

# VOX NOSTRA

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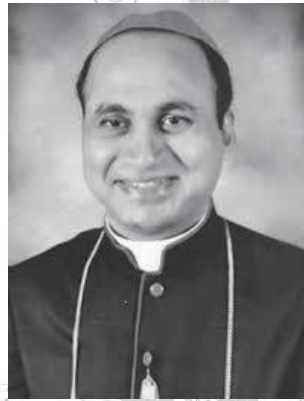
No. II

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

12/11/2017

Dear Bishop,

We rejoice on this special day of your life. We are really proud to become a part of your wonderful journey in life. May you have a wonderful birthday and many more great years ahead! May God continue to shower His choicest blessings on you! Happy Birthday!



**The Clergy, Religious & Laity  
Diocese of Udupi**

*Dear Rev. Fathers, Deacons, Brothers and Sisters,*

### **1. SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS AND KARNATAKA RAJYOTHSAVA**

We begin the month of November with the celebration of the solemnity of all Saints with the day dedicated to all those who have attained heaven. The day reminds us all to look forward, with hope, to the beatific vision of God enjoyed by those already in heaven. As Pope Francis says: “We can enter heaven only thanks to the blood of the Lamb, thanks to the blood of Christ. Christ’s own blood has justified us, which has opened for us the gates of heaven. And if, today, we

remember our brothers and sisters who have gone before us in life and are in heaven, it is because they have been washed in the blood of Christ. This is our hope: the hope of Christ's blood! It is a hope that does not disappoint. If we walk with the Lord in life, he will never disappoint us!"

I exhort all of you, dear Fathers, to celebrate this solemnity meaningfully, catechizing the faithful on the importance of this solemnity and also announce to the faithful about the requirements to obtain either plenary or partial indulgence, the details of which are found on page 184-185 of *ORDO*. Since it is a solemnity, other celebrations, including funeral masses, are not permitted on this day. Wherever there is a custom of having evening mass and commemoration of all souls, I urge you to educate the faithful in this regard and discontinue it as it goes against the liturgical norms.

We also celebrate Karnataka Rajyotsava on 1 November. This was the day in 1956 when all the Kannada-speaking regions of South India were merged to form the state of Karnataka. As we all belong to the state of Karnataka, let us be proud of the rich heritage and traditions of our state and join with others to celebrate the day meaningfully. Let us remember to pray for all leaders of our state so that they always strive for peace and harmony among all religions and may always work for the all-round development of Karnataka.

## **2 ALL SOULS' DAY**

The Church remembers and prays for all the faithful departed on 2nd November. Our faith teaches us that the Church exists in three states- the triumphant, the pilgrim and the suffering. The triumphant church refers to the Church in heaven-the realm in which the holy Trinity, the angels and saints, and the abode of all those who have reached the fullness of salvation in Christ - and we remember them on November 1 every year. The church suffering refers to the Church in purgatory. Purgatory is the threshold, the antechamber of heaven. In purgatory, all those who have reached the gates of death without reaching the full perfection of life represented in Christ are purified by the enlightening

fire of the Holy Spirit. The suffering of purgatory is not one of destruction, but the suffering that comes from leaving the old self behind and taking on the new. As members of the pilgrim church, we can help the suffering church to attain heaven by our prayers and offering the sacrifice of the Mass. The Church reminds us of the continued and close relationship between the three states of the Church and invites us, all, to offer prayers and Mass for the suffering Church on 2 November every year.

I exhort you, dear Fathers, to follow the instructions given in *ORDO* for the celebration of Mass on this day. Do not arrange any mass for the dead in the church or cemetery on the previous day. Let us also encourage our faithful to pray for their dear departed so that those who have gone before them may obtain the remission of sins and be admitted to the triumphant Church.

### **3 CATECHISM TEACHERS' DAY**

On **November 4**, the Church celebrates the feast of St Charles Borromeo, the patron saint of Catechism Teachers. Hence, I request you, dear Parish Priests, to celebrate this day as '**Catechism Teachers' Day**' in our Diocese. It is an occasion for us to recognize the tireless and dedicated service of our Catechism teachers who spend their precious time every Sunday to take classes in Catechism to our children and thus contribute to the handing over of the faith to them. Let us remember all Catechism teachers on this day, pray for them and felicitate them appropriately for their service to the parish.

### **4 WORLD DAY OF THE POOR**

We shall celebrate the first **World Day of the Poor** on **Sunday, 19 November 2017**. This day was launched by Pope Francis at the end of the Jubilee year of Mercy. In the document concluding the year, *Misericordia et Misera*, the Pope has asked the Catholics to celebrate the special day every year on the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time and has called on Christians around the world to serve the poor with concrete actions that address their daily needs. The message of Pope Francis for the first World Day of the Poor is titled "**Let us love,**

**not with words but with deeds.”** The title is taken from John’s first letter in which the apostle tells the Christian community of his time: “Let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth.” “These words of the Apostle John voice an imperative that no Christian may disregard,” the Pope opens his message. “The seriousness with which the ‘beloved disciple’ hands down Jesus’ command to our own day is made even clearer by the contrast between the empty words so frequently on our lips and the concrete deeds against which we are called to measure ourselves.” You will find the entire message as annexure 3 on page 13. I request all the priests and the religious in the Diocese to celebrate the day meaningfully and organize appropriate programmes by recognizing the poor and needy in the parishes and reach out to them in concrete action!

## **5. DIOCESAN EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION**

The Diocesan Eucharistic Procession this year will take place on **November 26** on the **Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe**. As suggested in the Pastoral Consultation 2017 and deliberated in the meeting of the Council of Priests, the Eucharistic Procession this year will be held in Kallianpur. A diocesan committee, including all the priests of Kallianpur Deanery, has been formed to work out the details.

There will be **Eucharistic celebration at 3.30 p.m. in Milagres Cathedral** followed by a short **Adoration** with a solemn **Eucharistic Procession to Mount Rosary Church and Benediction**. The Eucharistic celebration will be preceded by Divine Mercy Rosary at 3.00 p.m. I request you, dear Rev. Fathers, to announce to your parishioners the significance of this annual Diocesan Eucharistic Procession and encourage them to participate in large numbers. I appeal to all priests, both diocesan and religious, to concelebrate with me and also join the procession, without fail.

The members of the official bodies and associations/organizations like the Altar Servers, Legion of Mary, SVP, SFO, etc. are requested to wear their insignia during the procession.

I request the parish priests of all parishes in Udupi and Kallianpur deaneries to hold a Saturday evening mass preceding this Sunday for the needy and cancel all masses on Sunday morning and encourage and facilitate the parishioners to join the Eucharistic celebration and procession on 26 November 2016 at 3.30 p.m.

## **6 MASS CALENDAR- *ORDO***

The *ORDO*, useful and essential to the recitation of the Divine Office and celebration of the Mass for the year 2017-18 will be ready and available in the first week of November at *Divya Jyothi* at a price of Rs 100 per copy. I wish that all parishes and houses of men and women religious in the Udupi Diocese procure the copies of *ORDO* published by *Divya Jyothi*, not by other dioceses and note the earmarked collections, dates and events specific to Udupi Diocese.

## **7. ANNUAL PARISH FEASTS**

Annual Parish Feasts are round the corner in good many parishes of our Diocese. Parish feasts are occasions for families and relatives to meet and greet each other, come together and share a fellowship festive meal. It is also an occasion to promote parish unity and family spirit and grow more in spiritual strength and grace. I appreciate the good will of *pirjents* and generous donors in parishes for their contribution to make these parish feasts devotional, joyous and attractive. As the custom in our diocese, I request the parish priests to set aside the offertory collection made during your respective annual parish festal mass and send the same to the Secretary Cum Treasurer of Priests' Welfare Scheme (PWS).

## **8 FAITH FORMATION CAMPS-THANKS**

Every deanery enthusiastically conducted the Faith Formation Camps, *Jeevan Amrith, Jeevan Disha and Jeevan Jyothi*, for the children of the 8th, 9th and 10th Standards. I am aware of the great effort put in by our Deans and the Parish Priests to bring the children of their respective parishes together in these camps. The camps were made interesting, informative, faith-oriented and resourceful. I hope that our children have understood the value of the precious gift of our faith and the need to live and promote it. I thank the Deans for hosting and coordinating these camps, all Parish Priests for their effort in making these camps meaningful and the Directors of Divya Jyothi, Family and Youth Commissions for supplying the themes and resource personnel. May God bless you.

## **9 NEW PRESBYTERY ATKUNDAPUR**

The newly constructed presbytery at Our Lady of Rosary Church, Kundapur was inaugurated and blessed by me on Saturday, 7 October 2017, after the Eucharistic celebration on the occasion of the feast of the Patron, Our Lady of the Rosary. The parishioners, under the leadership of the Parish Priest, V. Rev. Fr Anil D'Souza, the Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council, came together as a team to complete this project in time. I congratulate and thank the Parish Priest, Asst Parish Priest, Rev. Fr Praveen Martis, the members of the PPC and PFC and all the parishioners for their enthusiasm and assistance in the realization of this project. May God bless you, all, for your sacrifices.

## **10. DIACONAL MINISTRY**

Deacon Ashwin Prakash Aranha from Kanajar Parish has returned to the Diocese after completing his theological studies at St Joseph Seminary, Mangalore, and has begun his Diaconal ministry at Christ the King Church, Karkal Town. I wish him a fruitful ministry as he prepares himself to receive the sacred order of Priesthood.

Yours Sincerely in Christ

+   
+ Gerald I. Lobo

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## **COMMUNICATION FROM PASTORAL COMMISSIONS**

### **1. DIVYAJYOTHI – DBCLC**

- 05/11/2017 Bible Sunday at Katapdi
- 05/11/2017 Liturgical Seminar at Kemmannu
- 06/11/2017 Liturgical Seminar at Gangolly
- 12/11/2017 Lectio Divina training to Youth at Brahmavar

**Rev. Fr Stephen D'Souza**  
**Director**

### **2. COMMISSION FOR SCCS**

- 05/11/2107 Training on Bible Mirror Method at Hirgan
- 12/11/2107 Training on Bible Mirror Method at Kolalgiri

**Rev. Fr Harold Pereira**  
**Director**

### **3. PASTORAL COMMISSIONS**

Meeting of all **Directors of Pastoral Commissions** will be held on 30 November 2017 at 9.30 a.m. at Bishop's House. Kindly bring the annual report as per the objectives.

**Rev. Fr Harold Pereira**  
**Coordinator**

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### **CHARISMATIC RENEWAL MOVEMENT**

Dear Rev. Fathers,

A meeting of those who are involved in the Charismatic Movement in our Diocese was called on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at Bishop's House and was presided over by our Bishop. There were 65 participants including 6 Priests from 21 parishes. The participants were briefed about the Constitution of the Charismatic Renewal Movement. The participants shared their experiences about their involvement in this movement in their respective parishes.

Bishop in his message stressed the need of a training of these leaders. There is a training program for three days in November for the Charismatic lay leaders at Mangalore during the Regional Charismatic Convention 2017 at Rosario Cathedral. The training will be held at Fatima Retreat House, Jeppu, Mangalore. The timing is 9.30 am to 1.00 pm on 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2017. Bishop wishes that at least one person from each parish participates in this training. To register names for this Charismatic Leadership Training, kindly contact Mr. Henry Machado of Mt Rosary Parish. His Mobile No. 9731204292.

A diocesan 'Core Team' of Charismatic movement will be formed during the next meeting that will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> November at Holy Family Church, Brahmavar from 9.30 am to 1.00 pm.

**Rev. Fr Francis Cornelio**  
**Director**



## **PRIESTS' WELFARE SCHEME (PWS)**

**Please note the following:**

### **1. As per the Constitution of the Priests' Welfare Scheme:**

- a) "The Annual Subscription (both Individual and Institutional) shall be paid by the end of June, every financial year" (no. 6.4).
- b) Please refer to nos. 7:2.1 to 7:2.10 (pages 7-9 of the Constitution) for the sources of MOP
- c) Please refer to nos. 7:3.1 to 7:3.6 (pages 9 -10 of the Constitution) for the expenditure of MOP
- d) 2% of Gross Income (Previous Year) of the Parishes and Parish Halls are to be paid by the end of September, every financial year (see no.9:2.6)
- e) "The Priest-in-charge of a parish or institution shall be responsible to maintain proper accounts of the same and shall submit Quarterly Returns (be it surplus or deficit) to the PWS Secretary/Treasurer by the 15 of the month following each quarter, i.e., April, July, October and January, in the prescribed form along with surplus, if any. The units which have a deficit will receive the amount from MOP Central Pool by the end of the month following each quarter" (7:3.5).
- f) "A member, teaching in aided or unaided institution shall retain the quantum of allowance applicable to him and then the balance amount shall be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer of the PWS on a quarterly basis. He shall also contribute generously his retirement benefits such as pension, gratuity, insurance and other benefits, if any, to the Diocese to build the PWS" (8.7).

**2. The Audited Accounts of PWS will be sent to you separately.**

**Rev. Fr Henry Mascarenhas  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Priests' Welfare Scheme**

## ***Annexure 1:***

### **ON THE TERM OF OFFICE FOR PARISH PRIESTS**

Whereas the clergy of the Diocese of Udupi gathered together at the Pastoral Consultation on 28-29 August 2017 proposed a revision to the existing seven-year term for the office of the Parish Priest in the Diocese of Udupi, and

Whereas the Council of Priests in its meeting of 18 September 2017 having discussed the proposal of the *Presbyterium* recommended to the Bishop to reduce the existing seven-year term of office of the Parish Priest and fix it to a six-year term;

Having taken into consideration the proposal made by the *Presbyterium* of the Diocese and the recommendation of the Council of Priests, and

Keeping in mind the letter and spirit of canon 522 of the Code of Canon Law and the Complementary Legislation of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India, I hereby

#### **DECREE**

That the term of office for a Parish Priest in the Diocese of Udupi shall hereafter be six years in a given parish.

This decree comes into effect from May 2018 during the time of transfers and appointment of priests in the diocese, and shall be applied to Parish Priests who will be completing their six years of ministry in their parishes.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this decree.

*Given from our Episcopal Residence in Udupi on 07 October 2017, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.*

Sd/-  
V. Rev. Fr Valerian Mendonca  
**Chancellor**

Sd/-  
+ Gerald I. Lobo  
**Bishop of Udupi**

## **Annexure 2:**

**Ref. No: LD/11/2017**

### **DECREE**

#### **ON MASS STIPENDS AND OTHER FEES (Revised)**

Taking into consideration the proposal made by the *presbyterium* during the Pastoral Consultation held on 28 and 29 August 2017 and having consulted the Council of Priests on 18 September 2017, I am pleased to issue this Decree on the revision of Mass Stipends and Other Fees as follows:

#### **I. Mass Stipends**

1. Normative Mass (not fixed)	: Rs	150/-
2. Fixed Weekday Mass	: Rs	200/-
3. Sundays and Days of obligation	: Rs	300/-
4. Masses outside regular Masses (Funeral – 7 <sup>th</sup> day, month's mind etc)	: Rs	300/-
5. <i>Mordom</i> Mass	: Rs	500/-
6. Nuptial Mass / Jubilee Mass and other special occasions	: Rs	500/-
7. Mass on days of Novena	: Rs	250/-
8. Legacy Mass	: Rs	30,000/-
9. Gregorian Mass (set of 30 Masses)	: Rs	30,000/-

#### **II. Fees for Certificates**

Certificates of Birth, Baptism, Burial, any other	:Rs	50/-
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#### **III. Fees for Banns**

1. Publication of Marriage Banns (3)	:Rs	300/-
2. Dispensation from Banns:		
a. From 1 <sup>st</sup> Bann	:Rs	200/-

b. From 2 <sup>nd</sup> Bann	:Rs 400/-
c. From 3 <sup>rd</sup> Bann	:Rs 500/-
d. From all 3 Banns	:Rs 1000/-

#### **IV. Fees for Dispensations**

1. Dispensation from the impediment of:	
- Disparity of Cult	:Rs 3000/-
- Mixed religion	:Rs 3000/-
- Any other impediment	:Rs 3000/-
2. <i>Nihil obstat</i> for international marriage dossier (Papers)	:Rs 2000/-

#### **V. Other Fees**

1. Tolling of Church Bells for Funerals:	
- For parishioners 03 times free; additional — per toll	:Rs 100/-
- For Non Parishioners — per toll	:Rs 100/-

This Decree is made effective from 01-01-2018.

*Given from our Episcopal Residence in Udupi on 01 November 2017 the Solemnity of All Saints, in the seventeenth year of my Episcopate.*

Sd/-  
V. Rev. Fr Valerian Mendonca  
**Chancellor**

Sd/-  
+ Gerald Isaac Lobo  
**Bishop of Udupi**

## **Annexure 3:**

### MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

#### ***FIRST WORLD DAY OF THE POOR***

*33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*19 November 2017*

#### ***Let us love, not with words but with deeds***

1. "Little children, let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth" (*1 Jn 3:18*). These words of the Apostle John voice an imperative that no Christian may disregard. The seriousness with which the "beloved disciple" hands down Jesus' command to our own day is made even clearer by the contrast between the *empty words* so frequently on our lips and the *concrete deeds* against which we are called to measure ourselves. Love has no alibi. Whenever we set out to love as Jesus loved, we have to take the Lord as our example; especially when it comes to loving the poor. The Son of God's way of loving is well-known, and John spells it out clearly. It stands on two pillars: God loved us first (cf. *1 Jn 4:10,19*), and he loved us by giving completely of himself, even to laying down his life (cf. *1 Jn 3:16*).

Such love cannot go unanswered. Even though offered unconditionally, asking nothing in return, it so sets hearts on fire that all who experience it are led to love back, despite their limitations and sins. Yet this can only happen if we welcome God's grace, his merciful charity, as fully as possible into our hearts, so that our will and even our emotions are drawn to love both God and neighbour. In this way, the mercy that wells up – as it were – from the heart of the Trinity can shape our lives and bring forth compassion and works of mercy for the benefit of our brothers and sisters in need.

2. "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him" (*Pss 34:6*). The Church has always understood the importance of this cry. We possess an outstanding testimony to this in the very first pages of the Acts of the

Apostles, where Peter asks that seven men, “full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (6:3), be chosen for the ministry of caring for the poor. This is certainly one of the first signs of the entrance of the Christian community upon the world’s stage: the service of the poor. The earliest community realized that being a disciple of Jesus meant demonstrating fraternity and solidarity, in obedience to the Master’s proclamation that the poor are *blessed* and *heirs* to the Kingdom of heaven (cf. *Mt* 5:3).

“They sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need” (*Acts* 2:45). In these words, we see clearly expressed the lively concern of the first Christians. The evangelist Luke, who more than any other speaks of mercy, does not exaggerate when he describes the practice of sharing in the early community. On the contrary, his words are addressed to believers in every generation, and thus also to us, in order to sustain our own witness and to encourage our care for those most in need. The same message is conveyed with similar conviction by the Apostle James. In his Letter, he spares no words: “Listen, my beloved brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonoured the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you, and drag you into court? ... What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works? Can his faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled’, without giving them the things needed for the body; what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has not works, is dead’ (2:5-6.14-17).

3. Yet there have been times when Christians have not fully heeded this appeal, and have assumed a worldly way of thinking. Yet the Holy Spirit has not failed to call them to keep their gaze fixed on what is essential. He has raised up men and women who, in a variety of ways, have devoted their lives to the service of the poor. Over these two thousand years, how many pages of history have been written by

Christians who, in utter simplicity and humility, and with generous and creative charity, have served their poorest brothers and sisters!

The most outstanding example is that of Francis of Assisi, followed by many other holy men and women over the centuries. He was not satisfied to *embrace* lepers and give them *alms*, but chose to go to Gubbio to *stay* with them. He saw this meeting as the turning point of his conversion: “When I was in my sins, it seemed a thing too bitter to look on lepers, and the Lord himself led me among them and I showed them mercy. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of mind and body” (*Text 1-3: FF 110*). This testimony shows the transformative power of charity and the Christian way of life.

We may think of the poor simply as the beneficiaries of our occasional volunteer work, or of impromptu acts of generosity that appease our conscience. However good and useful such acts may be for making us sensitive to people’s needs and the injustices that are often their cause, they ought to lead to a true *encounter* with the poor and a *sharing* that becomes a way of life. Our prayer and our journey of discipleship and conversion find the confirmation of their evangelic authenticity in precisely such charity and sharing. This way of life gives rise to joy and peace of soul, because we touch with our own hands the *flesh of Christ*. If we truly wish to encounter Christ, we have to touch his body in the suffering bodies of the poor, as a response to the sacramental communion bestowed in the Eucharist. The Body of Christ, broken in the sacred liturgy, can be seen, through charity and sharing, in the faces and persons of the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. Saint John Chrysostom’s admonition remains ever timely: “If you want to honour the body of Christ, do not scorn it when it is naked; do not honour the Eucharistic Christ with silk vestments, and then, leaving the church, neglect the other Christ suffering from cold and nakedness” (*Hom. in Matthaëum, 50.3: PG 58*).

We are called, then, to draw near to the poor, to encounter them, to meet their gaze, to embrace them and to let them feel the warmth of love that breaks through their solitude. Their outstretched hand is also an invitation to step out of our certainties and comforts, and to acknowledge the value of poverty in itself.

4. Let us never forget that, for Christ's disciples, poverty is above all a *call to follow Jesus in his own poverty*. It means walking behind him and beside him, a journey that leads to the beatitude of the Kingdom of heaven (cf. *Mt 5:3; Lk 6:20*). Poverty means having a humble heart that accepts our creaturely limitations and sinfulness and thus enables us to overcome the temptation to feel omnipotent and immortal. Poverty is an interior attitude that avoids looking upon money, career and luxury as our goal in life and the condition for our happiness. Poverty instead creates the conditions for freely shouldering our personal and social responsibilities, despite our limitations, with trust in God's closeness and the support of his grace. Poverty, understood in this way, is the yardstick that allows us to judge how best to use material goods and to build relationships that are neither selfish nor possessive (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Nos. 25-45).

Let us, then, take as our example Saint Francis and his witness of authentic poverty. Precisely because he kept his gaze fixed on Christ, Francis was able to see and serve him in the poor. If we want to help change history and promote real development, we need to hear the cry of the poor and commit ourselves to ending their marginalization. At the same time, I ask the poor in our cities and our communities not to lose the sense of evangelical poverty that is part of their daily life.

5. We know how hard it is for our contemporary world to see poverty clearly for what it is. Yet in myriad ways poverty challenges us daily, in faces marked by suffering, marginalization, oppression, violence, torture and imprisonment, war, deprivation of freedom and dignity, ignorance and illiteracy, medical emergencies and shortage of work, trafficking and slavery, exile, extreme poverty and forced migration. Poverty has



the face of women, men and children exploited by base interests, crushed by the machinations of power and money. What a bitter and endless list we would have to compile were we to add the poverty born of social injustice, moral degeneration, the greed of a chosen few, and generalized indifference!

Tragically, in our own time, even as ostentatious wealth accumulates in the hands of the privileged few, often in connection with illegal activities and the appalling exploitation of human dignity, there is a scandalous growth of poverty in broad sectors of society throughout our world. Faced with this scenario, we cannot remain passive, much less resigned. There is a poverty that stifles the spirit of initiative of so many young people by keeping them from finding work. There is a poverty that dulls the sense of personal responsibility and leaves others to do the work while we go looking for favours. There is a poverty that poisons the wells of participation and allows little room for professionalism; in this way it demeans the merit of those who do work and are productive. To all these forms of poverty we must respond with a new vision of life and society.

All the poor – as Blessed Paul VI loved to say – belong to the Church by “evangelical right” (*Address at the Opening of the Second Session of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 29 September 1963*), and require of us a fundamental option on their behalf. Blessed, therefore, are the open hands that embrace the poor and help them: they are hands that bring hope. Blessed are the hands that reach beyond every barrier of culture, religion and nationality, and pour the balm of consolation over the wounds of humanity. Blessed are the open hands that ask nothing in exchange, with no “ifs” or “buts” or “maybes”: they are hands that call down God’s blessing upon their brothers and sisters.

6. At the conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy, I wanted to offer the Church a *World Day of the Poor*, so that throughout the world Christian communities can become an ever greater sign of Christ’s charity for the least and those most in need. To the World Days instituted by my

Predecessors, which are already a tradition in the life of our communities, I wish to add this one, which adds to them an exquisitely evangelical fullness, that is, Jesus' preferential love for the poor.

I invite the whole Church, and men and women of good will everywhere, to turn their gaze on this day to all those who stretch out their hands and plead for our help and solidarity. They are our brothers and sisters, created and loved by the one Heavenly Father. This *Day* is meant, above all, to encourage believers to react against a culture of discard and waste, and to embrace the culture of encounter. At the same time, everyone, independent of religious affiliation, is invited to openness and sharing with the poor through concrete signs of solidarity and fraternity. God created the heavens and the earth for all; yet sadly some have erected barriers, walls and fences, betraying the original gift meant for all humanity, with none excluded.

7. It is my wish that, in the week preceding the World Day of the Poor, which falls this year on 19 November, the Thirty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time, Christian communities will make every effort to create moments of encounter and friendship, solidarity and concrete assistance. They can invite the poor and volunteers to take part together in the Eucharist on this Sunday, in such a way that there be an even more authentic celebration of the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Universal King, on the following Sunday. The kingship of Christ is most evident on Golgotha, when the Innocent One, nailed to the cross, poor, naked and stripped of everything, incarnates and reveals the fullness of God's love. Jesus' complete abandonment to the Father expresses his utter poverty and reveals the power of the Love that awakens him to new life on the day of the Resurrection.

This Sunday, if there are poor people where we live who seek protection and assistance, let us draw close to them: it will be a favourable moment to encounter the God we seek. Following the teaching of Scripture (cf. *Gen* 18:3-5; *Heb* 13:2), let us welcome them as honoured guests at our table; they can be teachers who help us live the faith more

consistently. With their trust and readiness to receive help, they show us in a quiet and often joyful way, how essential it is to live simply and to abandon ourselves to God's providence.

8. At the heart of all the many concrete initiatives carried out on this day should always be *prayer*. Let us not forget that the *Our Father* is the prayer of the poor. Our asking for bread expresses our entrustment to God for our basic needs in life. Everything that Jesus taught us in this prayer expresses and brings together the cry of all who suffer from life's uncertainties and the lack of what they need. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he answered in the words with which the poor speak to our one Father, in whom all acknowledge themselves as brothers and sisters. The *Our Father* is a prayer said in the plural: the bread for which we ask is "ours", and that entails sharing, participation and joint responsibility. In this prayer, all of us recognize our need to overcome every form of selfishness, in order to enter into the joy of mutual acceptance.

9. I ask my brother Bishops, and all priests and deacons who by their vocation have the mission of supporting the poor, together with all consecrated persons and all associations, movements and volunteers everywhere, to help make this *World Day of the Poor* a tradition that concretely contributes to evangelization in today's world.

This new *World Day*, therefore, should become a powerful appeal to our consciences as believers, allowing us to grow in the conviction that sharing with the poor enables us to understand the deepest truth of the Gospel. The poor are not a problem: they are a resource from which to draw as we strive to accept and practise in our lives the essence of the Gospel.

*From the Vatican, 13 June 2017*

Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua

## **Francis**

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