

VOX NOSTRA

Vol IX

MAY 2021

No. 5

Dear Rev. Fathers, Brothers and Sisters,

1. COVID- 19 SECOND WAVE

We are facing the second wave of Corona Virus which has hit us like a tsunami, and we are yet to reach the peak. We are witnessing around a huge number of cases every day in our country. Added to this is the apparent lack of readiness-to-face, resulting in shortage of hospital beds, anti-viral drugs, oxygen and vaccines. Many have lost their loved ones. Many priests and religious too have succumbed to the Corona Virus in our country.

Our State Government has declared a 15-day lockdown till 12 May 2021. Once again, we have been asked to close our Churches for public worship. I request all priests and religious to take proper care by following the Covid-19 protocol in your presbyteries and communities and keep yourselves safe and healthy so that we are able to serve others. Do strictly follow the measures issued by the central/state governments and local authorities to contain the spread of this virus, especially while celebrating the weddings and funeral rites. Encourage your parishioners too to strictly adhere to the safety norms. Since the vaccination is now available to all above 18 years of age, do encourage the faithful to receive the same. I exhort the Health Commission to bring awareness in this regard and organize vaccination programme in association with the government health centres as is already done in a few parishes. During these critical times, as a faith-community, it is proper for us to raise our earnest prayers to God who is our only hope. Hence, let us make of use of the lockdown period to spend extra time in interceding for the mercy of God on the world.

2. FEAST OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER AND INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY

The feast of St Joseph the Worker and International Workers' Day, also known as Labour Day/May Day, is celebrated all over the world on May 1. It is eminently appropriate that St Joseph, a carpenter who became the foster father of Jesus, is the patron of the universal Church. Since we are in the Year of St Joseph, proclaimed by Pope Francis, the feast of St Joseph the worker is significant. This noble saint, who was given the great task of caring for and watching over the Virgin Mary and Jesus, now cares for and watches over the Church and models for all the dignity of human labour. Although we are in lockdown for two weeks due to the second wave of Corona Virus and not able to come together for liturgical celebrations, let this feast be an occasion for us to reflect on the life of St Joseph as reflected in the Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*.

The theme for May Day 2021 given by CBCI Commission for Labour is '**Ensure the Right to Live with Dignity**'. Due to the pandemic of Corona Virus and lockdown imposed in the country last year, millions of workers faced a plethora of problems and experienced untold discrimination. Once again, the same problems are staring at these workers as the country is facing the second wave of Corona Virus this year. Let us pray that they may receive proper facilities from the government and good-hearted men and women.

3. MAY DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The *May Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary* refers to the special Marian Devotion held in the Catholic Church during the month of May honouring Mother Mary as the 'Queen of May'. Catholics offer special honour to Mother Mary in May: pilgrimages, visits to Marian shrines, little sacrifices in her honour, and a more devout recitation of the Rosary. In the prevalent circumstances, let us encourage our parishioners to pray the Rosary daily which definitely would help in their faith-life in the absence of the Sacraments.

4. MAY 7: DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING

As communicated by His Eminence, Oswald Cardinal Gracias, President of CBCI, the Indian Church will observe a Day of Prayer and Fasting on **Friday, 7 May 2021**, for relief from the Covid 19 pandemic. Since we are in lockdown, let us inform our faithful about this initiative of the Church in India and ask them to specially pray at their homes for the end of this pandemic. I invite all priests and religious to have a special holy hour praying for an end to the pandemic: a healing for those infected, comfort for the mourning, courage for the frontline workers and success to the efforts of those involved in research and production of medicines and vaccines.

5. WORLD DAY FOR COMMUNICATIONS

World Day for Communications is celebrated each year on the Sunday before Pentecost and this year it is on 16 May 2021. “The call to **‘come and see’**... is the method for every authentic human communication,” says Pope Francis in his Message for the 55th World Communications Day. “This year,” says Pope Francis, “I would like to devote this Message to the invitation to **‘come and see’**, which can serve as an inspiration for all communication that strives to be clear and honest, in the press, on the internet, in the Church’s daily preaching and in political or social communication.” This theme recalls the Gospel account of the first disciples’ initial encounters with Jesus, who invited them to “Come and see,” to enter into relationship with Him. Later, one of those disciples, St Philip, speaking to his friend, Nathaniel, invited him to **‘Come and see’** the Messiah whom he had found.

6. PENTECOST SUNDAY

The Pentecost Sunday, 23 May 2021, celebrates the birth of the Church with the descent of the Holy Spirit on Blessed Virgin Mary and the apostles of Jesus. They were united in prayer awaiting the descent of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus. The Holy Spirit has been guiding the Church ever since in her trials and tribulations, keeping her united with the Lord and proclaiming the message of salvation to the

world. As we celebrate the Pentecost Sunday, let us pray to the Holy Spirit to fill us, all, with his gifts to bear abundant fruit in the service of the Lord. May the Holy Spirit guide us in all the endeavours of our Diocese and thus help us carry forward the mission entrusted to her by our Lord Jesus Christ.

7. PROGRAMMES IN MAY 2021

Since there is lockdown in our State, my scheduled programmes for the month of May 2021 stand cancelled. All these programmes may be rescheduled after the situation permits us to hold them.

8. CLOSE OF *LAUDATO SI* YEAR

The year of *Laudato Si* started on 24 May 2020 by Pope Francis to mark the fifth anniversary of his Encyclical *Laudato Si* to promote commitment to nature, environment, climate and the resources of nature will come to a close on 24 May 2021. This does not mean that our concern and care for ecology is over. No, not at all! On the contrary, it must go on with greater fervour and enthusiasm. Let us make a self-evaluation of our programmes and initiatives in our parishes and institutions in the year of *Laudato Si* and re-dedicate ourselves to the care of our ‘Common Home’. Let us work together in realizing the objectives of the Commission for Ecology as specified in the revised Pastoral Plan 2021-25.

9. EPISCOPAL SILVER JUBILEE

Most Rev. Dr Aloysius Paul D’Souza, the Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Mangalore celebrates the Silver Jubilee of his Episcopal Ordination on 15 May 2021. He was our shepherd until the bifurcation of our Diocese from Mangalore and had been shepherding us all with the compassionate love of Jesus Christ. As the Bishop of Mangalore, he played a significant role and was instrumental in the erection of the Diocese of Udupi, and guided and supported us in the initial fledgling years of our Diocese. Acknowledging his role as a father and guide, and thanking him for his selfless service to us before and after the erection of the Diocese, on behalf of the Clergy, the religious and the faithful of

Udupi Diocese, I convey our best wishes and prayers on this special occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Episcopal Ordination. May God bless him with good health, joy and peace. Let us continue to pray for him.

10. TRANSFER OF PRIESTS

The priests who are under transfer and have been informed about it are hereby requested to get ready to move to the new assignments during the last week of May 2021. In this regard, I also request you to get ready with the application and submission for 12AB Certification, Audited Statement of accounts for the year 2020-21 and Parish/ Institutional Files, Documents, Inventory, etc. to the successors.

11. 12AB REGISTRATION

The 12AB registration for tax exemption for Trusts has begun on 1 April 2021. While a few parishes have already applied, I wish to remind all parish priests who have not yet began this process to kindly do the needful at the earliest, with the cooperation of your Auditors.

12. VOCATION PROMOTION TO OUR DIOCESE

Our Diocese is in need of vocations to priesthood. I know that the Parish Priests are trying your level best to identify suitable candidates from your respective parishes for which I thank you. Since the present situation has curtailed the possibility of visiting the houses of prospective candidates, I request the Parish Priests to identify and encourage suitable boys from 10th and II PU who have shown interest to become priests and inform Rev. Fr Baptist Menezes, Rector, Minor Seminary, for further contacts with them and to help them in the process of admitting them as candidates to Udupi Diocese.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

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+ **Gerald Isaac Lobo**
Bishop of Udupi

DIAMOND BIRTHDAY

Rev. Fr Alxeander Lewis, Parish Priest

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Kanajar - 20-05-2021

GOLDEN BIRTHDAY

Rev. Fr Anand Noronha, Parish Priest

St John Bosco Church, Kelmbet - 30-05-2021

CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES DEAR REV. FATHERS

INTENTION OF POPE FRANCIS FOR MAY 2021

The World of Finance

Let us pray that those in charge of finance will work with governnts to regulate the financial sphere and protect citizens from its dangers.

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