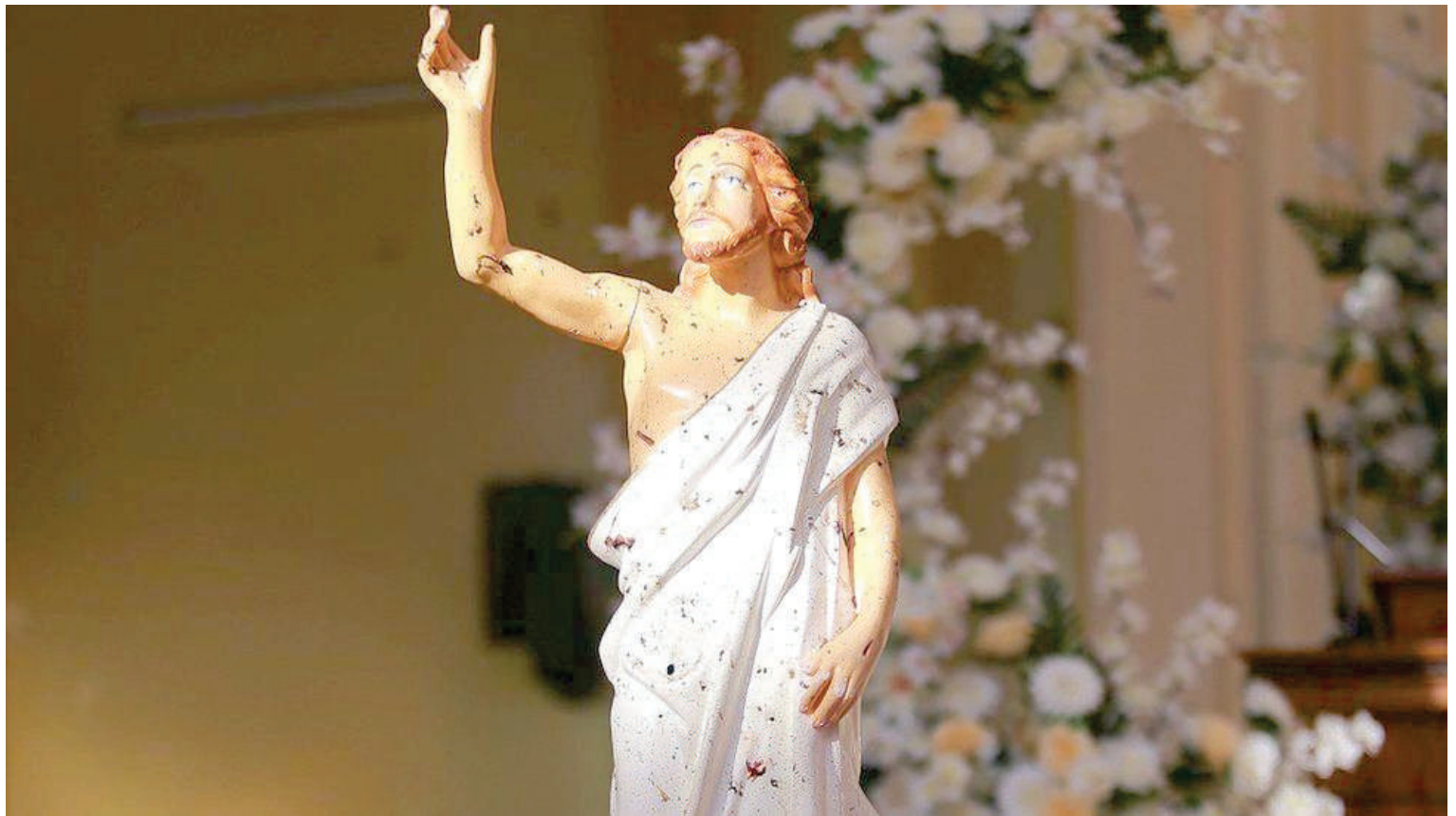




DIOCESE OF GALLE
SRI LANKA

MAY 2022
VOL. 17 - NO. 04

News Letter



**True social justice is impossible
if the human person is not the
center of concern...**

- Pope Francis -



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Most Rev. Dr. Raymond Wickramasinghe

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FOR CIRCULATION AMONG THE CLERGY
OF THE GALLE DIOCESE.

Dear Rev. Fathers & Sisters,
You are kindly requested to send your
information and news articles
to be published in the News Letter
before 20th of every month.

News Letter

MAY 2022 VOL. 17 NO 4

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May- Month of Mary

**This feast day is a day to recognize
Mary's humility and willingness to be used by God,
and**

strive to imitate it in our own lives:
Pope Benedict XVI

**"Feast of the Visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary"
May 31st**





TOTALLY FOR CHRIST



My dear Rev. Fathers, Sisters and Brothers,

I bring you greetings and blessings for the Easter Journey. We all live in hope that soon we will Passover these difficult and painful time in our Motherland. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead, will certainly hear our prayers and save us from the fires of hell. Please continue your prayers for the country and be strong in your faith. I believe very strongly that the change is coming. Let us acknowledge the saving power of the Lord.

The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Angels have just finished their General Chapter and elected the New Superior General, Rev. Mother Raymond Wijesuriya. She is re-elected after a brief pause and will head the reputed Congregation to face the present crisis in the Country and in the World. I trust that she would discharge her responsibilities, as she has done always, with much love for the Lord and to all the Members of the Congregation. Let us uphold her in our prayers. Rev. Mother Assumpta Perera, the outgoing Superior General, requested us to keep all of them in prayer. On behalf of the diocese of Galle, I am truly grateful to her, for her humble services to the Universal Church and to us in particular. As you all know, Sisters of the Holy Angels are serving in many parts of Galle Diocese. Therefore with much gladness, we promise our closeness and prayerful communion, to the New Superior General and to all the Rev. Sisters, as they have now discerned well the '**Will of the Lord**' for their forward journey.

A few weeks ago, the **Catholic Bishops' Conference of Sri Lanka, issued a statement on the present situation of the Country.** The Bishops called on the government and the people in authority to "*be sensitive to the sufferings of people beginning with the unborn child and ending with those on the death bed....cut down on unnecessary extravagant expenditure and overheads and provide people with essential food items, medicine, cooking gas, fuel, electricity, paper and cement. Do not indulge in*

senseless rhetoric but be truthful and realistic to seek expert advice from whatever the quarters and adopt the best practices learning from other countries and experience before it is too late. The country is fast approaching the precipice of a failed State that will in its wake inflict irreversible injuries on the people". Let me invite you to be one with our flock, with our suffering masses until they are liberated from this inflicted burden. This is truly our vocation and let us thank God for choosing us to give a hope to our people during these trying times.

As we pass three years, we continue to seek justice to the Easter Sunday Massacre Victims and their families. We are truly saddened by the lethargic pace at which the State machinery is moving in order to find those who are responsible for these attacks and those who did not fulfill that responsibility and willfully neglected it, and bring them before the law. We the Catholic Community will continue to harness all possible means – justifiable for the common masses, in pressurizing the government to act immediately, without any more delay. Holy Father Pope Francis has invited the Bishops of Sri Lanka to celebrate a Holy Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on the 25th April, together with a representation of our people, to join cries of our affected people and seek divine justice. You are all remembered during this journey and be assured our closeness to each and every one of you.

This issue of our News Letter comes to your hands after a lapse of two months. We had several obstacles to overcome in getting them printed. We regret the same. For the moment, we have decided to get this News Letter to you once in two months. Please bless our efforts.

Let me pray with you: Lord Jesus, I believe that you are risen, alive, and with me today. Please keep your Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary to walk with us during these very difficult and painful times.

+ Raymond Wickramasinghe
Bishop of Galle

**Empowering Sri Lanka's Tea Plantation Communities
for improving the Quality of life with access to basic Services,
Resources and Opportunities
-Lighting the Lives of Plantation People Project in the Diocese of Galle-**

This Project has been assigned to Caritas SED Galle by Caritas Sri Lanka –SEDEC from 1st January 2022

for one year initially. This project is being implemented in DCsBadulla, Kandy, Ratnapura and Galle sponsored by CRS (Catholic Relief Service). While Caritas Sri Lanka (National Centre) will be the main partner responsible for the overall implementation, monitoring and reporting to donor, Caritas SED Galle will be the implementing partner for the Diocese of Galle at the community level.

The Catholic Church spearheaded by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of Sri Lanka has taken many initiatives through Caritas Sri Lanka to address issues of various marginalized and under-privileged communities such as fisher folk, farmers, plantation estate workers focusing especially on vulnerable women and children. Caritas Sri Lanka has been engaged in dialogue since late 2014 to restore the dignity of Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) known as the Sri Lankan Plantation Community (SLPC).

Considering the plight of these unfortunate people, Caritas Sri Lanka has planned a long term program with the aim of making significant changes to the pathetic situation prevailing in the plantation estates towards upgrading the living conditions, providing access to government facilities/services and enable them to join the mainstream society as equal citizens.

The project goal is to improve the quality of life of tea plantation communities with access to basic resources and services and increase opportunities for community welfare through effective mediation from Government, Civil Society Organizations and other stakeholders. The objectives of this project in brief are to identify Civil Society Organizations/other stakeholders, formation of network of CSOs/Stakeholders, advocacy and lobbying to identify issues of plantation communities and

promote social dialogue and use of social media etc.

National Centre staff visited Galle in January 2022 for a discussion relating to this project. Thereafter an awareness/pre-orientation session was held in Nuwara-eliya on 4th January 2022 with the participation of National Director, DC Directors including Rev FrLasanthaFonseka, Director (Caritas SED Galle), Rev Fr Michael Rajendram, Rev FrSebastianNagaraja (Director of CODESEP) and DC Coordinators. A further awareness session for Priests and Religious of the Diocese of Galle was held in Galle (Caritas SED Galle Auditorium) on 13th February 2022 with the participation of His LordshipMost Rev Dr Raymond Wickremasinghe (Bishop of Galle), Rev FrMahendraGunatilleke (National Director - Caritas Sri Lanka),Rev FrLasanthaFonseka (Director of Caritas SED Galle), Rev. Priests and Rev Sisters of the Diocese of Galle.

A number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) including Faith-based Organizations (FBOs), Community-based Organizations (CBOs) and other Non-government Organizations (NGOs) who are involved in similar activities in Matara and Galle Districts in the Diocese of Galle were identified and awareness sessions for their representatives on the new Project to empower tea plantation communities and improve their lives were conducted by Rev Fr.SebastianNagaraja, Director of CODESEP and Mr.Sathies (Project Coordinator) on several days. In this exercise information relating to Plantation Companies, Tea Small Holders, Tamil Schools, Population(ethnicity-wise), Number of Estates, households etc were also gathered at district level and a data base prepared.

Director - Caritas SED Galle

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTION

FOR THE MONTH OF
MAY

For faith-filled young people

We pray for all young people, called to live life to the fullest; may they see in Mary's life the way to listen, the depth of discernment, the courage that faith generates, and the dedication to service.



St. Mathias - Pray for us!

A SAINT speaks

St. Mathias

Born: 1st century AD Judaea, Roman Empire

Died: c. AD 80 Jerusalem, Judaea or in Colchis (modern-day Georgia)

Patronage: alcoholics; carpenters; tailors; Gary,

Indiana[citation needed]; Great Falls-Billings

, Montana; Trier; smallpox; hope; perseverance

Feast - 14th May 2022

“

“Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry which Judas left...”

(Acts 1:24)

”

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Diocesan Pre-Synodal Meeting

Date : 07th of May 2022

Time : 09h00

Venue: Caritas Sed Galle Auditorium





CONGREGATIO
PRO CLERICIS



SYNODUS EPISCOPORUM

Vatican City, 19 March 2022

Prot. n.220083

Dear Priests,

Here we are, two priests and brothers of yours! May we ask for a moment of your time?
We would like to talk to you about a topic that touches us all.

“The Church of God is convoked in Synod.” The preparatory document for Synod 2021-2023 begins with these words. For two years the entire People of God is invited to reflect on the theme “For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission”. This is a novelty that can arouse enthusiasm as well as perplexity.

Yet “in the first millennium, 'walking together', that is, practicing synodality, was the Church's habitual way of proceeding.” The Second Vatican Council highlighted this dimension of ecclesial life, so important that St. John Chrysostom affirmed: “Church and Synod are synonymous” (Explicatio in Psalmum 149).

It is well known that today's world is in urgent need of fraternity. Without realizing it, the world yearns to meet Jesus. But how do we make this encounter happen? We need to listen to the Spirit together with the whole People of God, so as to renew our faith and find new ways and languages to share the Gospel with our brothers and sisters. The synodal process that Pope Francis proposes to us has precisely this objective: to set out, together, in mutual listening, in sharing ideas and projects, to show the true face of the Church: a hospitable “house”, with open doors, inhabited by the Lord and animated by fraternal relationships.

So that we do not fall into the risks highlighted by Pope Francis – that is, formalism, which reduces the Synod to an empty slogan; intellectualism, which makes the Synod a theoretical reflection on problems; and immobilism, nailing us to the security of our habits so that nothing changes – it is important to open our hearts and listen to what the Spirit suggests to the Churches (cf. Rev. 2:7).

Obviously, in the face of the journey, some fears may assail us.

First of all, we are well aware that priests in many parts of the world are already carrying a great pastoral burden. And now – it may seem – one more thing “to do” is added. Rather than inviting you to multiply your activities, we would like to encourage you to look at your communities with that contemplative gaze of which Pope Francis speaks to us in *Evangelii gaudium* (no. 71) so as to discover the many examples of participation and sharing that we already taking root in your communities. In fact, the current diocesan phase of the synodal process aims to “gather the wealth of experiences of lived synodality” (*Preparatory Document*, 31). We are certain that there are many more of these experiences than what might appear at first glance, perhaps even informal and spontaneous experiences. Wherever we listen deeply to each other, learn from each other, value the gifts of others, help each other and make decisions together, there is already synodality in action. All this should be emphasized and appreciated, so as to increasingly develop that synodal style which is “the specific *modus vivendi et operandi* of the Church, the People of God” (*Preparatory Document*, 10).

But there may also be another fear: if so much emphasis is placed on the common priesthood of the baptized and on the *sensus fidei* of the People of God, what will become of our role as leaders and of our specific identity as ordained ministers? Without a doubt, it is a matter of progressively discovering the fundamental equality of all the baptized and of stimulating all the faithful to participate actively in the journey and mission of the Church. In this way we will have the joy of finding brothers and sisters who share with us the responsibility for evangelization. But in this experience of the People of God, the special charism of ordained ministers to serve, sanctify and animate the People of God can and should also come to the fore in a new way.

In this sense, we would like to ask you to make a threefold contribution to the current synodal process:

Do everything so that the journey rests on listening to and living the Word of God. Pope Francis thus recently exhorted us, “Let us be passionate about Sacred Scripture, let us allow ourselves to be dug into by the Word, which reveals the newness of God and leads to loving others without tiring” (Francis, *Homily for Word of God Sunday*, January 23, 2022).

Without this grounding in the life of the Word, we risk walking in the dark and our reflections risk becoming an ideology. Instead, by basing ourselves on the Word put into practice, we will build the house on rock (cf. Mt 7:24-27) and we will be able to experience, like the disciples of Emmaus, the surprising light and guidance of the Risen Lord.

Let us strive to ensure that our journey is marked by mutual listening and mutual acceptance. Even before any concrete results, deep dialogue and true encounters are already a value. In fact, there are many initiatives and potentials in our communities, but too often individuals and groups run the risk of individualism and self-referentiality. With his new commandment, Jesus reminds us that “this is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35). As pastors, we can do much so that love might heal relationships and heal the wounds that often affect the fabric of the Church, so that the joy of feeling that we are one family, one people on a journey, children of the same Father and therefore brothers and sisters to one another may return, beginning with the fraternity of priests.

Take care that the journey does not lead us to introspection but stimulates us to go out to meet everyone. In *Evangelii gaudium*, Pope Francis has given us the dream of a Church that is not afraid to get its hands dirty by involving itself in the wounds of humanity, a Church that walks in listening to and serving the poor and the peripheries. This “outgoing” dynamism towards our brothers and sisters, with the compass of the Word and the fire of charity, fulfills the Father's great original plan: “that all may be one” (Jn 17:21). In his latest *Encyclical Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis asks us to commit ourselves to this unity, together with our brothers and sisters of other Churches, the faithful of other religions and all people of good will: universal brotherhood and love without exclusions, which all and everything must embrace. As servants of the People of God, we are in a privileged position to ensure that this does not remain a vague and generic guideline, but is made concrete where we live.

Dear brother priests, we are certain that starting from these priorities you will find ways to give life to specific initiatives, according to local needs and possibilities because synodality is truly God's call for the Church of the third millennium. Setting out in this direction will not be free of questions, fatigue and setbacks, but we can be confident that it will return to us a hundredfold in fraternity and in fruits of evangelical life. We need only think of the first Synod of Jerusalem (Acts 15). Who knows how much effort there was behind the scenes! But we know how decisive that moment was for the nascent Church.

We conclude this letter with the two passages from the *Preparatory Document* that can inspire and accompany us almost like a Vademecum.

“The ability to imagine a different future for the Church and her institutions, in keeping with the mission she has received, depends largely on the decision to initiate processes of listening, dialogue, and community discernment, in which each and every person can participate and contribute.” (n. 9).

“We recall that the purpose of the Synod, and therefore of this consultation, is not to produce documents, but “to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands” (n. 32).

Thanking you for your attention, we assure you of our prayers and wish you and your communities a joyful and fruitful synodal journey. May we be close to you and journey with you! And welcome, through us, the gratitude also of Pope Francis who feels very close to you.

Entrusting each of you to the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Good Way, we cordially greet you in the Lord Jesus.

Mario Card. GRECH
Secretary General
of the Synod of Bishops

+ Lazzaro YOU HEUNG SIK
Archbishop-Bishop em. Of Daejeon
Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy



**“There is no democracy with hunger,
nor development with poverty,
nor justice in inequality...”**

Pope Francis

PRAY FOR OUR COUNTRY



Vocation Sunday - 08th of May 2022 **"Here I am Lord, Send me"**

It is with a sense of profound sentiments of gratitude, we appreciate the wholehearted cooperation extended for the successful celebration of “Vocation Sunday” every year.

This year too, with a lot of trust and confidence we appeal to all the Parish Priests, Heads of Institutions and Apostolates to organize “Vocation Sunday” Liturgy and other Spiritual Activities to motivate and promote vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life.

Whilst thanking you for the unstinting generosity extended every year, we kindly request you this year too, to deposit the “Sunday Collection/ Contribution” collected with the Procurator General to support two major Seminaries in Ampitiya and Jaffna, and the Intermediate Seminary, Kalutara.

We rely and count on you for a successful celebration of “Vocation Sunday 2022”!

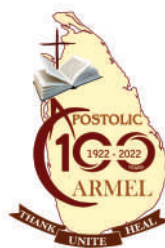
Rev. Fr. Expeditus Jayakody
Rector – The National Seminary, Ampitiya
&
The Organizing Committee.

Prayerful Best Wishes

To
Newly elected Superior General
Rev. Mother Raymond Wijesuriya
&
the Counsellors of the Congregation
of
the Sisters of Holy Angels



Apostolic Carmel Sisters presence in Sri Lanka Centenary celebration at Fort-Galle.



60th Annivesary of the Convent of Our Lady Of Cenacle Hiniduma



DATES TO BE REMEMBERED

BIRTHDAYS

Rev. Fr. Herman Fernando
07th May

Rev. Fr. Lalith Fernando
12th May

Rev. Fr. Camillus Cooray
21st May

Rev. Fr. Michael Colin
24th May

Rev. Sr. Mary of the Immaculate Heart
OCD
Carmel Community, Kalegana
22nd May

FEAST DAYS

Rev. Sr. Sadeeka HA
(DeniyayaCommunity)
15th May

Rev. Sr.
VenantiusPerera HA
(Ganegama)

Rev. Sr. Rita
Jacintha OCD
Carmel Community,

Rev. Sr. M. Joan of
Arc, HA
(Tangalle)

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

Rev. Fr. Chaminda Fernando SSS
05th May

DEAR DEPARTED

Rev. Fr. John Dalpadadu
18th May

Church Feast

St. Joseph's Church - Deniyaya

Hosting flag staff - 15th May 2022 @ 8.00 am
Vesperse - 21st May 2022 @ 4.30 pm
Festive Mass - 22nd May 2022 @ 8.00 am



Chrism mass



Good Friday at Hiniduma



Easter Vigil at the Cathedral - Galle



CHAIRMAN ELECTED OF THE COMMISSION FOR
SOCIAL COMMUNICATION OF *FABC*

Congratulations!

“

Prayerful Best Wishes
to our Shepherd
on his appointment
as
the Chairman
of
the Commission for
Social Communication
of the Federation of Asian
Bishops' Conference
[FABC]



- *Fr. Vicar General & the Presbyterium* -