

Dear Rev. Fathers, Brothers and Sisters,

1. NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary which is to be celebrated on the 8th of September is very dear to us because it is not just a liturgical celebration for us, but our family feast, dearly known as *Monthi Fest*. Keeping in mind the separate guidelines given for the celebration of Novena and Feast, I request all parish priests to organize the Novena and the feast in honour of Blessed Virgin Mary. With joy overflowing in my heart at the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I wish you, dear Rev. Fathers and your dear parishioners and religious communities of men and women who are rejoicing at this most beautiful feast, a very happy *Monthi Fest*. ***Happy Monthi Fest!***

2. GIRL CHILD'S DAY

As we joyfully celebrate the feast of the nativity of Infant Mary, the Catholic Church in India has given a clarion call to all of us to protect each and every girl child as God's wonderful creation by dedicating this day to the girl child. Hence I appeal to all of you to highlight the importance of the girl child on the feast of the Infant Mary in your homily with special prayers included in the prayers of the faithful.

3. OUR LADY OF SORROWS - *SALVI*

The devotion of conducting the *Salvi*, from 9 to 15 September, present in some of our parishes, needs to be fostered. This is an occasion to meditate on the seven dolours of our Lady along with the mystery of the Cross. Do encourage the faithful to participate in this devotion whereby they grow in their devotion to our Mother of Sorrows.

4. TEACHERS' DAY

We celebrate the Teachers' Day on September 05, 2020. This celebration affords us an opportunity to reflect on teaching and on the sacred responsibility the teachers play in shaping the minds and hearts of young students. Teaching, as we know, is a vocation – a call from God to serve the students. On this day we remember, with gratitude, all those who moulded us. We salute the teachers who are engaged in forming the tender young minds and hearts entrusted to their care. Let us pray for the teachers who render dedicated and selfless service in our educational institutions. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their care and concern. May the good Lord bless them, their work and their families. **Happy Teachers' Day!**

5. DOCUMENT ON ACTION DURING COVID-19

The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) jointly prepared a document “**Serving a Wounded World in Interreligious Solidarity: A Christian Call to Reflection and Action During COVID-19**” and released it on 27 August, 2020. It's purpose is to encourage Churches and Christian organizations to reflect on the importance of interreligious solidarity in a world wounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. The document offers a Christian basis for interreligious solidarity that can inspire and confirm the

impulse to serve a world wounded not only by COVID-19 but also by many other wounds.

6. NEW APPOINTMENT TO APOSTOLIC NUNCIO

His Holiness Pope Francis has designated His Excellency Most Rev Giambattista Diquattro, Archbishop of Giromonte, as Apostolic Nuncio in Brazil. The Vatican made the announcement Saturday, 29 August 2020. Since 21 January 2017, Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro has been holding the post of Apostolic Nuncio to India and Nepal. He has previously served as the Holy Father's representative to Bolivia (2008- 2017) and Panama (2005- 2008). We profusely thank Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro for his dedicated service to the Church in India. He made a great impact by his warm personal approach in all matters. We assure him of our prayers as he takes up his new and very challenging assignment in Brazil.

9. SEASON OF CREATION

The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. During the Season of Creation, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home.

Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I proclaimed 1 September as a day of prayer for creation for the Orthodox in 1989. The World Council of Churches was instrumental in making the special time a season, extending the celebration from 1 September until 4 October. Pope Francis made the Roman Catholic Church's warm welcoming of the season official in 2015.

The season starts 1 September, the Day of Prayer for Creation, and ends 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology. For the 2020 Season of Creation, the suggested theme is “Jubilee for the Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope.”

This year, amid crises that have shaken our world, we’re awakened to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and each other. During the season this year, we enter a time of restoration and hope, a jubilee for our Earth, that requires radically new ways of living with creation.

You may download more information and resource materials about the Season of Creation from <https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/>

10. PRAYERS FOR RELIEF FROM COVID-19

The cases of Covid-19 are still on the rise all over India. Hence, let us continue to raise our hearts and minds to God with unceasing prayers so that the world is completely delivered from the pandemic of the corona virus.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

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