace, happiness and prosperity. I am pleased to share with you and with all your dear ones the complements of the season. May the Babe of Bethlehem grant us peace and happiness. I wish each and every one of you a Happy New Year – 2018.

3. WORLD DAY OF PEACE

January 1 is observed all over the world as the World Day of Peace. In India we observe this on 30th January as the Day of Peace. MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE 51st WORLD DAY OF PEACE is: *Migrants and Refugees: Men and Women in search of Peace (Please see Annexure 1)*.

4. THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD – January 7th

The Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ is one of the oldest Christian Feast, celebrated throughout the centuries. Epiphany comes from a Greek Verb meaning “to reveal” and all of the various events celebrated by the Feast of the Epiphany are revelations of Christ to man. In the Western Church, the Feast of the Epiphany celebrates Jesus’ first appearance to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, while in the Eastern Church, the feast is the commemoration of the baptism of Christ where the Father and the Holy Spirit gave combined testimony to Jesus’ identity as Son of God. Later, in the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus revealed himself as the promised Messiah, and at Cana he revealed his divinity by transforming water

into wine. These multiple revelations are all suggested by the Feast of the Epiphany.

The Magi – foreigners and pagans – recognized and gave Jesus proper respect as the King. That means, there is nothing in human sinful lives that would keep God from bringing them to Jesus. There were three groups of people who reacted to the Epiphany of Christ's birth. The first group headed by King Herod tried to eliminate him, the second group of priests and scribes ignored him and the third group represented by the shepherds and the Magi came to adore him. The challenge is to belong to the third group and continue to bear witness to Him!

5. WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY JANUARY 18-25, 2018

The theme for the 2018 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, "Your Right Hand, O Lord, Glorious in Power," is taken from the Book of Exodus 15:6. The resources for this Year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by the churches of the Caribbean by an ecumenical team of women and men under the leadership of His Grace Kenneth Richards, Catholic Archbishop of Kingston, the Antilles Episcopal Conference, together with Mr. Gerard Granado, General Secretary of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC). Throughout the Biblical narrative of salvation, an unmistakable motif is the unrelenting determination of the Lord to form a people whom He could call His own. The formation of such a people, united in a sacred covenant with God, is integral to the Lord's plan of salvation and to the glorification of His name. The prophets repeatedly remind Israel that their covenant demanded that relationships among its various social groups should be characterized by justice, compassion and mercy. Reconciliation often demands repentance, reparation and healing of memories.

As Jesus prepared to seal the new covenant in His own blood, His earnest prayer to the Father was that those given to Him by the Father would be one, just as He and the Father were one. When Christians discover their unity in Jesus, they participate in Christ's glorification in the presence of the Father, with the same glory that He had lived in the Father's presence before the world existed.

Therefore, God's covenanted people must always strive to be a reconciled community that serves as an effective sign of how to live in justice and peace for all the people of the earth.

Today, the Bible continues to be a source of consolation and liberation, inspiring Christians to address the conditions that currently undermine the Body of Christ. The Church, like Israel, is called to be a sign and an active agent of reconciliation.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere from January 18-25 each year.

Since many years the Church has been keeping up the Week before the Feast of Conversion of St. Paul (18th to 24th January 2018) as the Unity Octave Week, encouraging prayers in our Churches and even in the Protestant places of worship. The Parish Priests, at least in the cities of our Archdiocese are requested to make attempts to have prayers in the main churches – Catholic and Protestants. Those who need prayer Services or themes for celebration, may kindly contact Rev. Fr. Arockiaswamy Sebastian, Archdiocesan Secretary of Ecumenism in our Archdiocese. (Mobile: 9008004255)

BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS AND PRAYERS FOR THE EIGHT DAYS

Day 1: You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt

Leviticus 19:33-34	You shall love the alien as yourself
Psalms 146	The Lord watches over the strangers
Hebrews 13:1-3	Some have entertained angels without knowing it

Day 2: No longer as a slave but a beloved brother

Genesis 1:26-28	God created humankind in God's own image
Psalms 10:1-10	Why, O Lord, do you stand far off?
Philemon	No longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother
Luke 10:25-37	The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Day 3: Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit

Exodus 3:4-10	God frees those who are in human bondage
Psalms 24:1-6	Lord, we are the people who seek your face
1 Corinthians 6:9-20	Therefore glorify God in your body
Matthew 18:1-7	Woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

Day 4: Hope and Healing

Isaiah 9:2-7a	His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace
Psalms 34:1-14	Seek peace, and pursue it
Revelation 7:13-17	God will wipe away every tear from their eyes
John 14:25-27	Peace I leave with you

Day 5: Hark, the cry of my poor people from far and wide in the land!

Deuteronomy 1:19-35	The Lord God goes before you and carried you
Psalms 145:9-20	The Lord upholds all who are falling
James 1:9-11	The rich will disappear like a flower in the field
Luke 18:35-43	Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!

Day 6: Let us look to the interests of others

Isaiah 25:1-9	Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation
Psalms 82	Maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute
Philippians 2:1-4	Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others
Luke 12:13-21	Be on your guard against all kinds of greed

Day 7: Building family in household and church

Exodus 2:1-10	The birth of Moses
Psalms 127	Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain

Hebrews 11:23-24	Moses was hidden by his parents ... because they saw that the child was beautiful
Matthew 2:13-15	Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt

Day 8: He will gather the dispersed... from the four corners of the earth

Isaiah 11:12-13	Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not be hostile towards Ephraim
Psalms 106:1-14, 43-48	Gather us to give thanks to your holy name
Ephesians 2:13-19	He has broken down the dividing wall
John 17:1-12	I have been glorified in them

6. ECUMENISM SUNDAY

21st January 2018, Sunday during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, is the Ecumenism Sunday for the Church in India. While the CCBI Commission for Ecumenism has provided material for the Liturgy to facilitate the active participation of the faithful in the parishes and religious communities, this is with an appeal to all of you not only to keep up the Ecumenism Sunday but also celebrate it in a befitting manner so that the mission of Jesus Christ may be realized in and through our incessant prayers for unity. Jesus has said: “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock and one shepherd” (Jn 10:16).

7. CBCI MEETING

The General Body Meeting of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India is scheduled from 2nd – 9th February 2018 at St. John’s National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru. The chosen theme: “**United in Diversity for a Mission of Mercy and Witness**”. In this biennial meeting, all the Catholic Bishops of India (203 active Bishops and 60 Emeritus Bishops) will participate, take stock of the life, guide the Church in India, and plan activities for the growth of the Catholic Church in India.

Fully conscious that without Jesus we are nothing, and “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labour in vain” (Psalm 127:1), we wish to entrust the General Body Meeting and its preparations into the hands of God.

A Prayer for the successful and fruitful General Body Meeting has been composed. (*Please see Annexure – 2*)

I request all the Parishes, Religious Communities, Lay Organizations, Small Christian Communities, Families and our well-wishers to pray this Prayer regularly from today till the end of the General Body Meeting.

8. INFANT JESUS FEAST

The Infant Jesus Feast will be celebrated with all grandeur at our Archdiocesan Shrine, Viveknagar, on 14th January 2018. I welcome all of you to participate in the Flag Hoisting Ceremony on 4th January, and to participate in all the spiritual activities during the novena days and to obtain the favours, graces and blessings of Miraculous Infant Jesus. I wish all of you a very happy feast of Infant Jesus.

I exhort all the Archdiocesan priests and religious priests to come to the Shrine in large numbers during the Novena Days and help the Shrine Clergy in hearing confessions and offering the Holy Masses. This would help the devotees to celebrate the Infant Jesus Feast more spiritually and meaningfully.

9. THE POPE SAYS, “WELCOME THOSE WHO HAVE NO PLACE AND TURN FEAR INTO CHARITY”

“Amid the gloom of a city that had no room or place for the stranger from afar”, on the footsteps of a couple of refugees” forced to leave their land “Surviving the Herods of today, who, to impose their power and increase their wealth, see no problem in shedding innocent blood”, surrounded by a group of shepherds” considered impure “for the society of the time”; this is how Jesus Christ was born. It was precisely there “that the revolutionary spark of God’s love was kindled”.

In a suggestive Vatican Basilica illuminated by candles, with the musical background of the choir of the Sistine Chapel, Pope Francis celebrates Christmas Eve Mass and dedicates it to the hundreds of

thousands of people whose history is intertwined with that of the young Mary and Joseph forced to abandon their land, home and family.

“So many other footsteps are hidden in the footsteps of Joseph and Mary,” Pope Francis says in an intense homily. “Let us see the footsteps of entire families who today are forced to leave”. **“We see the tracks of entire families forced to set out in our own day. We see the tracks of millions of persons who do not choose to go away but, driven from their land,** leave behind their dear ones. In many cases this departure is filled with hope, hope for the future; yet for many others this departure can only have one name: survival. Surviving the Herods of today, who, to impose their power and increase their wealth, see no problem in shedding innocent blood.”

Mary and Joseph have to leave, “to undertake a journey in order to be registered in the census. This was no comfortable or easy journey for a young couple about to have a child”, Bergoglio comments. “At heart, they were full of hope and expectation because of the child about to be born; yet their steps were weighed down by the uncertainties and dangers that attend those who have to leave their home behind”.

Once in Bethlehem, they must face perhaps the most difficult thing of all. They arrived in Bethlehem and experienced that it was a land that was not expecting them. A land where there was no place for them.” “Amid the darkness of a bustling city which in this case seemed to want to build itself up by turning its back on others...”. “It was precisely there that the revolutionary spark of God’s love was kindled. In Bethlehem, a small chink opens up for those who have lost their land, their country, their dreams; even for those overcome by the asphyxia produced by a life of isolation.” the Pope notes.

On that night of centuries ago, during which “Everything, that night, became a source of hope.”. That night,” the One who had no place to be born is proclaimed to those who had no place at the table or in the streets of the city”. The shepherds are the first to hear this Good News. “By reason of their work, they were men and women forced to live on the edges of society”. “Their state of life, and the places they had to stay, prevented them from observing all the ritual prescriptions of religious purification; as a result, they were considered unclean. Their skin, their clothing, their smell, their way of speaking, their origin, all betrayed them. Everything about them generated mistrust.

They were men and women to be kept at a distance, to be feared. They were considered pagans among the believers, sinners among the just, foreigners among the citizens.”

Yet to them – pagans, sinners and foreigners – the angel says: **“Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord”** It is they, after Mary and Joseph, “the first to embrace the One who comes to give all of us our document of citizenship. The One who in his poverty and humility proclaims and shows that true power and authentic freedom are shown in honouring and assisting the weak and the frail”, recalls Pope Francis.

And in this night, he invites **“to share, celebrate and proclaim,” the joy; “The joy with which God, in his infinite mercy, has embraced us *pagans, sinners and foreigners*, and demands that we do the same.”**

“The faith we proclaim tonight makes us see God present in all those situations where we think he is absent.” The Pope says, “He is present in the unwelcomed visitor, often unrecognizable, who walks through our cities and our neighbourhoods, who travels on our buses and knocks on our doors.”

“This same faith impels us to make space for a new social imagination, and not to be afraid of experiencing new forms of relationship, in which none have to feel that there is no room for them on this earth”. Christmas – Bergoglio adds – **“is a time for turning the power of fear into the power of charity, into power for a new imagination of charity”**.

“The charity that “does not grow accustomed to injustice, as if it were something natural, but that has the courage, amid tensions and conflicts, to make itself a “house of bread”, a land of hospitality.”

“Do not be afraid! “Open wide the doors for Christ”, that is what Saint John Paul II told us Francis said. “In the Child of Bethlehem, God comes to meet us and make us active sharers in the life around us. He offers himself to us, so that we can take him into our arms, lift him and embrace him. So that in him we will not be afraid to take into our arms, raise up and embrace the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, the imprisoned”.

“Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ”. In this Child, God invites us to be messengers of hope. He invites us to become sentinels for all those bowed down by the despair born of encountering so many closed doors. In this child, God makes us agents of his hospitality.”

The prayer of the Bishop of Rome is thus that the crying of this newborn child may **“shake us from our indifference and open our eyes to those who are suffering”**. **May your tenderness awaken our sensitivity and recognize our call to see you in all those who arrive in our cities, in our histories, in our lives.”**

“May your revolutionary tenderness persuade us to feel our call to be agents of the hope and tenderness of our people.”

10. REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

Republic Day in India is celebrated every year with great honour on 26th of January to honour the Constitution of India as it came into force on the same day in the year 1950. It had replaced the Government of India Act, 1935 into the governing document of the India. At this day, a national holiday is declared by the Indian Government. The new Indian constitution was sketched and approved by the Indian Constituent Assembly and decided to celebrate it on 26th of January every year as India became a republic country.

Let us on this day pray very specially for our national leaders and fellow citizens that all of us may become more responsible in building the Nation by promoting unity and solidarity.

11. APPOINTMENTS

Name	To	Designation	Date of Installation
Rev. Fr. Joseph Antony Daniel, cpps	Garudacharyapalya Mass Centre dedicated to St. John Mary Vianney (Hitherto a Sub-station of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church Akashnagar)	Priest-in-charge	26.12.2017

12. DIACONAL MINISTRY

Prior to their priestly ordination, the Church expects deacons to gain some pastoral experience to prepare well for their priestly ministry. This year the five deacons of our Archdiocese are posted to different parishes in the Archdiocese to gain such pastoral experience. These deacons are expected to familiarize themselves with the languages needed for their pastoral ministry, to know the spiritual and temporal needs of the people, to prepare well for the proclamation of the Word of God, to assist at and to administer the sacraments with proper preparation and devotion, and also to learn more about the parish pastoral administration. The Parish Priest and the elders in the parish are requested to guide the Deacon posted in their parish that he may acquire pastoral zeal and experience.

The Deacons are posted to the following Parishes:

Sl. No.	Name	Diaconate Ministry	Date
1	Deacon Immanuel A.	Holy Family Church Rayapuram	01.12.2017
2	Deacon Hadlee Vimal S.	St. Patrick's Church Brigade Road	01.12.2017
3	Deacon Clement Deep	St. Ignatius Church Begur	26.12.2017
4	Deacon Vivian Juan Mariaraj S.	St. Pius X Church Kammannahalli	26.12.2017
5	Deacon Maxmillan S.	Ss. Peter & Paul Church Rayapuram	26.12.2017

13. INFORMATION

i. The 70th Anniversary of the Dedication of St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral

St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral will be celebrating its 70th Dedication Day on 24th January 2018. It is the Mother Church of our Archdiocese. Let us thank God with Mother Mary and St. Francis Xavier, Patron of

our Archdiocese, for the gifts of this Cathedral and the opportunity that he has given us to praise and worship him in this holy place.

ii. The 44th Anniversary of the Dedication of St. Mary's Minor Basilica

St. Mary's Basilica will be celebrating the 44th anniversary of its Dedication on 26th January 2018. This Minor Basilica was also declared as the Archdiocesan Shrine on 08.09.2007.

I exhort all of you to visit and pray for the powerful intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, especially on Saturdays and the Marian Feasts. May Mother Mary our dearest model and guide intercede with God for all of us for our spiritual and temporal well-being now and always.

iii. Hearty Felicitations

Archbishop Emeritus Most Rev. Ignatius Paul Pinto will be celebrating 29th anniversary of his Episcopal Ordination on 31st January 2018. Congratulations and best wishes to him on behalf all of you. Kindly pray for him. *Ad multos annos.*

iv. Day of Consecrated Life

Day of Consecrated life will be celebrated on 2nd February, 2018. The Archdiocesan CRI and the CRI Zonal Units will be organizing Sanyasa Sangamam, a special programme on this occasion.

v. Annual Statistics

The Annual General Statistics is being compiled by the office. We hereby request all parish priests and heads of institutions to send the carefully and faithfully updated statistics by January 20, 2018 without fail. Please cooperate.

vi. Priests' Council (Senate) Meeting

The meeting of the Priests' Council will be held on Wednesday, 18th February 2018 at Archbishop's House at 10.00 a.m. All the members are requested to attend the meeting.

vii. Priests' Recollection and Deans' Meeting

The Archdiocesan Priests and the Religious Priests working in the

Archdiocesan parishes and institutions will have a day of Recollection on Wednesday, 20th February 2018 at Paalana Bhavana from 9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. It is also an occasion for us to pray for each other, greet each other and experience a true fellowship.

On the same day, the Deans' Meeting will also be held at 2 p.m. at the Conference Hall, Archbishop's House.

I kindly request all of you to participate in this recollection.

viii. Archdiocesan Commissions' Meeting

The Meeting of the Archdiocesan Commissions will be held on Tuesday, 1st March 2018 at Paalanaa Bhavana from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. The Secretaries and the Joint Secretaries of the Commissions are requested to participate in this meeting and to present the scheduled programme for next three months.

ix. Liturgical ORDO / Archdiocesan Directory 2017-2018

The Liturgical Ordo, The Archdiocesan New Directory – 2017-18 are available for sale at Rs. 75/- and Rs. 150/- respectively at Archdiocesan Finance Office.

x. 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 for the year ending, March 2018 requested to send them at the earliest without delay. This is applicable to all the parishes (including the parishes of Religious) in the Archdiocese.

14. WORD OF THANKS

I appreciate your prayers, best wishes and greetings on the occasion of my 50th anniversary of Sacerdotal Ordination. I cherish your love, thoughtfulness and concern for me. I thank you for your wishes and participation in the mass on my golden Priesthood day at the Cathedral. Several of you have participated in the celebration

at kuppepadavu Church. I remain grateful to you and promise my prayers for you and I thank you for praying for me

I am very happy to note the abundance of Christmas and New Year Greetings were sent by post and email. I thank each and every one of you personally for your wishes and thoughtfulness in expressing your love and affection.

May God and Mother Mary continue to guide you in this New Year 2018.

With every good wish and God's blessings,

Yours sincerely,



✠ **Bernard Moras**
Archbishop of Bangalore

ANNEXURE 1

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE 51st WORLD DAY OF PEACE – 2018

Migrants and refugees: men and women in search of peace

1. *Heartfelt good wishes for peace*

Peace to all people and to all nations on earth! Peace, which the angels proclaimed to the shepherds on Christmas night, is a profound aspiration for everyone, for each individual and all peoples, and especially for those who most keenly suffer its absence. Among these whom I constantly keep in my thoughts and prayers, I would once again mention the over 250 million migrants worldwide, of whom 22.5 million are refugees. Pope Benedict XVI, my beloved predecessor, spoke of them as “men and women, children, young and elderly people, who are searching for somewhere to live in peace.” In order to find that peace, they are willing to risk their lives on a journey that is often long and perilous, to endure hardships and suffering, and to encounter fences and walls built to keep them far from their goal.

In a spirit of compassion, let us embrace all those fleeing from war and hunger, or forced by discrimination, persecution, poverty and environmental degradation to leave their homelands.

We know that it is not enough to open our hearts to the suffering of others. Much more remains to be done before our brothers and sisters can once again live peacefully in a safe home. Welcoming others requires concrete commitment, a network of assistance and goodwill, vigilant and sympathetic attention, the responsible management of new and complex situations that at times compound numerous existing problems, to say nothing of resources, which are always limited. By practising the virtue of prudence, government leaders should take practical measures to welcome, promote, protect, integrate and, “within the limits allowed by a correct understanding of the common good, to permit [them] to become part of a new society.” Leaders have a clear responsibility towards their own communities, whose legitimate rights and harmonious development they must ensure, lest they become like the rash builder who miscalculated and failed to complete the tower he had begun to construct.

2. *Why so many refugees and migrants?*

As he looked to the Great Jubilee marking the passage of two thousand years since the proclamation of peace by the angels in Bethlehem, Saint John Paul II pointed to the increased numbers of displaced persons as one of the consequences of the “endless and horrifying sequence of wars, conflicts, genocides and ethnic cleansings” that had characterized the twentieth century. To this date, the new century has registered no real breakthrough: armed conflicts and other forms of organized violence continue to trigger the movement of peoples within national borders and beyond.

Yet people migrate for other reasons as well, principally because they “desire a better life, and not infrequently try to leave behind the ‘hopelessness’ of an unpromising future.” They set out to join their families or to seek professional or educational opportunities, for those who cannot enjoy these rights do not live in peace. Furthermore, as I noted in the Encyclical *Laudato Si’*, there has been “a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation”.

Most people migrate through regular channels. Some, however, take different routes, mainly out of desperation, when their own countries offer neither safety nor opportunity, and every legal pathway appears impractical, blocked or too slow.

Many destination countries have seen the spread of rhetoric decrying the risks posed to national security or the high cost of welcoming new arrivals, and thus demeaning the human dignity due to all as sons and daughters of God. Those who, for what may be political reasons, foment fear of migrants instead of building peace are sowing violence, racial discrimination and xenophobia, which are matters of great concern for all those concerned for the safety of every human being.

All indicators available to the international community suggest that global migration will continue for the future. Some consider this a threat. For my part, I ask you to view it with confidence as an opportunity to build peace.

3. *With a contemplative gaze*

The wisdom of faith fosters a contemplative gaze that recognizes that all of us “belong to one family, migrants and the local populations that welcome them, and all have the same right to enjoy the goods of the earth, whose destination is universal, as the social doctrine of the Church teaches. It is here that solidarity and sharing are founded.” These words evoke the biblical image of the new Jerusalem. The book of the prophet Isaiah (*Chapter 60*) and that of Revelation (chapter 21) describe the city with its gates always open to people of every nation, who marvel at it and fill it with riches. Peace is the sovereign that guides it and justice the principle that governs coexistence within it.

We must also turn this contemplative gaze to the cities where we live, “a gaze of faith which sees God dwelling in their houses, in their streets and squares, [...] fostering solidarity, fraternity, and the desire for goodness, truth and justice” – in other words, fulfilling the promise of peace.

When we turn that gaze to migrants and refugees, we discover that they do not arrive empty-handed. They bring their courage, skills, energy and aspirations, as well as the treasures of their own cultures; and in this way, they enrich the lives of the nations that receive them. We also come to see the creativity, tenacity and spirit of sacrifice of the countless individuals, families and communities around the world who open their doors and hearts to migrants and refugees, even where resources are scarce.

A contemplative gaze should also guide the discernment of those responsible for the public good, and encourage them to pursue policies of welcome, “within the limits allowed by a correct understanding of the common good” – bearing in mind, that is, the needs of all members of the human family and the welfare of each.

Those who see things in this way will be able to recognize the seeds of peace that are already sprouting and nurture their growth. Our cities, often divided and polarized by conflicts regarding the presence of migrants and refugees, will thus turn into workshops of peace.

4. Four mileposts for action

Offering asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and victims of human trafficking an opportunity to find the peace they seek requires a strategy combining four actions: welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating.

“Welcoming” calls for expanding legal pathways for entry and no longer pushing migrants and displaced people towards countries where they face persecution and violence. It also demands balancing our concerns about national security with concern for fundamental human rights. Scripture reminds us: “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.”

“Protecting” has to do with our duty to recognize and defend the inviolable dignity of those who flee real dangers in search of asylum and security, and to prevent their being exploited. I think in particular of women and children who find themselves in situations that expose them to risks and abuses that can even amount to enslavement. God does not discriminate: “The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the orphan and the widow.”

“Promoting” entails supporting the integral human development of migrants and refugees. Among many possible means of doing so, I would stress the importance of ensuring access to all levels of education for children and young people. This will enable them not only to cultivate and realize their potential, but also better equip them to encounter others and to foster a spirit of dialogue rather than rejection or confrontation. The Bible teaches that God “loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.”

“Integrating”, lastly, means allowing refugees and migrants to participate fully in the life of the society that welcomes them, as part of a process of mutual enrichment and fruitful cooperation in service of the integral human development of the local community. Saint Paul expresses it in these words: “You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people.”

5. *A proposal for two international compacts*

It is my heartfelt hope this spirit will guide the process that in the course of 2018 will lead the United Nations to draft and approve two Global Compacts, one for safe, orderly and regular migration and the other for refugees. As shared agreements at a global level, these compacts will provide a framework for policy proposals and practical measures. For this reason, they need to be inspired by compassion, foresight and courage, so as to take advantage of every opportunity to advance the peace-building process. Only in this way can the realism required of international politics avoid surrendering to cynicism and to the globalization of indifference.

Dialogue and coordination are a necessity and a specific duty for the international community. Beyond national borders, higher numbers of refugees may be welcomed – or better welcomed – also by less wealthy countries, if international cooperation guarantees them the necessary funding.

The Migrants and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development has published a set of twenty action points that provide concrete leads for implementing these four verbs in public policy and in the attitudes and activities of Christian communities. The aim of this and other contributions is to express the interest of the Catholic Church in the process leading to the adoption of the two U.N. Global Compacts. This interest is the sign of a more general pastoral concern that goes back to the very origins of the Church and has continued in her many works up to the present time.

6. *For our common home*

Let us draw inspiration from the words of Saint John Paul II: “If the ‘dream’ of a peaceful world is shared by all, if the refugees’ and migrants’ contribution is properly evaluated, then humanity can become more and more a universal family and our earth a true ‘common home’.”[18] Throughout history, many have believed in this “dream”, and their achievements are a testament to the fact that it is no mere utopia.

Among these, we remember Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini in this year that marks the hundredth anniversary of her death. On this thirteenth day of November, many ecclesial communities celebrate her memory. This remarkable woman, who devoted her life to the service of migrants and became their patron saint, taught us to welcome, protect, promote and integrate our brothers and sisters. Through her intercession, may the Lord enable all of us to experience that “a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

From the Vatican, 13 November 2017

Memorial of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini,
Patroness of Migrants

FRANCIS

ANNEXURE 2

PRAYER FOR THE SUCCESS OF GENERAL BODY MEETING OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF INDIA FEBRUARY 2018

God our loving Father, you have gifted your beloved Son Jesus Christ to all humans for their salvation. We believe that you are with us always, even to the end of the age through you Son Jesus. We ask you to continue to inspire the hearts and minds of your faithful through your Holy Spirit to reveal your love, mercy and peace to all people everywhere and thus to renew your creation according to your Holy Will.

May our Bishops, the shepherds of your flock in India who will be gathering for their General Body Meeting in February 2018 in Bangalore experience once again experience the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their discussions and deliberations on the chosen theme “United in Diversity for a Mission of Mercy and Witness”. Assist and guide the Church in India, dear Lord through the prompting of your Holy Spirit that she may ever remain faithful to her prophetic calling to preach, witness and promote the values of Your Kingdom in our country in the midst of manifold challenges.

Mary, the Mother of the Church, we entrust the upcoming General Body Meeting of our Bishops in India to your powerful maternal protection and guidance. May this gathering be a spring time of abundant blessings of your beloved Son Jesus for a more committed, vibrant, evangelizing and participatory Church in India and for the people of our beloved country. Walk with us our dear Mother in the pilgrim journey of the Church in India towards deeper faith and courageous witness to the Gospel of your Son Jesus our Lord. Amen.

✠ Basелиos Cardinal Cleemis Catholicos

Major Archbishop of Trivandrum &

President, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI)



CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED IN THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2017



1) CLERGY SECURITY FUND			
1	15.12.17	Fr William Patrick	Rajajinagar 10,000.00
2) HUNGER AND DISEASE CAMPAIGN Dated 09.04.2017 (To be sent to Caritas, Delhi)			
1	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli 3,775.00
3) HOLY LANDS COLLECTIONS Dated 14.04.2017 (Towards Holy Land maintenance)			
1	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli 4,150.00
4) EASTER SUNDAY COLLECTIONS Dated 16.04.2017 (For the Maintenance of Major and Minor Seminarians of our Archdiocese)			
1	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli 6,915.00
5) VOCATION SUNDAY COLLECTIONS Dated 07.05.2017 (For the Maintenance of Major and Minor Seminarians of our Archdiocese)			
1	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli 2,300.00
6) SOCIETY OF ST PETER, APOSTLE Dated 27.06.2017 (Towards the up keep of Seminarians in the whole world)			
1	04.12.17	St Joseph's Church	Channapatna 3,595.00
2	04.12.17	Church of Our Lady of Compassion	Mulabagilu 120.00
3	15.12.17	Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church	Bellandur Gate 2,800.00
4	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram 4,200.00
5	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli 2,325.00
7) CATHOLIC INFORMATION BUREAU (C.I.B) Dated 09.07.2017 (For the spread of Good News in the Archdiocese of Bangalore)			
1	04.12.17	Church of Our Lady of Compassion	Mulabagilu 130.00
2	15.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Kadesanahalli 240.00
3	15.12.17	Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church	Bellandur Gate 32,000.00
4	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram 5,000.00
5	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli 2,825.00

8) AFRICAN MISSION Dated 20.08.2017
(Towards Mission work in Africa)

1	04.12.17	Church of Our Lady of Compassion	Mulabagilu	125.00
2	04.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Uttrahalli	4,126.00
3	15.12.17	Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church	Bellandur Gate	3,200.00
4	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram	3,700.00
5	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli	2,120.00

9) PETER'S PENCE COLLECTIONS DATED 17.09.2017
(Towards Holy Father's Charity)

1	04.12.17	Church of Our Lady of Compassion	Mulabagilu	120.00
2	04.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Uttrahalli	3,200.00
3	15.12.17	Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church	Bellandur Gate	2,500.00
4	23.12.17	St Rita's Church	Kunigal	503.00
5	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram	6,750.00
6	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli	2,850.00

10) MISSION SUNDAY COLLECTIONS DATED 22.10.217
(Towards World Mission Works)

1	04.12.17	St Joseph's Church	Channapatna	1,16,540.00
2	04.12.17	Church of Our Lady of Compassion	Mulabagilu	6,050.00
3	05.12.17	Mount Carmel P.U College	Palace Road	50,000.00
4	05.12.17	Bhakathi Bhavan [2nd installment]	Da Costa Layout	14,100.00
5	05.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Munnekolala	45,000.00
6	05.12.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Jalahalli	1,68,190.00
7	05.12.17	Holy Eucharist Church	Mangammanapalya	75,000.00
8	06.12.17	Holy Rosary Church	Harobale	12,000.00
9	06.12.17	St Sebastian's Church	Coromandel	50,000.00
10	07.12.17	St Jude's Church	R.T Nagar	1,44,000.00
11	07.12.17	St Francis of Assisi Church	Kengeri	2,10,000.00
12	07.12.17	Assumption Church	Rajajinagar	2,01,059.00
13	07.12.17	Immaculate Heart of Mary Church	Kalen Agrahara	3,86,000.00

14	12.12.17	Our Lady of Divine Providence	Kannuru	33,120.00
15	12.12.17	Infant Jesus Church	Vivek Nagar	12,36,865.00
16	13.12.17	St Theresa's Church	J.C Road	20,100.00
17	13.12.17	Sacred Heart Church	Bangarpet	5,000.00
18	14.12.17	St Jude's Church	Karahalli	12,813.00
19	15.12.17	St Francis Xavier Church	Chikka- kammanahalli	54,279.00
20	15.12.17	Ascension Church	Da Costa Layout	7,00,000.00
21	15.12.17	Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church	Bellandur Gate	1,32,000.00
22	15.12.17	St Rita's Church	Kanakapura	40,000.00
23	15.12.17	St Mary's Church	Shivaji Nagar	8,01,281.00
24	21.12.17	Nirmal Joythi Convent Salesian Sisters	Baneurgatta	5,000.00
25	21.12.17	Christha Prabhalaya Epiphany Church	Jayanagar	10,11,691.00
26	23.12.17	St Rita's Church	Kunigal	5,110.00
27	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram	1,17,645.00
28	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli	60,016.00

11) HOLY SEE MAINTENANCE DATED 19.11.2017

(Towards Up Keep of the Holy See)

1	04.12.17	St Joseph's Church	Channapatna	3,000.00
3	04.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Uttrahalli	4,200.00
4	05.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Kammanahalli	78,130.00
5	05.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Munnekolala	12,800.00
6	05.12.17	Our Lady of Fathima Church	Jalahalli	48,680.00
7	07.12.17	St Jude's Church	R.T Nagar	8,200.00
8	07.12.17	Assumption Church	Rajajinagar	25,020.00
9	07.12.17	Christha Prabhalya Epiphany Church	Jayanagar	46,100.00
10	07.12.17	Our Lady of Vailankanni Church	Yelanka	10,515.00
12	13.12.17	St Theresa's Church	J.C Road	4,560.00
13	14.12.17	St Theresa's Church	Bhoopsandra	15,575.00
14	14.12.17	St Jude's Church	Karahalli	1,172.00
15	15.12.17	St Francis Xavier Church	Chikkakammanahalli	7,008.00

16	15.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Kadesanahalli	240.00
17	15.12.17	St Theresa's Church	Robert Sonpet	5,260.00
18	15.12.17	Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church	Bellandur Gate	3,000.00
19	15.12.17	St Rita's Church	Kanakapura	1,000.00
20	15.12.17	St Mary's Church	Shivaji Nagar	64,025.00
21	23.12.17	St Rita's Church	Kunigal	501.00
22	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram	8,700.00
23	27.12.17	St Francis Xavier's Church	Somanahalli	2,340.00

**12) CHRISTMAS COLLECTION DATED 25.12.2017
(Towards Maintenance of Retired Priests)**

1	27.12.17	Don Bosco Church	Lingarajapuram	30,275.00
2	28.12.17	St James Church	Mariyannapalya	8,500.00
3	28.12.17	St Anthony's Church	Kadesanahalli	685.00