



Diocesan News Letter Madurai

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No. 611

தவக்காலம்



செபம்

புலன் மறுத்தல்

ஏழைகளுக்குதவி

Happy Birthday to His Grace



Birthday Greetings to His Grace. The clergy and the faithful of the ARCHDIOCESE OF MADURAI convey cordial greetings of BIRTHDAY to His Grace. May the good Lord grant good health and strength to shepherd the Archdiocese.

Pope's General Prayer Intention for March 2014: That all cultures may respect the rights and dignity of women.

Pope's Mission Intention for March 2014: That young people may accept the Lord's invitation to consecrate their lives to proclaiming the Gospel.

Please Note

- Monthly Recollection:** The monthly Recollection for this month will be held on 11th inst., at Archbishop's House at 10:30 a.m. Kindly come without fail.
- Birthday Greetings to His Grace:** DNL and all its readers wish His Grace the birthday greetings on 22nd March. May the good Lord through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Veilankanni, shower the blessings of good health on His Grace.
- Congratulations to Rev. Fr. John Martin, the Silver Jubilarian:** Rev. Fr. M. John Martin celebrated together with the large number of Presbyterium and the faithful his **Sacerdotal Silver Jubilee Mass** on 22nd February 2014 at St. Joseph's Church Gnanaolivupuram in the presence of Vicar General, Fr. Joseph Selvaraj, Fr. Anandam preached.

The Archdiocese of Madurai thanks the Jubilarian Fr. John Martin for all his 25 years of priestly ministry to the Lord and to his people in the Archdiocese of Madurai. The Presbyterium wishes **ad multos annos** and thanks Fr. John Martin for his joyous and meaningful ministry.
- Lenten Practices:** During the Lenten season observance of penance is not an option. It is prescribed not by ecclesiastical law, nor by natural law, but by **divine law** (Mk.1, 15). Hence it is obligatory.



The precepts regarding penance as follows:

C. 1249: "All Christ's faithful are obliged *by divine law*, each in his or her own way, to do penance [...] On these days the faithful are in a special manner to devote themselves to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity, and to deny themselves, by fulfilling their obligations more faithfully and especially by observing the fast and abstinence [...] prescribed."

C. 1250: "The days and times of penance for the universal Church are each Friday or the whole year and the season of Lent."

C. 1251: "Abstinence from meat, or from some other food as determined by the Episcopal Conference, is to be observed on all Fridays, unless a solemnity should fall on a Friday. Abstinence and fasting are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday."

C. 1252: "The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their fourteenth year. The law of fasting binds those who have attained their majority, until the beginning of their sixtieth year. Pastors of soul and parents are to ensure that even those who by reason of their age are not bound by law of fasting and abstinence, are taught the true meaning of penance."

C. 1253: "The [...] observed. In place of abstinence or fasting it (the Episcopal Conference) can substitute, in whole or part, other forms of penance, especially works of charity and exercises of piety."

- Ash Wednesday:** Ash Wednesday falls on 5th of March. All the Reverend fathers are asked to make use of this liturgical season to nourish the faith of the people with Lenten preaching, special retreat, Way of the cross and other spiritual exercises suited to the season of Lent.

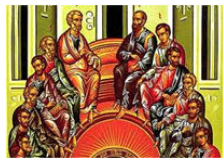


6. **Congratulations** to Fr. B. Arulanandam, who has brought out a Lenten liturgical book that consists of *Daily reflections* including Sundays and Holy week Holy week *Liturgical commentaries and a Way of the cross*. The DNL also appreciates the Rev. Fathers, who had contributed their prayerful reflections to this book. The name of the book is “**Padhivugalil Paadham Pathikka**”. It will be very useful for the individual faithful, the members of Anbians and other Associations, the religious and priests for their daily meditations, preaching and to conduct the Holy Week liturgy meaningfully. The books are available in Nobili book depot and Sathangai. The price of it is **Rs. 80/-**.



7. **Chrism Mass**: The Chrism Mass will be celebrated on 14th of April, Monday by the Archbishop together with the concelebration of the presbyterium in a Solemn Mass celebrated as usual.

8. **Congratulations to the Chairman of CBCI. Cardinal Baselios Cleemis Catholicos**, head of the Syro Malankara Catholic Church, was elected President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India (CBCI) held on 12th February at Palai, Kerala. Cardinal Cleemis replaces Cardinal Oswald Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, as the head of India’s 18 million Catholics who belong to ritual Churches of Latin, Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara. The CBCI, council of prelates from all the three rites, is the third largest episcopal conference in the world. Syro-Malabar Archbishop Andrews Thazhath of Trichur was elected the first vice president of the conference while Latin Archbishop Philip Neri of Goa and Daman were elected the second vice president.



The new CBCI office bearers were elected on the sixth day of the ongoing plenary assembly at Palai, Kerala. The weeklong conference that began on February 5 addressed mainly how a

renewed Church could help renew society. Archbishop Albert D’Souza of Agra Latin Archbishop was reelected the secretary general. The 54-year-old new CBCI president is one of the youngest cardinals of the Catholic Church. He is also one of the youngest prelates to head the Indian Church.



9. **Extraordinary Consistory** was held on 20th of February 2014 in which all the newly appointed Cardinals too participated. Thus began the preparation for the *Extraordinary Synod of Bishops* on Family and Evangelization.

Pope Francis appointed during the Consistory three Presidents-Delegates for the upcoming Synod of Bishops that will discuss the “Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of the New Evangelization”. The presidents are: Cardinal André Armand Vingt-Trois, Archbishop of Paris (France); Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Archbishop of Manila (Philippines); and Cardinal Raymundo Damasceno Assis, Archbishop of Aparecida (Brazil). *The Extraordinary Synod of Bishops will take place from October 5-19 at the Vatican.*

10. **Canonization of Pope John Paul II & John XXIII**: Pope Benedict XVI will attend the Canonization ceremony of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II on April 27th 2013.



11. **a) Commission for Evangelisation** : On 14-16 March there will be a Growth Retreat for the members who participated in the charismatic convention held on 11-13th October 2013 in Pastoral Centre. I thank the parish priests once again who encouraged them. At the same time, I ask the concerned parish priests to contact the persons who participated in the charismatic convention and send them once again to the growth - level retreat which is very important. Participants will contribute at least Rs.100/- towards this retreat.

- b) During the Lenten season Evangelisation commission is sending 75 persons to the villages in Arupukottai, Batlagundu, Hanumanthanpatti, Melur, Megamalai, Perumalmalai, Shenbaganur, Sundaranachiapuram and W. Pudupatti parishes. I think the parish priests who have taken lot of pains to arrange the places for village ministry in their parish substations with these interested laity. The exact date for village ministry will be communicated to them separately.
- c) The Fasting prayer on 5th April will be exclusively offered for our country that too, with a special emphasis for the upcoming Parliament Election. All are most welcome to participate.

- Fr. Arul, Secretary, Commission for Evangelisation

12. On 2nd February in Silukkuvarpatty parish people who are the leaders from 17 Anbiam, were trained by the commission for Anbiam. During the sermon in the mass as well as in the inaugural talk Fr. Arul explained from the diocesan synod and the church documents the need and the importance of Anbiam. Sr. Ambika shared from her experience how Anbiam helped to deepen her faith Mr.M.A. Raj, Annanagar explained the 7 steps to be followed in conducting the Anbiam. Our appreciation to Fr. Titus who took initiative to gather the leaders and conduct the Anbiam training.

- Secretary, commission for Anbiam

திருமண முன்தயாரிப்பு நடவடிக்கை நாள்கள்

மார்ச்	1,2.03.2014	விருதுநகர்	சனி, ஞாயிறு
	7,8.03.2014	நொபிலி மறைப்பணி நிலையம்	வெள்ளி, சனி
	15,16.03.2014	கொடைக்கானல்	சனி, ஞாயிறு
	21,22.03.2014	நொபிலி மறைப்பணி நிலையம்	வெள்ளி, சனி

POPE'S LENTEN MESSAGE – 2014 AN INVITATION TO EVANGELICAL POVERTY IN OUR TIME

“He became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” is the title of the Holy Father’s Message for Lent 2014. The title is drawn from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians in which the apostle encourages them to show their generosity by helping their brothers in Jerusalem, who were experiencing difficulties. In the document, dated 26 December, feast of St. Stephen protomartyr, the Pope explores the meaning of St. Paul’s invitation to evangelical poverty in our times. The full text of the message is published below:”

Dear Brothers and Sisters, As Lent draws near, I would like to offer some helpful thoughts on our path of conversion as individuals and as a community. These insights are inspired by the words of Saint Paul: ‘For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich’. The Apostle was writing to the Christians of Corinth to encourage them to be generous in helping the faithful in Jerusalem who were in need. What do these words of Saint Paul mean for us Christians today? What does this invitation to poverty, a life of evangelical poverty, mean to us today?

Christ’s grace First of all, it shows us how God works. He does not reveal himself cloaked in worldly power and wealth but rather in weakness and poverty: ‘though He was rich, yet for your sake he became poor ...’. Christ, the eternal Son of God, one with the Father in power and glory, chose to be poor; he came amongst us and drew near to each of us; he set aside his glory and emptied himself so that he could be like us in all things. God’s becoming man is a great mystery! But the reason for all this is his love, a love which is grace, generosity, a desire to draw near, a love which does not hesitate to offer itself in sacrifice for the beloved. Charity, love, is sharing with the one we love in all things. Love makes us similar, it creates equality, it breaks down walls and eliminates distances. God did this with us. Indeed, Jesus ‘worked with human hands, thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, he truly

became one of us, like us in all things except sin'. By making himself poor, Jesus did not seek poverty for its own sake but, as Saint Paul says 'that by his poverty you might become rich'.

This is no mere play on words or a catch phrase. Rather, it sums up God's logic, the logic of love, the logic of the incarnation and the cross. God did not let our salvation drop down from heaven, like someone who gives alms from their abundance out of a sense of altruism and piety. Christ's love is different! When Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan and was baptised by John the Baptist, he did so not because he was in need of repentance, or conversion; he did it to be among people who need forgiveness, among us sinners, and to take upon himself the burden of our sins. In this way he chose to comfort us, to save us, to free us from our misery. It is striking that the Apostle states that we were set free, not by Christ's riches but by his poverty. Yet Saint Paul is well aware of the 'the unsearchable riches of Christ', that he is 'heir of all things'.

So what is this poverty by which Christ frees us and enriches us? It is his way of loving us, his way of being our neighbour, just as the Good Samaritan was neighbour to the man left half dead by the side of the road. What gives us true freedom, true salvation and true happiness is the compassion, tenderness and solidarity of his love. Christ's poverty which enriches us is his taking flesh and bearing our weaknesses and sins as an expression of God's infinite mercy to us.

Christ's poverty is the greatest treasure of all: Jesus' wealth is that of his boundless confidence in God the Father, his constant trust, his desire always and only to do the Father's will and give glory to him. Jesus is rich in the same way as a child who feels loved and who loves its parents, without doubting their love and tenderness for an instant. Jesus' wealth lies in his being the Son; his unique relationship with the Father is the sovereign prerogative of this Messiah who is poor. When Jesus asks us to take up his 'yoke which is easy', he asks us to be enriched by his 'poverty which is rich' and his 'richness which is poor', to share his filial and fraternal Spirit, to become sons and daughters in the Son, brothers and sisters in the first-born brother. It has been said

that the only real regret lies in not being a saint (L. Bloy); we could also say that there is only one real kind of poverty: not living as children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ.

Our witness We might think that this 'way' of poverty was Jesus' way, whereas we who come after him can save the world with the right kind of human resources. This is not the case. In every time and place God continues to save mankind and the world through the poverty of Christ, who makes himself poor in the sacraments, in his word and in his Church, which is a people of the poor. God's wealth passes not through our wealth, but invariably and exclusively through our personal and communal poverty, enlivened by the Spirit of Christ. In imitation of our Master, we Christians are called to confront the poverty of our brothers and sisters, to touch it, to make it our own and to take practical steps to alleviate it. Destitution is not the same as poverty: destitution is poverty without faith, without support, without hope. There are three types of destitution: material, moral and spiritual.

Material destitution is what is normally called poverty, and affects those living in conditions opposed to human dignity: those who lack basic rights and needs such as food, water, hygiene, work and the opportunity to develop and grow culturally. In response to this destitution, the Church offers her help, her diakonia, in meeting these needs and binding these wounds which disfigure the face of humanity. In the poor and outcast we see Christ's face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ. Our efforts are also directed to ending violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for these are so often the cause of destitution.

When power, luxury and money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth. Our consciences thus need to be converted to justice, equality, simplicity and sharing. No less a concern is moral destitution, which consists in slavery to vice and sin. How much pain is caused in families because one of their members – often a young person – is in thrall to alcohol, drugs, gambling or pornography!

How many people no longer see meaning in life or prospects for the future, how many have lost hope! And how many are plunged into this destitution by unjust social conditions, by unemployment, which takes away their dignity as breadwinners, and by lack of equal access to education and health care. In such cases, moral destitution can be considered impending suicide. This type of destitution, which also causes financial ruin, is invariably linked to the spiritual destitution which we experience when we turn away from God and reject his love. If we think we don't need God who reaches out to us through Christ, because we believe we can make do on our own, we are headed for a fall.

God alone can truly save and free us. The Gospel is the real antidote to spiritual destitution: wherever we go, we are called as Christians to proclaim the liberating news that forgiveness for sins committed is possible, that God is greater than our sinfulness, that he freely loves us at all times and that we were made for communion and eternal life. The Lord asks us to be joyous heralds of this message of mercy and hope! It is thrilling to experience the joy of spreading this good news, sharing the treasure entrusted to us, consoling broken hearts and offering hope to our brothers and sisters experiencing darkness.

It means following and imitating Jesus, who sought out the poor and sinners as a shepherd lovingly seeks his lost sheep. In union with Jesus, we can courageously open up new paths of evangelisation and human promotion. Dear brothers and sisters, may this Lenten season find the whole Church ready to bear witness to all those who live in material, moral and spiritual destitution the Gospel message of the merciful love of God our Father, who is ready to embrace everyone in Christ. We can do this to the extent that we imitate Christ who became poor and enriched us by his poverty.

Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt. May the Holy Spirit, through whom we are 'as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet

possessing everything', sustain us in our resolutions and increase our concern and responsibility for human destitution, so that we can become merciful and act with mercy. In expressing this hope, I likewise pray that each individual member of the faithful and every Church community will undertake a fruitful Lenten journey. I ask all of you to pray for me. May the Lord bless you and Our Lady keep you safe".

- *Courtesy: Vatican. va*



SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

“GO TO CONFESSION COURAGEOUSLY”

-POPE FRANCIS

Through the Sacraments of Christian initiation — Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist -, man receives new life in Christ. Now we have this life “in earthen vessels” (2 Corinthians 4:7), we are still subject to temptation, to suffering, to death and, because of sin, we can even lose this new life. This is why the Lord Jesus wished His Church to continue His work of salvation also to her members, in particular with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and that of the Anointing of the Sick, which can be united under the name of “Sacraments of Healing.” The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a Sacrament of healing. When I go to confess myself, it is to heal myself, to heal my soul, to heal my heart and anything that isn't going well. The biblical icon that expresses best their profound bond, is the episode of the forgiveness and healing of the paralytic, where the Lord Jesus reveals himself at the same time as doctor of souls and of bodies (cf. Mark 2:1-12; Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26).

1. The Sacrament of Penance and of Reconciliation flows directly from the Paschal Mystery. In fact, on the very evening of Easter the Lord appeared to the disciples, locked in the Cenacle and, after greeting them saying “Peace be with you!,” he breathed on them and said: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are

forgiven” (John 20:21-23). This passage reveals to us the most profound dynamic that is contained in this Sacrament. First of all, the fact that the forgiveness of our sins is not something that we can give ourselves. I cannot say: I forgive my sins. Forgiveness is asked, it is asked of another and in Confession we ask for forgiveness from Jesus. Forgiveness is not the fruit of our efforts but it is a present, a gift of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with the purification of mercy and grace which flows incessantly from the wide open heart of Christ crucified and risen. In the second place, it reminds us that only if we allow ourselves to be reconciled in the Lord Jesus with the Father and with our brothers can we really be in peace. And we all have heard this in the heart when we go to confess ourselves, with a weight in the soul, a bit of sadness; and when we receive the forgiveness of Jesus we are in peace, with that peace of the soul that is so beautiful that only Jesus can give, only Him.

2. In time, the celebration of this Sacrament passed from a public to a personal and reserved form of Confession. This, however, must not make us lose the ecclesial matrix, which constitutes the vital context. In fact, the Christian community is the place in which the Spirit is rendered present, who renews hearts in the love of God and makes all brothers one in Christ Jesus. See then how it is not enough to ask forgiveness from the Lord in our own mind and heart, but it is necessary to confess one’s sins humbly and confidently to the minister of the Church. In the celebration of this Sacrament, the priest not only represents God but the whole community, which recognizes itself in the fragility of each of its members, which is moved on hearing one’s repentance, which reconciles with one, which encourages and accompanies one in the path of conversion and of human and Christian maturation. One may say: I only confess with God. Yes, you can say to God “forgive me” and say your sins, but our sins are also against the brothers, against the Church. For this it is necessary to ask forgiveness from the Church, from the brothers, in the person of the priest. “But Father, I am ashamed....” Even shame is good, it is healthy to have a

bit of shame; to be ashamed is healthy. When a person doesn’t have shame, in my country we say that he is a “sin vergüenza” (without shame). But even shame does us well, because it makes us more humble, and the priest receives with love and tenderness this confession and in the name of God, forgives.

Even from a human point of view, to vent, it is good to talk with a brother and tell the priest these things, that weigh heavily in my heart. And one feels that they vent in front of God, with the Church, with the brother. Do not be afraid of Confession! When one is in line to confess, they feel these things, even shame, but then when Confession is ended, they feel free, great, beautiful, forgiveness, white (clean), happy. And this is the beauty of Confession! I would like to ask you - but don’t answer out loud, each one responds in their heart -: when was the last time you confessed, that you have confessed? Each one think about it...Has it been two days, two weeks, two years, twenty years, forty years? Everyone takes count, but everyone ask themselves: when was the last time that I confessed? And if a long time has passed, don’t miss another day, go, the priest will be good. Jesus is there, and Jesus is much better than the priests, Jesus receives you, He receives you with so much love. Be courageous and go to Confession!

Dear friends, to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation means to be wrapped in a warm embrace: it is the embrace of the infinite mercy of the Father. Let us remember that beautiful, beautiful parable of the son who left his home with the inheritance money; he squandered all the money, and then, when he didn’t have anything, he decided to return home, not as a son, but as a servant. So many faults he had in his heart and so much shame. The surprise was when he began to speak, to ask forgiveness, the father did not let him speak, he embraced him, he kissed him and made a feast. But I tell you: every time we confess, God embraces us, God makes a feast! Let us go forward on this path. May God bless you!

- *Courtesy: vatican.va*

Holly Childhood

Batlagundu	14,000.00
Anjal Nagar	6,920.00
Periyakulam	4,000.00
Munjikkal	2,000.00
Kariapatti	500.00
Matha Kovilpatti	300.00

Collection as on 25/02/2014 27,720.00

Seminarians Fund

Mr. Irudayaraj & Arockia Stella Family (Thiruthangal)	25,00.00
Sundaranatchiapuram	5,000.00
Mrs. Jaquline Xavier, Ayravathanallur	1,500.00
Mrs. Mary Grace, Silukkuvarpatty	200.00

Collection as on 25/02/2014 31,700.00

Adoration Sunday

March		April	
02	Silukkuvarpatti	06	Meenatchiapuram
09	Rajapalayam	13	Kalladipatti
16	Kalladipatti	20	Thirunagar
23	Thirunagar	27	Michaelpalayam
30	Mangalamkombu		

Greetings on Happy Birthdays

Most. Rev. Peter Fernando	on	22.03.1939
Fr. R.P. George Stephen	on	02.03.1967
Fr. I. Arpudasamy	on	02.03.1980
Fr. A. Antonysamy	on	04.03.1979
Fr. S. James Paulraj	on	06.03.1960
Fr. J. Paul Ignatius	on	09.03.1975
Fr. G. Gabriel	on	13.03.1973
Fr. J. Jeyaraj	on	20.03.1958
Fr. Jerome Sebastine	on	20.03.1983
Fr. Joseph Amalan	on	20.03.1977
Fr. M. John Diraviam	on	24.03.1968
Fr. Soosai P. Visuvasam	on	26.03.1959
Fr. J. Benedict Barnabas	on	27.03.1963
Fr. Y. Jeyaseelan	on	28.03.1975
Fr. Vincent Raja	on	28.03.1983
Fr. Varan Vardhan	on	31.03.1979



Necrology

Archbishop Arockiasamy	on	22.03.2007
Fr. Saldana	on	03.03.1973
Fr. Antony Nair	on	03.03.1982
Fr. Savariraj	on	15.03.1977
Fr. Alexis S.A.	on	16.03.1998
Fr. Lawrence Xavier P.	on	19.03.2006

