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சர்வக்ஷ ஆண்டி நிகழ்ச்சி 20.02.2016

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Diocesan News Letter

Archdiocese of Madurai

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March 2016

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No. 635

Rabbouni!



*I am ascending
to my Father and your Father,
to my God and your God.*

சாதுவாங்காணல்பட்டி
ஆலய அரங்கப்ப ஷீடா
03.02.2016



சாதுவா தொலைக்காட்சி
இரண்டாசாண்டு நிகழ்வு ஷீடா 06,07.02.2016



Greetings on Birthday



Most. Rev. Peter Fernando (22)



Msgr. J. Jeyaraj (20)



Fr. R.P. George Stephen (02)



Fr. J. Arputhasamy (02)



Fr. A. Antonysamy (04)



Fr. S. James Paulraj (06)



Fr. J. Paul Ignatius (09)



Fr. G. Gabriel (13)



Fr. R. Sebastine Jerome (20)



Fr. Joseph Amalan (20)

Fr. Britto Jerald Dhinakaran (22)

Fr. M. John Diraviam (24)

Fr. Soosai P. Visuvasam (26)

Fr. J. Benedict Barnabas (27)

Fr. V. Jeyascelan (28)

Fr. Vincent Raja (28)

Fr. Varan Vardhan (31)



The Voice of the Pastor

In the Gospel of John Chapter 15 verse 5 Jesus says, 'I am the vine and you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.' What does the word "remain or abide" mean for us? There is no life and no fruit in life apart from Christ. Just as a branch cut off from the vine is lifeless, so also we, living on earth without attachment to Christ are lifeless and meaningless.

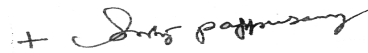


If we are attached to Christ then as the attached branch we will also receive nourishment from Christ. As persons attached to Christ, we remain, live and walk in the very presence of Christ, without any separation from him. As genuine believers we walk in constant fellowship and prayer with the Lord. We always remain and share his life with us and our life with him. As the vine nourishes the branch by sending its life-giving food, so also it is with Christ. Christ shares his life-giving nourishment with us by answering our prayers and meeting our needs in our daily life.

We are the branches united with the vine i.e. Christ. We glorify God by bearing much fruit. We bear the fruit of righteousness as St. Paul says to the Philippians 'Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God' (Phil 1:11). Secondly, as united with Christ in a vital way like the branch to the vine, we attain godly character by receiving the fruit of the Spirit. Hence, St. Paul says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Gal 5:22-23).

If we are genuine believers bearing much fruit by our union with Christ then we will be witnesses to Christ by making people turn their mind to God, to thirst for God to save them and making the people to ask God for help. Thus our union with Christ becomes still more strengthened and we manifest our discipleship to Christ by our life.

May the season of Easter help you get connected more closely to Christ!



Your loving Archbishop

Pope's General Prayer Intention for March 2016: That those involved in scientific research may serve the well-being of the whole human person.

Pope's Mission Intention for March 2016: That those Christians who, on account of their faith, are discriminated against or are being persecuted, may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel, thanks to the incessant prayer of the Church.

பேராயரின் இம்மாத ஜெபக்கருத்து

- * அரசு பொதுத் தேர்வு எழுதும் பனிரெண்டாம் வகுப்பு மற்றும் பத்தாம் வகுப்பு மாணவ, மாணவியர் தேர்வில் வெற்றிபெற . . .
- * பெண்ணுரிமை காக்கப்படவும், மதிக்கப்படவும். . .
- * பெண்களுக்கு எதிரான வன்முறைகள் களையப்படவும் . . .
- * பாஸ்கா மறைபொருளை வாழ்வாக்கவும். . .
- * இராணுவம் மற்றும் அரசுபணிபுரிவோர் தங்கள் கடமைகளை பொறுப்புடன் நிறைவேற்ற. . .

HAPPY FEAST

The Archbishop & The Archdiocesan Priests wish the following religious congregations, serving in our Archdiocese, a blessed Feast Day.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Lyons (SJL)	- 19 th March
St. Joseph of Apparition Sisters (SJA)	- 19 th March
St. Joseph of Tarbes (SJT)	- 19 th March
Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny	- 19 th March
Suore Ancelle Dell'amore Miseri Cordioso	- 19 th March
Suore Missionarie dell' Incarnazione (SMI)	- 25 th March
Society of Catholic Medical Mission Sisters (MMS)	- 25 th March

Archbishop's Engagements

March - 2016

- 01-10 CBCI Meeting @ Bangalore
11 Women's Day Celebration & Mass @ NPC
12 தமிழக சட்டப்பேரவை தேர்தல்
கலந்தாய்வரங்கம் @ NPC
13 Pastoral Visit to Ugarthe Nagar, Kodaikanal
14 M Senate Meeting @ Archbishop's House
E மாதா தொலைக்காட்சி பட்டிமன்றம், பாத்திமாகல்லூரி
15 M Secretaries' Meeting
21 Monthly Recollection & Chrism Mass @
St. Mary's Cathedral, Madurai
22 Chrism Mass @ St. Joseph's Cathedral, Dindigul
24 Maundy Thursday @ St. Mary's Cathedral, Madurai
25 Good Friday @ St. Mary's Cathedral, Madurai
26 Easter Vigil @ St. Mary's Cathedral, Madurai
30 Priestly Ordination @ Thirumangalam

Please Note

1. There will be a **Senate Meeting** on Monday, 14th March, 2016, at 10.30 a.m. in the Archbishop's House. All the members are requested to attend the meeting.
2. **The Monthly Recollection** will be held on Monday, 21st March, in the Archbishop's House, Madurai. There will be Chrism Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral, presided over by our Archbishop at 6.00 pm. The city parish priests are kindly asked to persuade the faithful

to participate in good number, in this **Chrism Mass** Liturgy, and they are requested to drop the evening mass in all the parishes.

3. Address of His Holiness to "**Jubilee of Consecrated Life**" is given in this issue.
4. Message of the Holy Father to the **Youth of the World** on the occasion of the 31st World Youth Day, 2016 is also given in this edition of DNL.
5. Parish priests and the heads of institutions are kindly requested to take special effort to increase the customary collections of **campaign against Hunger and Disease** during Lent. The faithful should be properly motivated for a generous co-operation in this campaign which is a practical and concrete expression of practising penance. Let us not give up the long standing custom of distributing small earthen vessels (undials) to families to encourage this collection with a spirit of sacrifice.
6. The collection taken on **Good Friday** on 25th March, 2016, to be sent for the maintenance of the sacred places in Holy Land. Kindly procure a good collection. The superiors and heads of religious communities and institutions are also requested to procure and submit the collection to the procurator.
7. Rev. Fr. Anandam, the co-ordinator of our Archdiocesan Commissions and Rev. Fr. Arulanandam, the Secretary of our communication commission thank the secretaries of all our commissions, parish priest of Gnanaolivupuram, other parish priests, religious congregations, donors, volunteers, the Headmasters of Britto Hr. Sec. & Matric Schools, Heads and children of the institutions which gave wonderful programmes, whole heartedly for making the **Second Anniversary of Madha TV**, a grand success.
8. **Our heartfelt condolence** to Rev. Fr. John Diraviam and his relatives, upon the demise of his elder brother Mr. Joseph Amal Raj, aged 56, who expired on 7th February, 2016. For the Funeral Mass at Lourdes Shrine, K. Pudur, our Archbishop, number of priests, religious and people from different parishes were present. Let us pray for the repose of his soul.

Closing Grand Finale of the Year of Consecrated Life

The closing celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life & the Archbishop's Consecration Anniversary Day was celebrated at Nobili Pastoral Center on 20th February 2016. With the traditional dance by St. Mary of Leuca, EBG students, the thanksgiving mass was offered by the Archbishop, Most Rev. Antony Pappusamy with the concelebration of 100 priests. Two representatives from each community had been invited together with all the parish priests of the Archdiocese. Around 400 priests and religious (from 71 congregations; 140 communities) participated in the celebration. Immediately after the mass the programme started. The Episcopal Vicar for the Religious, Fr.M. John Diraviam welcomed the gathering in reference to Psalm 92; he welcomed the Archbishop, the CIC Mother General, Rev. Sr. Antony Xavier; the Major Superiors who have a Seat in Madurai, namely, the Provincial of St. Anne's, of Holy Cross of Chavanod, of the Capuchins, of the Servites, of CIC, of the Pondi Blue, of the Coimbatore Presentation. The Vicar General, Msgr. J. Jeyaraj spoke on 'the contribution of the Religious to the Archdiocese'. The Mother General of CIC, Rev. Sr. Antony Xavier spoke on "The various Ministries, the Religious do in the Archdiocese". Next, Rev. Fr. Anandam showered praises for the personality of the Archbishop and for his shepherding Ministries. Finally the Archbishop acknowledged and appreciated the contribution of the Religious to the Archdiocese by their Lives and Ministries. The cultural events were organized by the core group members Rev. Sr. Lowrencia SAC, Rev. Sr. Daicy CIC, Rev. Sr. Motcham CSJB, Rev. Sr. Mercy SJL and Rev. Bro. Delphine SHJ. Rev. Fr. P. Arockiasamy SJ, another member thanked all the participants and all who made the event a blessed one which rejuvenated all the religious in their commitment to CHRIST and to his people. The whole celebration was planned and executed by the PRIESTS - RELIGIOUS RELATIONSHIP COMMITTEE headed by the Episcopal Vicar. - Rev. Dr. M. John Diraviam.

சதங்கை கலைத் தொடர்பு மையம்

அன்புள்ள அருட்பணியாளர்களே, அருட்சகோதர சகோதரிகளே, நம் மாதா தொலைக்காட்சியில் 27.03.2016, உயிர்ப்புப் பெருநாளின் போது ஒளிபரப்பாக வேண்டிய "சிறப்பு பட்டிமன்றம்" மதுரை

பாத்திமாக்கல்லூரி, யூபிலி அரங்கத்தில் 14.03.2016, திங்கள், மாலை 5 மணிக்கு ஒளிப்பதிவு செய்யப்படத் திட்டமிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. இது "உன்னைப் போல் பிறரை நேசி - இன்றைக்கு சிரமமே! சாத்தியமே!" என்னும் தலைப்பில், பட்டிமன்றம் மற்றும் திரைப்பட்புகழ் திரு. ராஜா அவர்களை நடுவராகக் கொண்டு நடைபெற உள்ளது. இச்சிறப்பு நிகழ்வில் தாங்களும் பங்கெடுத்து இறைமக்களையும், மற்றவர்களையும் பங்குகொள்ளச் செய்ய ஊக்கப்படுத்துமாறு வேண்டுகிறேன். அரங்கத்தின் கொள்ளளவினைக் கருத்தில் கொண்டு சுமார் 1500 நபர்களைப் பங்கெடுக்கச் செய்தால்தான் ஒளிப்பதிவு சிறப்பாக அமையும். எனவே அதனை உறுதிசெய்யும் நோக்குடன் ரூ.50 டிக்கெட் என திட்டமிடப்பட்டுள்ளது. குலுக்கல் முறையில் தெரிவு செய்யப்படும் 5 நபர்களுக்கு ஆரோக்கிய அன்னையின் திருவுருவம் பொரிக்கப்பட்ட தங்க நாணயம் பரிசாக வழங்கப்படும். இதற்கு தங்களின் மேலான ஒத்துழைப்பைத் தரவேண்டுகிறேன்.

அருட்தந்தை அருளானந்தம், செயலர், சதங்கை

அகில உலக பெண்கள் தினம் - மார்ச் 8, 2016

அன்புடையீர், அகில உலக பெண்கள் தினவிழாவினை முன்னிட்டு தங்கள் பங்குகளுக்கு அனுப்பியுள்ள துண்டறிக்கை, வழிபாட்டு குறிப்புகள், சுவரொட்டி ஆகியவற்றை பயன்படுத்தி, தங்கள் பங்கில் பெண்கள் தின விழாவினை ஊக்கத்தோடும், உற்சாகத்தோடும் சிறப்பாகக் கொண்டாட வேண்டுகிறேன். மேலும் வருகின்ற 11.03.2016 அன்று நொபிலி அருள்பணி மையத்தில் காலை 10 மணிமுதல் மாலை 4 மணிவரை நம் பேராயர் அவர்கள் தலைமையில் நடைபெறும் பெண்கள் தினவிழா நிகழ்ச்சியில் தங்கள் பங்கிலுள்ள பெண்கள் மற்றும் அருட்சகோதரிகள் பங்கேற்று விழாவை சிறப்பிக்க வேண்டுமென்று அன்புடன் கேட்டுக் கொள்கிறேன்.

அருட்சகோதரி சகாயராணி, செயலர், பெண்கள் பணிக்குழு,

குடும்ப நல்வாழ்வு பணிக்குழு நடத்தும் திருமண முன்தயாரிப்பு நடைபெறும் நாட்கள்

4,5.03.2016	நொபிலி அருள்பணி மையம்	வெள்ளி, சனி
12,13.03.2016	திருவில்லிப்புத்தூர்	சனி, ஞாயிறு
18,19.03.2016	நொபிலி அருள்பணி மையம்	வெள்ளி, சனி

அருட்தந்தை. ஜோசப், செயலர்

**EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY
JUBILEE FOR CONSECRATED LIFE
ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
Paul VI Audience Hall - Monday, 1st February 2016**

Extemporaneous address by the Holy Father:

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I prepared a speech for this occasion on topics regarding consecrated life and on the three pillars; there are others, but three [words] are important to consecrated life. The first is prophecy, another is proximity and the third is hope. Prophecy, proximity hope. I have given the text to the Cardinal Prefect, because reading it is a little dull, and I prefer to speak to you from my heart. Okay?

Men and women religious, that is men and women consecrated to the Lord's service, who in the Church pursue this path of arduous poverty, of a chaste love that leads to a spiritual fatherhood and motherhood for all the Church, of obedience.... There is always something lacking in our obedience, because perfect obedience is that of the Son of God, who emptied himself, who became man out of obedience, unto death on the Cross. There are men and women among you who live out an intense form of obedience, an obedience — not military, no, not that; that is discipline, another thing — an obedience of giving of the heart. This is prophecy. “Don't you wish to do something, something else?...” — “Yes, but according to the rules I must do this, this and this. And according to regulations, this, this and this. And if I don't see something clearly, I speak with the superior and, after the dialogue, I obey”. This is prophecy, as opposed to the seed of anarchy, which the devil sows. “What do you do?” — “I do whatever I please”. The anarchy of will is the daughter of the demon, it is not the daughter of God. The Son of God was not an anarchist, he did not call his [disciples] to mount a force of resistance against his enemies; he said to Pilate: “Were I a king of this world I would have called my soldiers to protect me”. Instead, he was obedient to the Father. He said only: “Father, please, no, not this chalice.... But Thy will be done”. When out of obedience you accept something which perhaps often you do not like... [he makes a swallowing gesture]... that obedience must be swallowed, and it is done. Thus, prophecy. Prophecy is telling people that there is a path to happiness and grandeur, a path that fills you with joy, which is precisely the path to Jesus. It is the path

to be close to Jesus. Prophecy is a gift, it is a charism and it must be asked of the Holy Spirit: that I may know that word, in the right moment; that I may do that thing in the right moment; that my entire life may be a prophecy. Men and women prophets. This is very important. “Let's do what everyone else does...”. No. Prophecy is saying that there is something truer, more beautiful, greater, of greater good to which we are all called.

Then another word is proximity. Men and women consecrated, but not so as to distance themselves from people and have all the comforts, no, [but rather] to draw close and understand the life of Christians and of non-Christians — the suffering, the problems, the many things that are understood only if a consecrated man and woman is close: in proximity. “But Father, I am a cloistered nun, what should I do?”. Think about St Thérèse of the Child Jesus, patron saint of the missions, who with her ardent heart was close, and the letters she received from missionaries made her closer to the people. Proximity. Becoming consecrated does not mean climbing one, two, three steps in society. It is true, so often we hear parents say: “You know, Father, my daughter is a nun, my son is a brother!”. And they say it with pride. And it's true! There is satisfaction for parents to have consecrated children, this is true. But for consecrated people it is not a life status that makes me look at others like this [with detachment]. Consecrated life should lead me to closeness with people; physical, spiritual proximity, to know the people. “Ah yes Father, in my community the superior gave us permission to go out, to go into the poor neighbourhoods with the people...” — “And in your community, are there elderly sisters?” — “Yes, yes... there is a nurse, on the third floor” — “And how often during the day do you go to visit your sisters, the elderly ones, who could be your mother or your grandmother?” — “But you know, Father, I am very busy with work and I can't go...”. Closeness! Who is the first neighbour of a consecrated man or woman? The brother or sister of the community. This is your first neighbour. A kind, good, loving closeness, too. I know that in your communities there is never gossip, never, ever.... A way of distancing oneself [is] to gossip. Listen carefully: no gossip, the terrorism of gossip. Because those who gossip are terrorists. They are terrorists in their own community, because like a bomb they drop a word against this one or that one, and then they go calmly. Those who do this destroy, like a bomb, and they distance themselves. This, the Apostle Santiago

said, was perhaps the most difficult virtue, the most difficult human and spiritual virtue to have, that of bridling the tongue. If it comes to you to say something against a brother or sister, to drop a bomb of gossip, bite your tongue! Hard! No terrorism in the community! “But Father, what if there is something, a defect, something to correct?”. You say it to the person: you have an attitude that bothers me, or that isn’t good. If this isn’t appropriate — because sometimes it isn’t prudent — you say it to the person who can remedy, who can resolve the problem and to no one else. Understood? There is no use for gossip. “But in the chapter house?”. There, yes! In public, what you feel you have to say; because there is temptation not to say things in the chapter house, and then outside: “Did you see the prioress? Did you see the abbess? Did you see the mother superior?...”. Why didn’t you say it there in the chapter house?... Is this clear? These are virtues of proximity. The Saints, the consecrated Saints had this. St Thérèse of the Child Jesus never, ever complained about work, about the bother it was to bring that sister to the dining room every evening: from the choir to the dining room. Never! Because that poor nun was very old, almost paralyzed, she had difficulty walking, she was in pain — I understand her too! — she was even a bit neurotic.... Never, ever did she go to another sister to say: “How she bothers me!”. What did she do? She helped her sit down, brought her a napkin, broke the bread and did so with a smile. This is called proximity. Closeness! If you drop the bomb of gossip in your community, this is not closeness: this is waging war! This is distancing yourself, this is creating distance, creating anarchy in the community. In this Year of Mercy, if each one of you could manage to never be a gossiping terrorist, it would be a success for the Church, a success of great holiness! Take courage! Proximity

And now hope. I admit that it pains me a great deal when I see the drop in vocations, when I receive bishops and ask them: “How many seminarians do you have?” — “Four, five...”. When, in your religious communities — men’s and women’s — you have a novice or two... and the community ages, it ages.... When there are monasteries, great monasteries, and Cardinal Amigo Vallejo [turning to him] can tell us how many there are in Spain, that are carried on by four or five elderly nuns, until the end.... This leads me to the temptation to lose hope: “Lord, what is happening? Why is the womb of consecrated life becoming so barren?”. Several congregations are experimenting with “artificial insemination”. What are they doing? They accept.... “Yes, come, come,

come...”. And then there are internal problems.... No. One must accept with seriousness! One must carefully discern whether this is a true vocation and help it to grow. I believe that in order to fight the temptation to lose hope, which gives us this barrenness, we have to pray more. And pray tirelessly. It does me a lot of good to read the passage of Scripture in which Hannah, Samuel’s mother, prayed and asked for a son. She prayed and moved her lips, and prayed.... And the elderly priest, who was a little blind and who didn’t see well, thought she was a drunken woman. But that woman’s heart [she said to God]: “I want a son!”. I ask you: does your heart, facing this drop in vocations, pray with this intensity? “Our congregation needs sons, our congregation needs daughters...”. The Lord, who has been so generous, will not fail in his promise. But we have to ask him for it. We have to knock at the door of his heart. Because there is a danger — this is terrible, but I have to say it — when a religious congregation sees that it has no children and grandchildren and begins to be smaller and smaller, it grows attached to money. And you know that money is the devil’s dung. When they cannot receive the grace of having vocations and children, they think that money will save its life; and they think of old age: that this not be lacking, that that is not lacking.... Thus, there is no hope! Hope is only in the Lord! Money will never give it to you. On the contrary: it will bring you down! Understood?

I wanted to tell you this, instead of reading the pages that the Cardinal Prefect will give you later....

I thank you so much for what you do, consecrated people, each with your own charism. And I want to point out the consecrated women, the sisters. What would the Church be without nuns? I have said this before: when you go to hospitals, colleges, parishes, neighbourhoods, missions, men and women who have given their lives.... In my last journey to Africa — I believe I recounted this in an audience — I met an 83-year-old Italian nun. She told me: “I’ve been here since I was — I don’t remember if she told me 23 or 26. I am a hospital nurse”. Let’s think: from age 26 to 83! “And I wrote to my family in Italy that I would never return”. When you go to a cemetery and see that there are so many religious missionaries and so many nuns dead at age 40 because they caught diseases, the fevers of those countries, their lives burnt out.... You say: these are saints. These are seeds! We must tell the Lord to

come down to some of these cemeteries and see what our ancestors have done and give us more vocations, because we need them!

I thank you very much for this visit. I thank the Cardinal Prefect, the Monsignor Secretary, the Undersecretaries, for what they have done in this Year of Consecrated Life. But please, do not forget prophecy, obedience, proximity, the most important neighbour, the closest neighbours are the brothers and sisters of the community, and then hope. May the Lord bring forth more sons and daughters in your congregations. And pray for me. Thank you!

Written address consigned by the Holy Father:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am glad to meet with you at the end of this Year dedicated to consecrated life.

One day, Jesus, in his infinite mercy, turned to each of us and asked us, personally: “Come, follow me”! (Mk 10:21).

If we are here it is because we responded “yes” to him. At times it is treated as a bond filled with enthusiasm and joy, at times more difficult, perhaps uncertain. However, we have followed him with generosity, allowing ourselves to be led on paths we would have never even imagined. We have shared intimate moments with him: “Come away by yourselves [...] and rest a while” (Mk 6:31); moments of service and mission: “You give them something to eat” (Lk 9:13); even his cross: “If any man would come after me, let him [...] take up his cross” (Lk 9:23). He has introduced us into his very relationship with the Father, he has given us his spirit, he has expanded our hearts by the measure of his own, teaching us to love the poor and the sinners. We have followed him together, learning from him service, acceptance, forgiveness, fraternal love. Our consecrated life has meaning because dwelling with him and carrying him along the streets of the world, conforms us to him, makes us be the Church, a gift for humanity.

The Year that we are concluding has helped to make the beauty and holiness of consecrated life shine more in the Church, strengthening in consecrated people gratitude for the call and the joy of responding. All consecrated men and women have had the opportunity to have a clearer perception of their own identity, and thus project themselves in to the future with renewed apostolic zeal in order to write new pages of good, in the wake of the Founders’ charism. We are grateful to the Lord for

what he has given us in order to live in this Year so rich of initiatives. I thank the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which prepared and brought about the great events here in Rome and in the world.

The Year has ended, but our commitment to be faithful to the call received and to grow in love, in giving, and in creativity continues. For this reason I offer you three words.

The first is *prophecy*. It is a characteristic of yours. What prophecy does the Church and the world expect from you? You are called, first of all, to proclaim, with your life even before than with words, the reality of God: to speak God. If at times he is rejected or marginalized or ignored, we must ask ourselves whether perhaps we have not been transparent enough to his Face, showing our own instead. The Face of God is that of a Father “merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love” (Ps 103[102]:8). In order to make him known it is important to have a personal relationship with him; and for this it takes the capacity to adore him, to cultivate friendship with him day after day, through a heart to heart conversation in prayer, especially in silent adoration.

The second word I consign to you is *proximity*. God, through Jesus, made himself close to every man and every woman. He shared the joy of the spouses at Cana in Galilee and the anguish of the widow of Nain; he entered the house of Jairus, touched by death, and in the house of Bethany perfumed with nard; he took sickness and suffering upon himself, until giving his life as a ransom for all. Following Christ means going there where he has gone; taking upon oneself, as a Good Samaritan, the wounded whom we meet on the street; going in search of the lost sheep. Being, like Jesus, close to the people, sharing with them their joys and their sorrows; showing, with our love, the paternal face of God and the maternal caress of the Church. May no one ever feel distant, detached, closed and therefore barren. Each of you is called to serve our brothers and sisters, following your own charism: some by praying, some through catechesis, some through teaching, some by caring for the sick or the poor, some by announcing the Gospel, some by performing various works of mercy. The important thing is not living for oneself, as Jesus did not live for himself, but for the Father and for us.

Thus we come to the third word: *hope*. In bearing witness to God and his merciful love, with the grace of Christ you can instill hope in this

humanity of ours marked by various reasons for anguish and fear and at times tempted to be discouraged. You can make felt the renewing power of the Beatitudes, of honesty, of compassion; the value of goodness, of the simple, essential, meaningful life. You can also nourish hope in the Church. I think, for example, of ecumenical dialogue. The meeting a year ago among consecrated people of various Christian confessions was a beautiful innovation, which deserves to be carried on. The charismatic and prophetic witness of the life of consecrated people, in its various forms, can help to recognize all of us more united and foster full communion.

Dear brothers and sisters, in your daily apostolate, do not let yourselves be conditioned by age or by number. What counts most is the capacity to repeat the initial “yes” to the call of Jesus who continues to make himself heard, in an ever new way, in every season of life. His call and our response keep our hope alive. *Prophecy, proximity, hope.* By living this way, you will have joy in your heart, the distinctive sign of the followers of Jesus and more so of consecrated people. Your life will be more attractive to so many men and women, by the glory of God and through the beauty of the Bride of Christ, the Church.

Dear brothers and sisters, I thank the Lord for what you are and do in the Church and in the world. I bless you and I entrust you to Our Mother. Please, do not forget to pray for me.

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE THIRTY-FIRST WORLD YOUTH DAY 2016**
“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7)
Dear Young People,

We have come to the last stretch of our pilgrimage to Krakow, the place where we will celebrate the 31st World Youth Day next year in the month of July. We are being guided on this long and challenging path by Jesus’ words taken from the Sermon on the Mount. We began this journey in 2014 by meditating together on the first Beatitude: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3). The theme for 2015 was: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Mt 5:8). During the year ahead, let us allow ourselves to be inspired by the words: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Mt 5:7).

1. The Jubilee of Mercy

With this theme, the Krakow 2016 WYD forms part of the Holy Year of Mercy and so becomes a Youth Jubilee at world level. It is not the first time that an international youth gathering has coincided with a Jubilee Year. Indeed, it was during the Holy Year of the Redemption (1983/1984) that Saint John Paul II first called on young people from around the world to come together on Palm Sunday. Then, during the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, over two million young people from around 165 countries gathered in Rome for the 15th World Youth Day. I am sure that the Youth Jubilee in Krakow will be, as on those two previous occasions, one of the high points of this Holy Year!

Perhaps some of you are asking: what is this Jubilee Year that is celebrated in the Church? The scriptural text of *Leviticus 5* can help us to understand the meaning of a “jubilee” for the people of Israel. Every fifty years they heard the sounding of a trumpet (*jobel*) calling them (*jobil*) to celebrate a holy year as a time of reconciliation (*jobal*) for everyone. During that time they had to renew their good relations with God, with their neighbours and with creation, all in a spirit of gratuitousness. This fostered, among other things, debt forgiveness, special help for those who had fallen into poverty, an improvement in interpersonal relations and the freeing of slaves.

Jesus Christ came to proclaim and bring about the Lord’s everlasting time of grace. He brought good news to the poor, freedom to prisoners, sight to the blind and freedom to the oppressed (cf. *Lk 4:18-19*). In Jesus, and particularly in his Paschal Mystery, the deeper meaning of the jubilee is fully realized. When the Church proclaims a jubilee in the name of Christ, we are all invited to experience a wonderful time of grace. The Church must offer abundant signs of God’s presence and closeness, and reawaken in people’s hearts the ability to look to the essentials. In particular, this Holy Year of Mercy is “a time for the Church to rediscover the meaning of the mission entrusted to her by the Lord on the day of Easter: to be a sign and an instrument of the Father’s mercy” (*Homily at First Vespers of Divine Mercy Sunday, 11 April 2015*).

2. Merciful like the Father

The motto for this Extraordinary Jubilee is “Merciful like the Father” (cf. *Misericordiae Vultus*, 13). This fits in with the theme of the next WYD, so let us try to better understand the meaning of divine mercy. The Old Testament uses various terms when it speaks about mercy. The most meaningful of these are *hesed* and *rahamim*. The first, when

applied to God, expresses God's unfailing fidelity to the Covenant with his people whom he loves and forgives for ever. The second, *rahamim*, which literally means "entrails", can be translated as "heartfelt mercy". This particularly brings to mind the maternal womb and helps us understand that God's love for his people is like that of a mother for her child. That is how it is presented by the prophet Isaiah: "Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you" (*Is* 49:15). Love of this kind involves making space for others within ourselves and being able to sympathize, suffer and rejoice with our neighbours.

The biblical concept of mercy also includes the tangible presence of love that is faithful, freely given and able to forgive. In the following passage from Hosea, we have a beautiful example of God's love, which the prophet compares to that of a father for his child: "When Israel was a child I loved him; out of Egypt I called my son. The more I called them, the farther they went from me... Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, who took them in my arms; I drew them with human cords, with bands of love; I fostered them like one who raises an infant to his cheeks... I stooped to feed my child" (*Hos* 11:1-4). Despite the child's wrong attitude that deserves punishment, a father's love is faithful. He always forgives his repentant children. We see here how forgiveness is always included in mercy. It is "not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality with which he reveals his love as of that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child... It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy" (*MisericordiaeVultus*, 6).

The New Testament speaks to us of divine mercy (*eleos*) as a synthesis of the work that Jesus came to accomplish in the world in the name of the Father (cf. *Mt* 9:13). Our Lord's mercy can be seen especially when he bends down to human misery and shows his compassion for those in need of understanding, healing and forgiveness. Everything in Jesus speaks of mercy. Indeed, he himself *is* mercy.

In Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel we find the three parables of mercy: the lost sheep, the lost coin and the parable of the prodigal son. In these three parables we are struck by God's joy, the joy that God feels when he finds and forgives a sinner. Yes, it is God's joy to forgive! This sums up the whole of the Gospel. "Each of us, each one of us, is that little lost lamb, the coin that was mislaid; each one of us is that son who has squandered his freedom on false idols, illusions of happiness, and has

lost everything. But God does not forget us; the Father never abandons us. He is a patient Father, always waiting for us! He respects our freedom, but he remains faithful forever. And when we come back to him, he welcomes us like children into his house, for he never ceases, not for one instant, to wait for us with love. And his heart rejoices over every child who returns. He is celebrating because he is joy. God has this joy, when one of us sinners goes to him and asks his forgiveness" (*Angelus*, 15 September 2013).

God's mercy is very real and we are all called to experience it firsthand. When I was seventeen years old, it happened one day that, as I was about to go out with friends, I decided to stop into a church first. I met a priest there who inspired great confidence, and I felt the desire to open my heart in Confession. That meeting changed my life! I discovered that when we open our hearts with humility and transparency, we can contemplate God's mercy in a very concrete way. I felt certain that, in the person of that priest, God was already waiting for me even before I took the step of entering that church. We keep looking for God, but God is there before us, always looking for us, and he finds us first. Maybe one of you feels something weighing on your heart. You are thinking: I did this, I did that.... Do not be afraid! God is waiting for you! God is a Father and he is always waiting for us! It is so wonderful to feel the merciful embrace of the Father in the sacrament of Reconciliation, to discover that the confessional is a place of mercy, and to allow ourselves to be touched by the merciful love of the Lord who always forgives us!

You, dear young man, dear young woman, have you ever felt the gaze of everlasting love upon you, a gaze that looks beyond your sins, limitations and failings, and continues to have faith in you and to look upon your life with hope? Do you realize how precious you are to God, who has given you everything out of love? Saint Paul tells us that "God proves his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (*Rom* 5:8). Do we really understand the power of these words?

I know how much the WYD cross means to all of you. It was a gift from Saint John Paul II and has been with you at all your World Meetings since 1984. So many changes and real conversions have taken place in the lives of young people who have encountered this simple bare cross! Perhaps you have asked yourselves the question: what is the origin of the extraordinary power of the cross? Here is the answer: the cross is

the most eloquent sign of God's mercy! It tells us that the measure of God's love for humanity is to love without measure! Through the cross we can touch God's mercy and be touched by that mercy! Here I would recall the episode of the two thieves crucified beside Jesus. One of them is arrogant and does not admit that he is a sinner. He mocks the Lord. The other acknowledges that he has done wrong; he turns to the Lord saying: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom". Jesus looks at him with infinite mercy and replies: "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (cf. *Lk* 23:32, 39-43). With which of the two do we identify? Is it with the arrogant one who does not acknowledge his own mistakes? Or is it with the other, who accepts that he is in need of divine mercy and begs for it with all his heart? It is in the Lord, who gave his life for us on the cross, that we will always find that unconditional love which sees our lives as something good and always gives us the chance to start again.

3. *The amazing joy of being instruments of God's mercy*

The Word of God teaches us that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (*Acts* 20:35). That is why the fifth Beatitude declares that the merciful are blessed. We know that the Lord loved us first. But we will be truly blessed and happy only when we enter into the divine "logic" of gift and gracious love, when we discover that God has loved us infinitely in order to make us capable of loving like Him, without measure. Saint John says: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love... In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another" (1 *Jn* 4:7-11).

After this very brief summary of how the Lord bestows his mercy upon us, I would like to give you some suggestions on how we can be instruments of this mercy for others.

I think of the example of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. He said, "Jesus pays me a visit every morning in Holy Communion, and I return the visit in the meagre way I know how, visiting the poor". Pier Giorgio was a young man who understood what it means to have a merciful heart that responds to those most in need. He gave them far more than material goods. He gave himself by giving his time, his words and his capacity to listen. He served the poor very quietly and unassumingly.

He truly did what the Gospel tells us: "When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret" (*Mt* 6:3-4). Imagine that, on the day before his death when he was gravely ill, he was giving directions on how his friends in need should be helped. At his funeral, his family and friends were stunned by the presence of so many poor people unknown to them. They had been befriended and helped by the young Pier Giorgio.

I always like to link the Gospel Beatitudes with Matthew 25, where Jesus presents us with the works of mercy and tells us that we will be judged on them. I ask you, then, to rediscover the corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, assist the sick, visit the imprisoned and bury the dead. Nor should we overlook the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, teach the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the sorrowful, forgive offences, patiently bear with troublesome people and pray to God for the living and the dead. As you can see, mercy does not just imply being a "good person" nor is it mere sentimentality. It is the measure of our authenticity as disciples of Jesus, and of our credibility as Christians in today's world.

If you want me to be very specific, I would suggest that for the first seven months of 2016 you choose a corporal and a spiritual work of mercy to practice each month. Find inspiration in the prayer of Saint Faustina, a humble apostle of Divine Mercy in our times:

"Help me, O Lord,

...that my eyes may be merciful, so that I will never be suspicious or judge by appearances, but always look for what is beautiful in my neighbours' souls and be of help to them;

... that my ears may be merciful, so that I will be attentive to my neighbours' needs, and not indifferent to their pains and complaints;

... that my tongue may be merciful, so that I will never speak badly of others, but have a word of comfort and forgiveness for all;

... that my hands may be merciful and full of good deeds;

... that my feet may be merciful, so that I will hasten to help my neighbour, despite my own fatigue and weariness;

... that my heart may be merciful, so that I myself will share in all the sufferings of my neighbour" (Diary, 163).

The Divine Mercy message is a very specific life plan because it involves action. One of the most obvious works of mercy, and perhaps

the most difficult to put into practice, is to forgive those who have offended us, who have done us wrong or whom we consider to be enemies. “At times how hard it seems to forgive! And yet pardon is the instrument placed into our fragile hands to attain serenity of heart. To let go of anger, wrath, violence, and revenge are necessary conditions to living joyfully” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 9).

I meet so many young people who say that they are tired of this world being so divided, with clashes between supporters of different factions and so many wars, in some of which religion is being used as justification for violence. We must ask the Lord to give us the grace to be merciful to those who do us wrong. Jesus on the cross prayed for those who had crucified him: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do” (*Lk 23:34*). Mercy is the only way to overcome evil. Justice is necessary, very much so, but by itself it is not enough. Justice and mercy must go together. How I wish that we could join together in a chorus of prayer, from the depths of our hearts, to implore the Lord to have mercy on us and on the whole world!

4. Krakow is expecting us!

Only a few months are left before we meet in Poland. Krakow, the city of Saint John Paul II and Saint Faustina Kowalska, is waiting for us with open arms and hearts. I believe that Divine Providence led us to the decision to celebrate the Youth Jubilee in that city which was home to those two great apostles of mercy in our times. John Paul II realized that this is the time of mercy. At the start of his pontificate, he wrote the encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*. In the Holy Year 2000 he canonized Sister Faustina and instituted the Feast of Divine Mercy, which now takes place on the Second Sunday of Easter. In 2002 he personally inaugurated the Divine Mercy Shrine in Krakow and entrusted the world to Divine Mercy, in the desire that this message would reach all the peoples of the earth and fill their hearts with hope: “This spark needs to be lighted by the grace of God. This fire of mercy needs to be passed on to the world. In the mercy of God the world will find peace and mankind will find happiness!” (*Homily at the Dedication of the Divine Mercy Shrine in Krakow*, 17 August 2002).

Dear young people, at the Shrine in Krakow dedicated to the merciful Jesus, where he is depicted in the image venerated by the people of God, Jesus is waiting for you. He has confidence in you and is counting on you! He has so many things to say to each of you... Do not

be afraid to look into his eyes, full of infinite love for you. Open yourselves to his merciful gaze, so ready to forgive all your sins. A look from him can change your lives and heal the wounds of your souls. His eyes can quench the thirst that dwells deep in your young hearts, a thirst for love, for peace, for joy and for true happiness. Come to Him and do not be afraid! Come to him and say from the depths of your hearts: “Jesus, I trust in You!”. Let yourselves be touched by his boundless mercy, so that in turn you may become apostles of mercy by your actions, words and prayers in our world, wounded by selfishness, hatred and so much despair.

Carry with you the flame of Christ’s merciful love – as Saint John Paul II said – in every sphere of your daily life and to the very ends of the earth. In this mission, I am with you with my encouragement and prayers. I entrust all of you to Mary, Mother of Mercy, for this last stretch of the journey of spiritual preparation for the next WYD in Krakow. I bless all of you from my heart. **- FRANCIS**



BEPPU Singh queuing behind his friend at an ATM machine.
 Friend: What are you looking at?
 Beppo Singh: I know your PIN no., hee, hee.
 Friend: Alright, what is my PIN no. if you saw it?
 Beppo Singh: four asterisks!

Holy Childhood - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	1,80,494.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	1,81,494.00
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Holy See - 2015

Collection as on 24/11/2015	79,169.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	80,169.00
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Hunger & Disease - 2015

Collection as on 24/11/2015	9,68,154.00
Srivilliputhur	10,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>9,78,154.00</u>
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Good Friday - 2015

Collection as on 24/11/2015	6,04,502.00
Srivilliputhur	5,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>6,09,502.00</u>
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Vocation Sunday - 2015

Collection as on 16/12/2015	91,557.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>92,557.00</u>
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St. Peter's Pence - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	91,222.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>92,222.00</u>
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Bible Sunday- 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	1,07,190.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00
Thummuchinampatti	180.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>1,08,370.00</u>
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Chennai Rain Relief Mission

Collection as on 25/01/2016	19,44,073.00
Palanganatham	13,500.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>19,57,573.00</u>
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Mission Sunday - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	24,25,420.00
Srivilliputhur	1,31,530.00
Chinnamanur	4,510.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>25,61,460.00</u>
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African Mission - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	67,517.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00
T. Sindalacherry	750.00
Thummuchinampatti	200.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>69,467.00</u>
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Communication Day - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	64,695.00
Palanganatham	2,000.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00
T. Sindalacherry	750.00
Thummuchinampatti	165.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>68,610.00</u>
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Peter the Apostle - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	63,941.00
Palanganatham	2,000.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00
T. Sindalacherry	1,000.00
Othayal	200.00
Thummuchinampatti	185.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	<u>68,326.00</u>
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Prison Ministry - 2015

Collection as on 22/01/2016	93,028.00
Srivilliputhur	1,000.00
Thummuchinampatty	200.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	94,228.00
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KANI (Seminarists Fund)

Fr. Parish Priest & Parishnors, Sundaranchiyapuram	77,552.00
Fr. Parish Priest, St. Antony's Shrine, Pullampatti	15,000.00
Parishnors, Mathankovilpatti	11,100.00
Fr. Gnanapragasam, Vadipatti	10,000.00
Mr.M. Thobias, Palanganatham, Madurai	10,000.00
Mr. Joseph Sahayaraj & Janci Rani Family, Michaelpalayam	10,000.00
Mr. G. Arulanandam & Mrs. A. Mercy Anjala, Anupanady Road Madurai	10,000.00
Mr. Ravi & Family, Lourdupuram	5,000.00
Fr. Maria Michael, Ellisnagar	5,000.00
Mr. Sahayaraj & Sujatha family, Nagamalaipudukpttai	1,000.00
Fr. Rector, Christ Hall Seminary, Karumathur	1,000.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	1,55,652.00
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Mass Received From Parishes

Vadipatty (2000 Nos)	2,00,000.00
Palanganatham (300 Nos)	15,000.00
Holy Rosary Church (227 Nos)	11,350.00
Sundaranatchiapuram (210 Nos)	10,500.00
Sivakasi (200 Nos)	10,000.00
Nagamalai Pudukottai (100 Nos)	5,000.00
Thirumangalam (60 Nos)	4,200.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	2,56,050.00
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Holy Childhood -2016

St. Agnes Home for Children, Rayappanpatti	10,000.00
Railway Colony	6,000.00
Usilampatti	4,200.00
Packiapuram	4,040.00
Theni	3,800.00
Hanumanthanpatti	2,000.00
Pandian Nagar	520.00
Melur	500.00

Collection as on 22/02/2016	31,060.00
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Adoration Sunday

March		April	
06	Silukkuvarpatti	03	Meenatchiapuram
13	Rajapalayam	10	Mangalamkombu
20	Kalladipatti	17	Thirunagar
27	Thirunagar	24	Michaelpalayam

Ordination Anniversary

Rev. Fr. Lourdhuraj G.	-	24.03.1962
Rev. Fr. GnanaSandanam	-	24.03.1965

Necrology

Archbishop Arockiasamy	on	22.03.2007
Fr. Asirvatham	on	01.03.2013
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

