

XAVIERIAN MISSION



Parish Bulletin of St. Francis Xavier Church Vile Parle (W), Mumbai

October 2019

Parish Team

Fr. Savio D'Souza
Fr. Ralph Fernandes
Fr. Omar Fernandes
Fr. Chinnappa
Fr. Sanjeev Prasad Pereira

Mass Schedule

Saturday: 7.00 pm.

Sunday:

6.30 am (Konkani),
7.30 am (Marathi),
8.45 am (Parish Mass),
10.00 am (Children's Mass),
5.30 pm (English)

Weekdays:

6.15 am, 7.15 am and 7.00 pm

Confessions:

Every Sat. at 6 pm and on request.

Baptisms:

Every Sunday at 11.00 a.m.

Novenas:

Wed. : O. Lady Perp. Succour before
the evening mass.

Prayer groups:

 After evening mass

Mon. : Konkani
Thurs : English
Fri. : Marathi

Parish Office Timing :

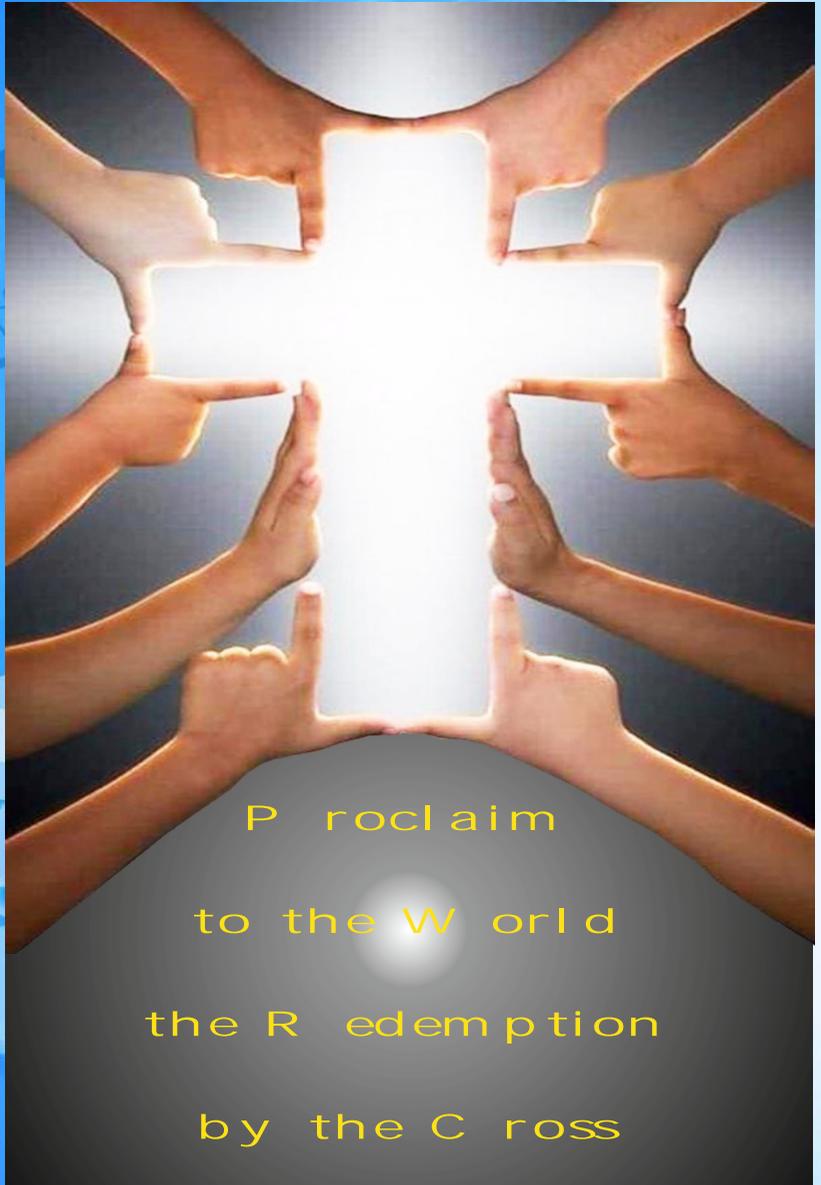
 Mon. to Fri.

9.00 am to 11.00 am & 5pm to 7pm,
Saturday : 9.00 am to 11.00 am only.

Marriages: Persons must approach
the priest on duty atleast 3 months in
advance. Marriage preparation
course is compulsory.

Sick calls: Any time on request

Funerals : After the death certificate
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BEING ON A JOURNEY

There was a world traveler who had heard a lot about a certain monk. He was known for his simple thinking, his matter of fact answers and his wisdom. The monk gave him a time for visit. The traveler went in for the meeting with all his questions in mind. He was very excited. But on entering the monk's room he was shocked – there was no laptop, no media connection, no paper, no books, and no furniture. **Just a mat in the room and nothing else!** "Sir", he began "I'm from Mumbai. I'm wondering now about the source of your wisdom. Where is your furniture sir?" "My wisdom comes from above", said the monk. "Where is **your** furniture", asked the monk in a counter. "No sir ", replied the traveler. I only have a bag with a few clothes and basic requirement now. But that's because "**I'm travelling, am on a Journey.**" "And so am I", returned the monk.

Our parish has been on a journey since its inception and there have been many parish priests in the past who have guided the course of its progress. I have become a part of this parish journey since 2016. We have in our parish a wealth of talented people who have not involved themselves for one reason or the other. The challenge is to involve them into the mainstream. All are welcome to join the journey provided they put no condition to their involvement. The resources we have in our parish is immeasurable and the work to bringing people together has begun. We continue bringing people together through the SCC core groups of the parish which is it's main focus. Through this network we keep people informed and activated – a step towards involvement. Through NYG's, we facilitate the youth of every area coming and working together as a team and thus taking the parish forward. Through associations we hope to get more people involved in **Parish welfare** like the Sodalities, CWF, in **liturgical** ministries like the choirs, Eucharistic ministers Altar servers, in **Spiritual** ministries like prayer groups, Divine mercy and **Service ministries** like legion of Mary and SVP.

While on this journey we as a team of priests have been constantly keeping a check on where we are going and where do we want to go! While we cannot bring about a complete cleansing of the system we have begun a process where we are asking the question **WHY**. But a lot of challenges lie ahead especially with the changing systems to involve more but also to get the right people inside. Or we stagnate with the same people doing the same things and not letting any newness percolate.

Change is always looked down upon in most parishes because people are used to doing the same things for ages. But Enlightened, Progressive, Developing are terms used for a group of people who have experimented with change and may not have succeeded on the first try but who have the courage to becoming BETTER.

We have achieved successes as a parish through the SCC module, but now we need to experiment with the Cluster formation. The NYG's have been successful as a new way of youth coming together every month, but now we have to tighten the system. A lot of our associations have done well so far, but we need to experiment with visitation which is a way of propagating our work. The journey will become easier if more people join us. And this journey towards becoming better will always be an ongoing one.

POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY MISSIONARY MONTH OF OCTOBER

On World Mission Sunday 2017, Pope Francis announced his intention to dedicate the entire month of October 2019 - not just World Mission Sunday - to “the Church’s evangelizing activity ad gentes,” a phrase meaning “to the nations” and used to describe missionary activity focused on people who still have not heard the Gospel.

“For the month of October 2019”, he said “I ask the whole Church to live an extraordinary time of missionary activity”.

He also explained it marks the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV’s Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, a document on the Church’s mission to bring to the world the salvation of Jesus Christ, which he described as prophetic and far-sighted.

The theme chosen for the month is “Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World.” It will help us in our mission, he explained, which he said is not about spreading a “religious ideology” or a “lofty ethical teaching.” Instead, he continued, “through the mission of the Church, Jesus Christ himself continues to evangelize and act; her mission thus makes present in history the Kairos, the favorable time of salvation.”

This special month opens on the feast of Saint Therese of Lisieux, patroness of the Missions together with Saint Francis Xavier, and has its culmination in the celebration of World Mission Sunday marked this year on 20 October.

In a video to assist in the worldwide dissemination of monthly intentions of the Holy Father, he states: “Today, a new impulse to the Church’s missionary activity is needed to face the challenge of proclaiming Jesus and his death and resurrection.

Reaching the peripheries – the human, cultural, and religious settings still foreign to the Gospel: this is what we call the ‘*missio ad gentes*’.

We must also remember that the heart of the Church’s mission is prayer.

In this Extraordinary Missionary Month, let us pray that the Holy Spirit may engender a new missionary “spring” for all those baptized and sent by Christ’s Church

To aid us in our missionary work, the timing of Pope Francis’ canonization of Cardinal John Henry Newman, Sister Marian Theresia, Sister Giuseppina Vannini, Sister Dulce Lopes Pontes, and Marguerite Bays couldn’t be better. In his homily, the Pope reflected on the Gospel account of the lepers, and on the verbs “to cry out, to walk, to give thanks”.

Noting that three of the new saints canonized this Sunday were religious women, the Pope said they show us that “the consecrated life is a journey of love to the existential peripheries”. Laywoman, Marguerite Bays, on the other hand, “speaks to us of the power of simple prayer, enduring patience and silent self-giving”.

Pope Francis concluded his homily by quoting Saint John Henry Newman, who described the holiness of daily life in these words: “The Christian has a deep, silent, hidden peace, which the world sees not... The Christian is cheerful, easy, kind, gentle, courteous, candid, unassuming; has no pretence... with so little that is unusual or striking in his bearing, that he may easily be taken at first sight for an ordinary man”

Let us ask God to be like that, said Pope Francis: “kindly lights” amid the encircling gloom.

CHRISTUS VIVIT (CHRIST IS ALIVE)

Pope Francis addresses every young Christian with these words : Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive! The Apostolic Exhortation to all Christian people is meant to remind us of certain convictions born of our faith and at the same time to encourage us to grow in holiness and in commitment to our personal vocation. Christus Vivit is written in a simple language and the Pope has drawn attention to various issues in a practical manner. This document was inspired by the wealth of reflections and conversations that emerged from last year’s Synod. I am giving in a nutshell some of the thoughts and views put forward by Pope Francis...

The brashness of youth when joined to the power of God have a great impact. Through examples of Joseph, David, Solomon, Samuel, Jeremiah we see God rewarding simplicity, frankness, boldness and humility. Through the younger son we are given hope to change our ways and return to God. Young people who have lost their inner vitality, dreams, enthusiasm, optimism and generosity are urged to be transformed by Jesus who stands, as he once stood before the dead son of the widow saying, “Young man, I say to you, arise!”

The Pope wants parents to be a source of encouragement and urges young people to accept the authority of those who are older. He reminds us that Jesus had no use for adults who looked down on the young or lorded it over them.

Jesus was young and himself experienced this stimulating stage of life. Jesus, in the years of his youth was ‘training’, being prepared to carry out His Father’s plan. Jesus did not grow in a narrow stifling relationship with his parents but interacted with the wider family, relatives and friends. The church is the real youth of the world and through it we

encounter Christ, the companion and friend of youth. We need to make room for the voices of young people to be heard. The Church needs to appreciate the vision and the criticisms of young people. In the heart of the church, Mary shines forth. Mary did not take out an insurance policy! She took a risk. She is an influencer of God and her yes to serve was stronger than any doubts or difficulties. The example of young saints show us what the young are capable of when they open themselves up to an encounter with Christ.

The Pope addresses the young people by saying “You are the now of God”. There is a tendency to provide prepackaged answers and ready-made solutions to young people without really listening to them nor allowing their questions to emerge and face the challenges they pose. Our empathy towards the young people allow them to contribute freely, appreciate new sensitivities and to consider new questions. The Pope says ‘each young person’s heart should be considered “holy ground”, a bearer of seeds of divine life, before which we must ‘take off our shoes’ in order to draw near and enter more deeply into the Mystery.

Many young people live in war zones and experience violence in different forms. Violence destroys many young lives. Young people suffer forms of marginalization and social exclusion in addition to the scourge of abortion, HIV, forms of addiction etc. The Pope reminds us that as a church may we never fail to weep before the tragedies of our young, only then will we be able to help others from the heart.

The digital environment with the web and social networks have created new ways to communicate and bond. It has also given rise to loneliness, manipulation, exploitation and violence, and digital media can expose young people to the risk of addiction, isolation, gradual loss of contact with concrete reality, blocking the development of authentic interpersonal relationships. The internet is a channel for spreading pornography and the exploitation of persons for sexual purposes or through gambling. “Online relationships can become inhuman”. Young people must find ways to pass from virtual contact to good and healthy communication. Migration too is a reality today. The Church is invited to play a prophetic role in society with regards to the issue of migration.

Sexual morality tends to be a source of incomprehension and alienation from the church, in as much as she is viewed as a place of judgment and condemnation. Recently the church has had to face the ugly truth of different kind of abuses perpetrated by some bishops, priests, religious and lay persons causing “suffering” to the victims that can last a lifetime and that no repentance can remedy. This phenomenon is widespread in society and it also affects the Church and represents a

serious obstacle to her mission. The Synod reaffirms the firm commitment made to adopting rigorous preventative measures intended to avoid the recurrence (of these crimes), starting with the selection and formation of those to whom tasks of responsibility and education will be entrusted. Clericalism is a constant temptation on part of priests who see “the ministry they received as a power to be exercised, rather than a free and generous service to be offered”. Such clericalism can make consecrated persons lose respect for the sacred. The Pope thanked with gratitude and affection those who had the courage to report the evil they experienced, he added, that they help the Church to acknowledge what happened and the need to respond decisively. Many young people present at the Synod expressed gratitude to those who have accompanied them and they emphasized the great need for adults who can serve as points of reference.

The Pope encourages communities to examine the situation of their young people in order to find fitting ways of providing them with pastoral care. He warned the youth not to end up dying as photocopies but to be original and unique. He said “being young is not only about pursuing fleeting pleasures and superficial achievements but the years of youth must be a time of generous commitment, whole-hearted dedication, and sacrifices that are difficult but ultimately fruitful”.

The message that God is love, Christ saves and He is alive is beautifully brought out through various examples from Scripture. The Pope asks young people to trust the memory of God : his memory is not a ‘hard disk’ that ‘saves’ and ‘archives’ all our data but his memory is a heart filled with tender compassion, one that finds joy in ‘deleting’ from us every trace of evil. The truth is God’s love is so real, so true, so concrete that it invites us to a relationship of openness and fruitful dialogue. The second truth is that Christ, out of love, sacrificed himself completely in order ‘to save you’. The Pope tells young people ‘you are priceless! You are not up for sale! Fall in love with freedom which is what Jesus offers. The third truth is Christ is alive and because he lives we can have a life of abundance. Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person (Jesus), which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.

Where the Father and the Son are, there too is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit draws us ever more deeply into the heart of Christ, so that we can grow in his love, his life and his power. Nothing is more practical than finding God, than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way. The Pope invites young people to fall in love since what you are in love with, what seizes your imagination will affect everything.

Part II next issue

Charmaine Moraes

MISSION

- What is a Mission?
- Mission is to act as an instrument of positive change in people through God.

I am guided by a spiritual belief that everyone has a purpose on this earth and that we are called to serve in some capacity. I also believe in the power of gratitude both as prayer and as a motivation to serve. As a child my mission is not of money or fame in making my life choices but to be an instrument of God. My mission in life is to model all aspects of my life to reflect my Christian beliefs and values of faith, honesty, hope, kindness, forgiveness and love. It will be difficult but I can still try to serve God in whatever way I can. An example will be to participate in activities for my school, church and community; to lend a helping hand when and where is needed.

PRIMROSE SHAH – STD VI

MISSION SUNDAY

World Mission Sunday is a day set aside for the Catholic Church throughout the world to publicly renew its commitment to the missionary movement. It was created by Pope Pius XI in 1926 as a day of prayer for missions.

The theme for this year's observance is 'Baptized and sent: The Church of Christ on mission in the world'. My mission is to reach out to the people who need my help in my own little ways. To share the Word of God among my friends, to introduce Christ among my non-Catholic friends through the parables and miracles of Jesus. To share my meal with the one who cannot afford any. My mission for my family is to reach out to the unreached by joining groups that serves the needy. My mission for the Church is to minister among the least reached, support in a mission by way of praying. In this way we can all be missionaries of Christ through our actions and kind deeds.

JONATHAN CARLOS FERNANDES- STD V

“When we serve the poor and sick, we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbors because in them we serve Jesus”- St. Rose of Lima

A mission is a ministry commissioned by a religious organization to spread its faith or carry on humanitarian work. Jesus asks us to love one another and do not fight. Our mission as children is to:

- Participate in the organization of the Church as altar servers, choir, lectors, etc.
- Helping our parents by listening to them, doing chores without being asked repeatedly, being polite and kind to them.
- Take care of the environment. Do not waste water. Water your home gardens on time.
- Each one of us has a mission and we must understand it and do it properly. We must inspire others to follow Jesus by doing good deeds to others.
-

LISA D'SOUZA- STD V

WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

World Mission Sunday is when churches come together to support a mission. All donations from worldwide support churches, hospitals and schools. It is the day to show love and respect to our family members. Also to help the sick by providing food and taking care of them.

My mission is to help the sick and the poor by giving donations. To be a missionary to spread the good news to the world. My mission towards my family is to give all my love and respect. To the Church is to give donation for the sick and poor.

So it is important to celebrate World Mission Sunday.

DAVIN D'SOUZA- STD V

OUR MISSION

Mission in the family and Church is to build families by helping them discover and praise God's design. This is expressed through our core values: teach the Bible, build families and love our neighbors. Global mission pursues this mission in other countries. I believe that engaging in global missions will help families and the Church to be better equipped in reaching our multi-cultural and multi-generational neighbors with the Gospel. So I think that we will be passed to build mission family and Church and also discover a whole world about the preaching's of our God. For this we need a team and as a team we need to be trained in tools related to having Gospel Conversations. Also, we are called to go out from our families and Church spreading God's mission.

ANEZKA MENDONCA- STD VII

A CHRISTIAN MISSION

As Catholics, we are called to be missionaries of our faith. How often do we reach out to people in need or simply spread the Gospel at every opportunity we get?

It all begins at home. Our immediate family plays a pivotal role in imbibing Christian virtues. However, the inexplicable experience of a deep encounter with Jesus comes only through fervent prayer and total surrender. Yes, we are so pre-occupied with our own lives, we hardly have time to even pray. Jesus can be our best friend, only if we allow Him to. The Bible says 'Give to God the energy of your youth and not the emptiness of your old age' (Eccl 12:1). We have to put Him first. Use all our talents and gifts for His glory. He does multiply it.

God has a plan for all of us. A plan far beyond our imagination and exceeding every expectation. He is a God of Abundance. Our Heavenly Father is waiting with open arms to embrace us. All we need to do is run to Him. Spend time in His presence. We serve a God who is so faithful to us even when we don't deserve it. He died for us and paved the way for our Salvation. He has already paid the price and through His Cross we have victory!

Let's endeavor to do our bit in bringing souls to Christ by testifying of all He's done for us. That's the mission we've all been called to accomplish.

MARILYN PEREIRA

5 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR KIDS CATHOLIC

Parents are the most influential and important mentors in shaping a child's faith. Here are five ways parents can embrace their call to be the primary religious educators of their children.

● START WITH YOU !

Before you can begin the journey of keeping your kids Catholic, you must strengthen your relationship with God. Opening yourself up to God will help you better understand your faith and reestablish its importance in your family's life.

● ARTICULATE YOUR FAITH

If you want your kids to have real faith, you have to discuss it with them. This doesn't mean just telling them "don't do this because it's wrong" Articulating faith means internalizing it, owning it, and making it a part of you, which is why dialogue is necessary

● CONTINUE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

There's a direct correlation between increased faith and faith-related activities like daily prayer, Bible study, and charitable service. These religious practices act as faith catalysts, speeding up and propelling faith development to new levels.

● BUILD A STRONG RELATIONSHIP

Handing on faith requires a strong relationship and a deep level of trust. Openness, honesty, and transparency about who you are and what you believe goes a long way toward establishing trust with your children.

● BE A ROLE MODEL

Children look up to their parents for guidance. It's not a matter of if you are influencing them (you are), rather what kind of influence are you having on them?

WE ARE A MISSIONARY CHURCH **(Ralph's Random Reflections)**

I am reading a book entitled "Divine Renovation" by Fr. James Mallon. The thesis of the author is "Instead of simply maintaining their buildings and meeting the needs of their parishioners, parishes are called to go further and embrace their mission, which is to make disciples."

If you ask people "are you a practicing Catholic?" quite often the answer will be "Yes I go to church every Sunday". (And sadly, for some, it means 'church compound').

To be a practicing Catholic, we must take to heart the mission of Jesus – his own mission and the mission he gave to his disciples.

Today, (Wednesday 25th September) as I get back to writing my reflections, I am given more inspiration by the Gospel I read at Mass this morning. Jesus sent out His apostles to preach the kingdom and to heal. They were to take nothing with them, not even a spare tunic. The mission was the chief priority. He had spent so much time with them that they were equipped to do the task.

Let us see what we need to do to be true Christians – true disciples of Jesus.

- a) Clarify the message for ourselves: God loves you and has sent His Son into the world to bring a sinful world back to His kingdom.
- b) Get to understand and fortify yourselves for spreading the message. The parish offers (or should be offering) opportunities to equip lay people to be apostles... call it faith formation. We should make every use of those opportunities.
- c) Having been given (that is having attended) suitable faith formation programmes, we should proclaim and heal. In other words we should speak about our faith and reach out to the needs of others.

Opportunities:

- 1) The Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian living. Do not just attend (be present) but sincerely participate. Listen to the Word, reflect on it. Be strengthened by Communion. And go forth to love and serve the Lord.
- 2) The Sunday School for children is another source of faith formation. As you will see from another article in this issue, children attending Sunday School have shared about their mission. Cooperate with the catechists to make Sunday School more fruitful for your children and for you. It would be great if we could have regular classes for adults as well.
- 3) A Family Cell has been formed in the parish. Its members will meet regularly to discuss and reflect on how they can fulfil their mission within the family. The cell will also try to organize sessions on Family development for spouses, parents, youth and parent/youth relationship, You could join the cell. You should attend the sessions organized for you.
- 4) The Liturgy team that prepares the liturgy for Sundays and Feasts could, and will, try to offer training for better understanding and participation in the Liturgy. Take full advantage of these sessions.
- 5) The parish bulletin is another source of information and formation. Take this issue... Read it carefully..... it has a variety of articles focusing on the mission of a Catholic.. Reflect on it and check out what you can do to become a "missionary" in your particular life circumstances. Discuss with your family how together you can reach out. Talk to the writer about what he/she has written and how it can influence your life. And if you think you can help in making the bulletin more formative get in touch with a member of the editorial board. We are planning to make the bulletin a regular bi-monthly, so the next issue will be in December.

Till then let's do it: Live as true disciples of Jesus, spreading His message of God's love.

Only "Ralph"

MISSION AS A NEWLY ORDAINED PRIEST

Who will pass on the faith to the next generation? This was the question that was continuously ringing in my head as a youth. As a newly ordained Priest, the answer is very clear; you and me. The direction of the Church has always been questioned because of the multitude of opinions people had and still have today. Collaboration is a key term that is regularly used in seminary formation and it is something that I feel is the need of the hour. Collaboration between clergy and laity, yes; but also between the Church and the people of God or humanity as we know it.

The mission of 'communion' that the Church holds dear will never change, it's methods of executing that mission has to be constantly updated so that it remains relevant. Just as an aircraft will face difficulties if it is nose heavy or tail heavy, the Church will experience instability if too much power lies with the Clergy and Religious or with the Laity. A balance has to be struck in order that the turbulence experienced every now and then can be overcome and the destination reached. With Pope Francis at the helm, the model of the Church which is currently taught at the seminary is one that focuses on being accommodating. Although quite a few view his style of operating as radical, a lot more have appreciated the efforts taken by our Holy Father in being compassionate towards the marginalized and being vocal and taking a stand on social issues, most notably global warming. The mission of the Church to reach out to people irrespective of the faith that they profess is not something alien to the teachings of Jesus. "Love one another as I have loved you" - John 13:34 and "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news" - Mark 16:15 are two examples of how scripturally we are called to open our hearts to our neighbours.

As newly ordained priests, the spirit of discernment is something that we are called to summon at this important time in our lives because a number of avenues continue to present themselves to us. The focus, as always remains communion. Through the structures already established by our seniors, the Small Christian Communities and the newly founded Neighbourhood Youth Groups, this collaboration is slowly becoming a reality. More programs are geared towards giving the people a platform to develop their personalities and also display their talents, all this while finding their own special role in the Church's mission. Various courses like the 'Ministry of the Word' which is a course that explains scripture, Theological studies at the seminary which helps one in understanding Church doctrine; and also the order of the Permanent Diaconate for married or unmarried men which is exclusively executed in India only by the Archdiocese of Bombay shows a definite movement towards working in collaboration with the laity to spread the good news.

The process might be slow but the future looks bright if humility, love and service are values that are at the very core of the Church's mission.

Fr. Omar Fernandes

AM I SHARING IN THE MISSION OF JESUS???

Pope Francis has announced October 2019 to be an extraordinary missionary month. This announcement has to be taken seriously by one and all, be it the bishops, priests, religious and the lay faithful. It is important for all of us to be convinced that each and every person in the Church is called to be a **Missionary**, to bring the good news to one and all. All of us, who are baptized are sent to proclaim Jesus to the world, and what He stood for, by virtue of this great sacrament.

The question that may come to your mind, while you are reading the first paragraph and the title of this article is **How do I bring the good news to others, and how do I share in the Mission of Jesus?**

The very **first** important step is **that I must believe in myself** and realize that I have a great responsibility to proclaim the kingdom of God, by the way I live with my family members, my neighbours, with the people I work with, or in my school or college. Am I kind, loving, understanding, adjusting, forgiving, reaching out to the helpless and hopeless. Am I being like another Christ, specially to those whom I don't like, or cannot get on with. I thus proclaim Christ, through my **actions**, and as the saying goes "**our actions speak louder than our words**".

The **second** step could be '**My personal encounter with Jesus Christ**, alive in the Church, through the Eucharist. By reading the Word of God, personal prayer and communal prayer.

The **third** step is, I cannot bring Christ to the people unless **I myself am well equipped**. This entails the need to grow in faith formation, biblical, catechetical, spiritual and theological formation.

The **fourth** step is to **Testify** to the people, the great things that the Lord has done in your life. Just as Mother Mary in her 'Magnificat' gave glory to God.

The **fifth** step is to **be involved** in acts of service and evangelization to the least and the lost, fuelled by an intense love of Christ and His Church. This could include feeding the hungry, educating the less privileged, supporting the poor and the marginalized, caring for the vulnerable and the sick, visiting those who are alone and protecting the environment.

In conclusion, none of us can share in the mission of Jesus, on our own steam and strength. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us and direct us in our mission. We have to listen to and respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and act with wisdom, even if we have to suffer for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lorna D'souza



Monthifest



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