Pope Francis: An encounter with a migrant is an encounter with Christ

By Linda Bordoni

In his message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis invites us to see migrations as a sign of the times and as a symbol of the Church’s pilgrimage throughout history. “See in the migrants of our time, as in those of every age, a living image of God’s people on their way to the eternal homeland,” writes Pope Francis in his 2024 Message for the 110th World Day of Migrants and Refugees. The World Day, celebrated annually on 24 September, is a call to believers to show support and closeness to the millions of men, women, and children who are forced to leave their homes. The current global estimate is that there were around 281 million international migrants in the world in 2020, which equates to 3.6 per cent of the global population, and that number continues to rise.

Pointing out that God not only walks with His people, but also within them, the Pope invites us all to walk in a “synodal” way - in the Church and in the world - in order to move forward on our own pilgrimage toward the heavenly homeland.

God walks with his people

The message’s title, “God walks with His people,” immediately points to the synodal dimension the Pope constantly invites the Church and the people of God to live every day and in every moment. Recalling the introduction to the synthesis report released at the conclusion of the First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on Synodality last October, the Pope writes, “Synodality is mainly presented as a joint journey of the People of God that allows the Church to rediscover its itinerant nature, as the People of God journeying through history on pilgrimage, ‘migrating’, we could say, toward the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Thus, as he so often does, the Pope calls us to recognize the Lord present in the millions of people who are forced to migrate due to conflict, persecution, poverty, and the climate crisis, “as a living image of God’s people on their way to the eternal homeland.”

Journeys of hope

“Their journeys of hope remind us that ‘our citizenship is in heaven,’ he says.

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Recalling images of the biblical exodus, he notes it shares many similarities with the plight of migrants: “Like the people of Israel in the time of Moses, migrants often flee from oppression, abuse, insecurity, discrimination, and lack of opportunities for development. Similar to the Jews in the desert, migrants encounter many obstacles in their path: they are tried by thirst and hunger; they are exhausted by toil and disease; they are tempted by despair.”

And God, he reminds us, “not only walks with His people, but also within them, particularly with the least, the poor and the marginalized. In this, we see an extension of the mystery of the Incarnation.”

God not only walks with His people, but also within them.

From tent to tent

Pope Francis points out that “the fundamental reality of the Exodus, of every exodus, is that God precedes and accompanies His people and all His children in every time and place.”

Thé, he adds, “God’s presence in the midst of the people is a certainty of salvation history: ‘The Lord your God goes with you; He will not fail you or forsake you.’

Indian Church official hail court order favouring minority schools

Delhi High Court order said ‘no prior permission from the government required’ for appointing staff in minority institutions. An Indian Church official has welcomed an order of the Delhi High Court allowing educational institutions run by minority communities to appoint their staff without government approval.

“This is a great order,” said Father Maria Charles Antonyssamy, the secretary of the Indian bishops’ Office of Education and Culture, indicating that government-funded minority institutions across the country experienced a lack of freedom in appointing staff members. Delhi High Court, in its May 28 order, said, “So long as the principals and teachers, who are appointed possess the prescribed qualifications and experience, there can be no restriction whatsoever on the right of the petitioner sa minority institution to make appointments to fill in the vacancies in the schools run by it.”

“No prior permission from the government is required for this purpose,” observed Justice C. Hari Shankar, ruling in favor of the petitioner Delhi Tamil Education Association, which runs seven senior secondary schools in India’s national capital region for the Tamil linguistic minority.

Indian constitution allows linguistic and religious minorities to establish and run educational institutions to serve their communities. The government also pays for the salaries and maintenance of several such institutions as they contribute to the state’s educational service.

However, state governments increasingly began controlling staff appointments, and “because of this difficulty, in some cases, Church-run aided schools were closed down,” the priest said.

The court’s order “definitely will help us to maintain our ethos and standards. Only when we have the freedom to appoint principals and teachers of our choice can we maintain our values for a better society,” said the Catholic priest.

The New Delhi court’s order applies only to Delhi state, but the priest said it could be used as a guiding principle in asserting the rights of minority institutions across the country.

“The order will help us to appoint staff members who understand us. It will make a big difference in our functioning. Appointing a vested interested person is a recipe for a clash of interest,” Father Antonyssamy added.

The priest said, “The high court order is a big relief not only in Delhi but also in other states where state-funded minority educational institutions faced similar problems. They can refer to this order in those states for relief.”

The association moved court when the state’s Director of Education was unable to fill in the vacancies in the schools run by it. The court’s order is good for everyone to refer in case any government body creates unnecessary obstruction in appointing their staff including principals and teachers. “The only condition is that all such appointments must be made following the law, which includes academic qualifications and experience required for each post,” he added.
Indian state asked to remove illegal religious structures

Encroachments on public land are prohibited under law but religious structures, including Christian crosses, are seen everywhere.

The top court in southern Indian Kerala state has asked its communist-led government to remove illegal religious structures on public land.

The Kerala High Court’s order “will have a widespread implication if implemented in letter and spirit,” said a Church leader who did not want to be named.

He told UCA News on May 31 that the forceful removal of illegal religious structures might lead to opposition.

The order on public land is prohibited under the Kerala Land Conservation Act. However, religious structures, including Christian crosses, can be seen across public lands in Kerala.

“Nowadays, it is a trend to erect stones or crosses in public places and thereafter to start worshipping these stones and crosses with religious color,” said Justice PV Kunhikrishnan of the Kerala High Court.

People need not encroach upon government land “to construct religious structures,” Justice Kunhikrishnan told the Kerala government, led by the Communist Party of India, in his May 27 order.

Justi ce Kunhikrishnan has directed the state government to set a deadline for executing the order to remove illegal structures from public land.

The order of the top court in the state came in response to a petition by the Plantation Corporation of Kerala, the largest state-owned plantation company, seeking a direction from the court to evict people who encroached on its land by erecting temples and religious structures.

The corporation has alleged that political groups are deliberately attempting to trespass on corporations’ properties by constructing temples.

The court asked the state government to free the petitioner’s land from illegal encroachments.

“Any illegal religious structures on any government land, the government should take necessary steps to remove the same forthwith. No time limit is observed,” the court has asked.

The court has asked the state chief secretary, the highest official in the government, to direct all district collectors to obtain details on illegal religious structures in their respective districts.

The court directed that the district administration take action within six months if illegal structures are found on government land.

An action-taken report should be filed by the collector within one year before the court, the judge noted.

India’s Syro Malabar Church convenes extraordinary Synod to solve liturgy row

‘Major Archbishop Raphael Thanlil, the head of the crisis-ridden Eastern rite Syro Malabar Church, has convened an extraordinary synod of its bishops to solve the decades-old liturgy dispute in his seat of power in India.

In a June 3 communication to 65 bishops, Thanlil said a special virtual meeting of the Synod, the top decision-making body of the second-largest Eastern rite Church, would be held to resolve the dispute.

The communication said the Church’s online synod, based in southern Indian Kerala state, is scheduled for two hours on June 14.

The dispute stems from the persistent refusal of most priests and lay people in the Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese to follow a synod-approved rubric for Mass that requires celebrants to face the altar during the Eucharist prayer.

They want priests to celebrate the Mass facing the people.

The archdiocese, the seat of the Major Archbishop, is where close to 18 percent of the Church’s 5 million followers live.

The synod assumes significance for the future of the Syro-Malabar Church, one of the 23 Eastern Catholic Churches in full communion with Rome, as the liturgy dispute threatened to divide the Church.

In the first week of May, a delegation of lay Catholic leaders from the troubled Archdiocese of Ernakulam-Angamaly archdiocese to the Vatican, seeking his intervention to allow them to continue with their traditional Mass.

A week later, the Bishops of the Permanent Synod of the Church and the archdiocese’s apostolic administrator met Pope Francis and discussed the disputes in the Vatican.

The pope wanted the dispute to "be amicably solved without any coercive action," said a Church source.

The opponents of the Synod-approved Mass wanted the Synod to withdraw its "clandestine decision" to implement the uniform liturgy or accord "liturgy variant" status to their version of mass, helping them continue with it.

The Synod has not accepted their demands but insisted on implementing Synod-approved Mass.

A body of priests, religious and laity that spearheads the protests against the Synod approved Mass.

It is rumoured that the Synod might initiate action against some priests leading the protest and warn the lay leaders of excommunication to tame their protests.

"Our position is very clear. Let the Synod take action against one priest or all the priests, we will not dilute our demand for traditional Mass as priests and the laity are together in this emotive issue," Kanjikkanoor told UCA News on June 3.

"When faithful will not allow a priest to celebrate the Synod-approved Mass, whatever disciplinary action the Synod contemplates will not help solve the dispute. It will only aggravate the crisis further," said a priest on condition of anonymity.

Sources said the priests and lay leaders have decided to go to the people once again to prepare them for the worst in case the Synod decides against their demand.

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Myanmar conflict: a state of unprecedented turmoil and suffering, Cardinal Bo says

By Ana Paula Morales, ACI Prensa

In an interview with ACI Prensa, CNA’s Spanish-language news partner, Cardinal Charles Myers Bo, archbishop of Yangon in Myanmar, said there is an “unprecedented state of turmoil and suffering,” which seems to have no end in the country resulting from a coup d’état at the beginning of 2021 in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The conflict has already left more than 100 places of worship bombed or damaged, the cardinal said, and that the violence has spread in many areas of the territory.

In addition, he said that almost 3 million people have been internally displaced due to the conflict, and over 1 million people have fled to neighboring countries under the urgent need of assistance, which has been provided by religious communities such as the Catholic Church and other nongovernmental organizations such as ‘Religions for Peace.’

Religious freedom under threat

Although Myanmar is a predominantly Buddhist country, a significant proportion of its people practice their religion, which do not officially represent any religious group. In fact, over 70 percent of the population is Muslim, largely concentrated in the Rakhine state, which is predominantly Buddhist.

Bo pointed out a worrying reality: “Although Myanmar is a predominantly Buddhist country, a significant proportion of its people practice their religion, which do not officially represent any religious group. In fact, over 70 percent of the population is Muslim, largely concentrated in the Rakhine state, which is predominantly Buddhist. The attack on places of worship has been a major concern for the Catholic community in the country.”

The president of the Myanmar Bishops’ Conference, said there is a lack of freedom of expression and freedom of conscience in the country resulting from a coup d’état in 2021. The attack on places of worship has been a major concern for the Catholic community in the country.

The conflict has left a devastating mark on the country’s religious infrastructure, especially in the Sagon region and the Diocese of Loikaw, the archbishop reported.

“The attack on places of worship has forced many congregations to abandon their churches, a significant blow to predominately Christian communities such as Kachin,” he lamented.

Furthermore, ethnic and religious groups, which do not officially represent any religion, are often mistakenly associated with their particular faith, which quickly leads to attacks against places of worship. How is the Catholic Church surviving?“Summer has brought unbearable heat and water is scarce. The Church has suffered but continues to be a source of healing, especially through the priests and religious and social work,” Bo related.

The prelate also said that Catholic churches have taken in numerous internally displaced people throughout the country.

“The needs are enormous and food security is an urgent need for our people,” he emphasized.

The cardinal, who is also president of the Myanmar Bishops’ Conference, said many religious communities have lost homes, monasteries, and churches due to the violence.

In November 2018, Pope Francis visited the country. According to the archbishop of Yangon, during his visit the pope gave “several messages of love and peace, but unfortunately it didn’t register.” Despite everything, the pontiff, the cardinal said, delivered a message of peace and prayer between religions and their leaders.

In the face of so much violence, the cardinal made a universal call to bring about peace in Myanmar. “We call on all parties to take a path of peace. At the beginning of the war, the Church tried to bring together all parties to work for consensus. Recently, the avenues for peace seem to be limited, but the Church continues to reach out to all stakeholders in the hope of bringing peace.”

United Nations warns: Never-ending nightmare in Myanmar

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk reported in May that the military regime has caused thousands of deaths, including airstrikes in towns and cities, and has arbitrarily detained over 20,000 opponents, including 3,909 women.

Additionally, the U.N. Security Council in April called for an immediate end to violence, the release of arbitrarily detained prisoners, and improved humanitarian access.

Finally, the U.N. also reported that the humanitarian emergency will worsen in 2024, a figure 19 times higher than that recorded in February 2021.

The coup d’état in Myanmar

In early March, the United Nations (U.N.) expressed its profound concern about the situation in Myanmar, describing the crisis as a “never-ending nightmare” that has inflicted unbearable levels of suffering and cruelty on its population.

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The Month of June in Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

The month of June holds immense importance in the Catholic faith due to its dedicated focus on the Sacred Heart of Jesus. His divine and compassionate love for humanity is celebrated during this month. This devotion serves as a powerful reminder of Christ’s unconditional love and mercy, inviting believers to deepen their spiritual connection and embrace the transformative impact of His divine love in their lives.

The significance of this devotion is deeply ingrained in the historical, religious, and traditional fabric of the Catholic faith, offering believers a profound opportunity for personal renewal, spiritual growth, and a strengthened commitment to living out the teachings of Christ. This devotion, deeply rooted in history and tradition, invites believers to reflect upon the profound message of love and mercy inherent in the Gospel.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus can be traced back to the early centuries of Christianity, but it gained widespread recognition in the 17th century through the revelations received by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, a French nun. Jesus appeared to her multiple times, revealing His heart as a symbol of His burning love for humanity, laying the foundation for the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Pope Pius IX consecrated the entire Catholic Church to the Sacred Heart in 1854, recognizing the significance of this devotion. Later, Pope Leo XIII encouraged all bishops to promote this devotion and emphasized its importance as a means of spiritual renewal and strengthening the faith of the faithful.

The religious practices and traditions associated with this devotion, such as Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, prayers, and acts of reparation, provide believers with tangible avenues to express their devotion and seek a deeper understanding of Christ’s love and grace. During the month of June, the Catholic Church offers numerous practices and devotions to foster a deeper connection with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Some of these practices include: Attending Mass and spending time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, offering special prayers and penitential acts, and participating in devotions such as the Sacred Heart Novena.

Two Suggestions

I used to contribute regularly to your newspaper when Fr. Sumit Rozario was its editor. I thank him and others who were part of the editorial team then for the welcome that you extended to a staunch Hindu. I write this letter with two suggestions. One, is it possible to make the archives and the entire publication from its original enactment defined education as state subject under Article 42 of the constitution. An amendment made in 1978 and education became a concurrent list subject which means that both the central government and state governments have the authority to make laws and policies regarding education. Under the concurrent status of education, the central government has the authority to formulate and implement policies and laws at the national level, while the state governments have the responsibility to govern and regulate education within their respective states. This arrangement allows for a shared responsibility in the field of education, with the central government providing overall guidelines and policies, and the state governments adapting and implementing them according to the specific needs and context of their regions.

The central government, represented by the Parliament of India, and the state governments, represented by their respective legislative bodies, have the power to enact laws related to education. Both levels of government can introduce bills, debate them, and pass legislation on various aspects of education. Therefore, if several private schools, which also provide education and are not under government control, have been floating the fee increase benchmarks fixed by a state government (in this case MP), then they can be held liable for the same.

In this connection, readers may read a 31.05.2017 report West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee holds meeting with private-educational authorities over fee structure/articlestructure/article/sb272411l1cmillion/r2h.png Much water has flown the Ganges since then with little relief to parents especially in post-Covid scenario of job losses/job uncertainty. While several state governments (Delhi, MP, Gujarat, UP) have Fee Regulatory Committees, West Bengal government is yet to come with one.

The other testimony was of a 96-year-old Capuchin priest, who continues to hear confessions at the Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii in Buenos Aires. At his confessional, there is always a long queue of priests, bishops, nuns, young people, old people, poor people, rich people, everyone.

One day, the priest came to Pope Francis, who was then Archbishop of Pompeii, asking him if he could be relieved of this torture. When the Pope asked why, he answered, “You know I always forgive, I forgive everything, I forgive too much. Sometimes I feel the scruples.” So the Pope asked him what he does when he feels the scruples. The Capuchin priest said he goes to the chapel and asks the Lord for forgiveness. But immediately I feel something inside and I say: ’But be careful Lord, because it was You who gave me the bad example.

In conclusion, Pope Francis reminded about the Apostolic Penitentiary of the 2025 Jubilee Year. He said that penitence is the ‘profound nucleus’ of every Jubilee and hence they should take care to make the Holy Year as fruitful as possible, so that God’s mercy may reach everywhere and to everyone.

Dominic J. Azavedo
The gospel call to leave everything and follow Christ was the rule of Saint Anthony of Padua's life. Over and over again, God called him to his Lord Jesus more completely. His journey as the servant of God began as a very young man when he decided to join the Augustinians in Lisbon, giving up a future of wealth and power to be a servant of God. Later when the bodies of the first Franciscan martyrs went through the Portuguese city where he was stationed, he was among the believers appalled by the task. He went to Italy and was stationed in a small hermitage where he spent most of his time praying, reading the Scriptures, and of serving him in prayer, fasting, and obedience had prepared Anthony to allow the Spirit to use his talents. Anthony's sermon was astounding to those who expected an unprepared speech and knew not the Spirit's power to give people words. Recognized as a great man of prayer and a great Scripture and theology scholar, Anthony became the first friar to teach theology to the other friars. Soon he was called to preach to the Albigensians in France, using his profound knowledge of Scripture and theology to convert and reassure those who had been misled by their denial of Christ's divinity and of the sacraments.

After he led the friars in northern Italy for three years, he made his headquarters in the city of Padua. He resumed his preaching and began writing sermon notes to help other preachers. In the spring of 1231 Anthony withdrew to a friary at Camposampiero where he had a sort of treehouse built as a hermitage. There he prayed and prepared for death. On June 13, he became very ill and asked to be taken back to Padua, where he died after receiving the last sacraments. Anthony was canonized less than a year later and named a Doctor of the Church in 1946. Anthony should be the patron of those who find their lives completely uprooted and set in a new and unexpected direction. Like all saints, he is a perfect example of turning one's life completely over to Christ. God did with Anthony as God does with the Church. Anthony is a perfect example of turning one's life completely over to Christ. God did with Anthony as God pleased—and what God pleased was a life of spiritual power and brilliance that still attracts admiration today. He whom popular devotion has nominated as finder of lost objects found himself by losing himself totally to the providence of God. His journey as the servant of God began as a very young man when he decided to join the Augustinians in Lisbon, giving up a future of wealth and power to be a servant of God. Later when the bodies of the first Franciscan martyrs went through the Portuguese city where he was stationed, he was among the believers appalled by the task. He went to Italy and was stationed in a small hermitage where he spent most of his time praying, reading the Scriptures, and of serving him in prayer, fasting, and obedience had prepared Anthony to allow the Spirit to use his talents. Anthony's sermon was astounding to those who expected an unprepared speech and knew not the Spirit's power to give people words. Recognized as a great man of prayer and a great Scripture and theology scholar, Anthony became the first friar to teach theology to the other friars. Soon he was called to preach to the Albigensians in France, using his profound knowledge of Scripture and theology to convert and reassure those who had been misled by their denial of Christ's divinity and of the sacraments.

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By Fr. Dominic Gomes

(Vicar General)

Hosea 4:6 “My people will perish because of lack of knowledge.”

On 25th May 2024 His Holiness Pope Francis addressing the general assembly of the pontifical mission societies insisted on a renewed commitment to the Second Vatican Council Constitutions on Sacred Liturgy. Light of the Nations, Word of God, and the Church in the Modern World. The purpose and mission of the Church is “making everyone know and live the ‘new’ communion that the Son of God made man has introduced into the history of the world” (Praedicate Evangelium, I, 4).

Following up on the success of 2023-24 Theology course Most Rev. Thomas D’Souza (Archbishop of Calcutta) and Father Dominic Gomes VG (Director of Bible Commission) met with Rev. Fr. Dr. Henry Jose MSFS (Dean of Morning Star Regional Seminary) and the fruit of this meeting was the decision to structure the ‘Theology for the Laity 2024-2025’ course in line with the Holy Father Pope Francis’s exhortation on the Constitutions of the II Vatican Council.

Theology for the Laity 2023-2024 course conducted by the Morning Star Regional Seminary faculty under the aegis of the Bible Commission concluded successfully on 24 April 2024. 58 lay members from our parishes completed the course with distinction and received their certificates at the hands of Archbishop Rev. Thomas D’Souza. This year-long course covered subjects such as Christology, Mariology, the Doctrine of the Trinity, sancification through the Sacraments, Social Teachings of the Church, the fundamental principles of Catholic Liturgy, Lay Spirituality deals with the role of the Laity both in the Church and the society at large and much more. From June this year the Bible Commission of Calcutta Archdiocese has started the process of training animators (from amongst the 2023-24 Course graduates) and forming Bible Cells in every parish with the aim of maintaining a continuity in theological teaching-learning process to ensure a spread in theological knowledge at the parish grassroots level.

To maintain the continuity of teaching-learning at the Diocesan level, the Bible Commission in association with Morning Star Regional Seminary, Barrackpore will commence the second year of “Theology for the Laity 2024-2025” course with an inauguration ceremony on Saturday 13 July 2024 at the Archdiocese’s House.

It is a reality that the Church in today’s modern times is faced with a variety of challenges, both from within and without, that are temporal, spiritual, cultural and intellectual in nature. Besides, this Holy Father Pope Francis has, through the Synodal process, exhorting the Church to live a Christian life in the world of families, communities, work, and public life. In order to face these challenges, we need more and more lay Catholics who have sound theological knowledge of the various aspects of the Faith so as to be able to practice it meaningfully and fruitfully while engaging actively in the pastoral endeavors of the Church.

The lesson content for 2024 – 2025 course to be covered over a period of 32 days (classes) will provide an opportunity for the Laity to be well-informed on following subjects:

St. Teresa’s Church celebrates the Feast of Visitation

St. Teresa’s celebrated the Feast of the Visitation of Mary on May 31, 2024 followed by Rosary at 5:30 p.m. at the Grotto and concluded with the Eucharistic celebration at 6:00 p.m. The event was organized on 31st May, 2024 at Mother Mary’s Grotto in our Church premises by Mr. James Lingham a member of the Fatima Apostolate, Bengali unit of St. Teresa’s Church with the help of five Parishioners of our Church.

It drew a significant congregation to honor this important occasion in our Catholic liturgical calendar. The Visitation of Mary commemorates the visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, as described in the Gospel of St. Luke. This visit is celebrated for its themes of faith, humility, and service, as Mary was with Jesus in her womb, and she offers support to Elizabeth, who is expecting John the Baptist.

St. Teresa’s Church, a historic landmark in Kolkata, provided a fitting backdrop for the solemn festivities. The church was adorned with flowers and candles, creating a reverential atmosphere for the day’s events. The celebrations included a special Mass celebrated by Fr. Subhroto Baidya, Fr. Arun Lucus, Fr. Naveen Tauro and our Altar servers. The procession began from Mother Mary’s Grotto by carrying our “Mama Mary” in a Palanquin by our Parishioners. The entire congregation sang songs dedicated to our Mother with their melodious voice.

Fr. Subhroto blessed the statue of Mother Mary and incensed it. Fr. Naveen Tauro garlanded the statue with the holy rosary and Fr. Arun Lucus crowned Mother Mary’s statue with a crown. The celebration of the Visitation of Mary reinforced community bonds and spiritual commitment among the parishioners. The involvement of the Fatima Apostolate highlighted the active participation of various church groups in fostering faith and unity within the parish.

We thank all the Fatima Apostolate members who took the initiative to organise this event and bringing them closer to Mother Mary. A special thanks to Mr. James Lingham who supported the community by sacrificing his time for making this event a memorable one. – Report by Dominic Panja
News & Views

The Perpetual Profession of Salesian Sisters

By Sr. Pranati Sabasundar FMA

The perpetual profession of Sr. Ba-I-Thiang Ster, Sr. Binita Bura and Sr. Shashikanta Xako was held on 26 May 2024 at St. Patrick’s Church Dum Dum on the solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity. Most Rev. Thomas D’Souza, the Archbishop of Calcutta officiated the Holy Eucharist along with eight Con-Celebrants. The theme of this celebration was taken from Isaiah 49:5, “I have carved you in the palm of my hand.”

The Holy Mass commenced with an entrance dance led by the candidates. It was an incredibly inspiring and touching moment when the would-be perpetuals were handed over by their parents to the provincial Rev. Sr. Leelamma Palliparambil FMA and she, in turn, offered them to the Lord. This great and glorious event was witnessed by parents and relatives of our sisters, friends, parishioners, well-wishers and the special invitees. The event was also blessed by the graceful presence of Sr. Elizabeth George the provincial of Shillong Province.

In his homily, the Archbishop exhorted the Trinitarian love and sacrifice. He then explained this love should be transmitted by all the baptized so, the Lord has chosen and called these sisters to share the love of God among His people by following the charism of Don Bosco and Mother Mazzarello. Soon after the Mass Rev. Fr. Indraya Raj the parish priest of St. Patrick parish and Archbishop Thomas D’Souza congratulated and felicitated the perpetually professed sisters with a token of love. Dr. Utpal Goswami, Parish Pastoral Council Secretary, expressed the joy of witnessing the celebration and then he thanked Sr. Provincial and parish priest for hosting the profession in the parish. It was indeed a great moment for all who were present for this occasion.

After which all proceeded to the community hall for a short cultural programme which was performed by aspirants, parents and relatives of the perpetually professed. The rich culture of our country brings a variety of joy and enrichment. It was followed by a sumptuous meal served for all.

Bible Summer Camp at Fatima Shrine

Fatima Shrine Youth group organised the summer camp from 22 - 26 May for a hundred and fifty children of 8 to 22 years under the guidance of the Parish Priest, Assistant Parish Priest, and the Youth Animator, and the Financial contribution of the parishioners helped to meet daily expenses for food, drink and other requirements.

Day one comprised Holy Mass, division of the camp participants in four teams – St. Alphonsus, St. Clement, St. Gerard, & St. Peter, post- breakfast orientation by Fr Anto, Treasure Hunt for juniors, Scavenger Hunt for seniors to encourage team-work, and Bible Quiz.

Day two was the day of joy and enrichment. It was followed by a rich culture of our country brings a variety of joy and enrichment. It was followed by a sumptuous meal served for all.

Day three was the day of joy and enrichment. It was followed by a rich culture of our country brings a variety of joy and enrichment. It was followed by a sumptuous meal served for all.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

I place all my problems in your Sacred Heart today and thank You for taking care of them. Amen.

Pope: Jubilee Year an occasion to cancel foreign debt

By Joseph Tulloch

Speaking to participants in a Vatican conference on debt in the Global South, Pope Francis says that the upcoming Jubilee Year is an opportunity to cancel or reduce debt owed by poorer countries.

On Wednesday morning, Pope Francis met with participants in a conference entitled “Debt Crisis in the Global South”, organised by the Vatican’s Pontifical Academy of Sciences. The Pope joked about the early start to the meeting, which was held at 7:45am, apologising to participants for “dragging you out of bed.”

Millions left without future

Pope Francis then moved on to discuss the debt crisis, underline the extent of the problem.

“After a mismanaged globalisation, after pandemics and wars,” he said, “we are now faced with a debt crisis that mainly affects the countries of the Global South, generating misery and distress.” This situation, he said, deprives “millions of people of the possibility of a decent future.”

Debt forgiveness

In the final section of his address, Pope Francis turned to discuss the upcoming Jubilee Year of 2025. The Catholic Church celebrates a Holy Year every quarter of a century, a practice with roots in the ancient Jewish tradition of the Jubilee, when slaves would be freed and debts forgiven.

Noting that, during the last Jubilee in 2000, Pope John Paul II encouraged the reduction or even forgiveness of foreign debt, Pope Francis said that he wanted to “echo this prophetic appeal. ‘We are only custodians and stewards’ of our money, he empha-sised, ‘not masters.’

Conclusion:

Pope Francis brought his address to a close by inviting participants in the debt conference to “dream and work together for the improvement of our common home.” “What you are doing is important,” he said. “I will pray for you, and please, do not forget to pray for me.”
Pope Francis pens the preface to the Italian version of the book “Come Forth: The Raising of Lazarus and the Promise of Jesus’ Greatest Miracle” by American Jesuit Father James Martin, in which he reminds us that Jesus didn’t just talk about eternal life; He gave it to us.

By Pope Francis

Facing the ditch, the author of many other books that I know and appreciate, Father James Martin, the author of many books devoted to what he calls “Jesus’ greatest miracle”: the resurrection of Lazarus. Their relationship is closely tied to the way Come Forth unfolds. It’s always fascinating, and never predictable.

First and foremost, Father James makes the biblical text come alive. He analyzes it with compassion and devotion, always looking at the lives of the biblical scholars he cites, it made me wonder how often we manage to approach Scripture with the “hunger” of a person who knows that word really is the Word of God.

The fact that God “speaks” should give us a little jolt each and every day. The Bible cannot and should not be treated as a collection of letters, or a set of legal documents. It must be a source of constant spiritual renewal.

The pope has emphasized that Jesus didn’t just talk about love with the Word of God. As I read the careful arguments and exegeses of the pope’s interpreters, I was moved by the deep, full meaning has nevertheless not been understood by everyone, and that remains fruitful. The vibrant witness to a God that is not dead or reduced to a philosophical, or well-structured ideology, or an abstract job that is to forgive.

Jesus! For Jesus has carried them all by himself when He carried the Holy Cross! What a wonderful insight, and what a paradox! Of course, the dead rise, but how true it is to recall that we the living never die! Yes, death does come, not just for us, but for our families and those dear to us—for everything, really. We see so much death all around, unjust and painful death, death caused by war, by violence, by Cain’s abuse of power toward Abel. But we men and women are destined for eternity. All of us are. Each of us is a “half-line” or “ray,” to borrow a concept from geometry; we each have a starting point—our birth on this planet—but our lives all point toward the infinite. Yes, that’s right, toward infinity! What Scripture calls “eternal life” is the life that awaits us after death. It’s the life we can already touch now, as long as we dwell not in the egoism that saddens us but in the love that widens us, that dilates our hearts. We are made for eternity.

By Arvicka Dhas Rayappan

It is that time of the year when summer-job applications for students here in Canada are being admitted and processed. Some parents shared with me that their teenage sons are going through a difficult experience, and those teenagers save some part of their earning for their future studies, i.e., bachelorette/degree/undergraduate studies; and they also updated about the kind of profession they wish to pursue in future.

I recently learned of a mom who was updated of the summer-jobs recruitment at the ice-cream shop by her friend. The mom and her son prepared the CV. The son was delighted to learn that the job involves many good qualities his mother wrote about him in the CV, i.e., leadership, communication, collaboration, organizational skills, flexibility, detail oriented, reliability, punctuality, problem-solving ability, and by nature honest, industrious, compassionate, persistent, and serious. The son knew no bounds. He gave mom a big hug.

At the evening, the mom called up the ice-cream shop and enquired about their availability for the submission of the CV. Upon receiving the positive response, they rushed instantly to submit the CV on foot instead of using the public transit. The distance covered on foot from the mom’s house to the ice-cream shop took them thirty plus minutes. They happily submitted the CV. Mom had a small meeting with her son submitting the CV. It is rare that a teenager obliges for a photo session while submitting the CV for the summer job hire in Canada. He was an exception. Her son is the protagonist of the story.

It is during the way back from the ice-cream shop, the son hinted at the distance both had to cover for his future/probable job-location. The son pointed to his mom that the costs of the for the job would last thirty plus minutes. The son told mom with a tone of surprise, “Mom, it is quite far from our home to the ice-cream shop. It is almost thirty minutes for us. I think, it is a lot of distance. May be, I will have to cover much distance to do the summer job if I will be recruited here.” For the readers, he is just thirteen years old—a year ten student.

Then, his mom responded to him smilingly, “My son, it is a lot of distance for you walking from home to the ice cream shop. What about the distance I covered from India to fly to arrive at Canada for the job to provide for our family and my family back home. My son, remember that your mom came from India to work in Canada. The real distance for job is between India and Canada, not between our home and the ice-cream shop/orner here in Montreal.”

The boy had a big laughter and looked at the sky. Then he embraced his mom and referred to her saying, “I understand, Mom.” They walked back largely adorned with blissful smiles on their faces.

On that day, mom had a big relief too that her son’s CV for the summer job was submitted. Not only that, but she also had the opportunity to educate him about the sacrifices she had made to travel to Canada from India.

Having listened to their fun-filled conversation on their way to a ice-cream shop back, I am sharing with you some meditative, spiritual, and Christian lessons from this or, an easy conversation between a mom and her son that might have often occurred at your homes.

It is during the summer-job application process that we have to talk about God, about the daily responsibilities we had to fulfill. Are we happy at the end of the day that we finished our job and responsibility? Were we concerned about our future? Are we just as happy with God about our daily responsibilities we had to fulfill? Are we as happy at the end of the day that we finished our job and responsibility? Do we complain also like our relatives who have less responsibility, or may be some of them might be without a responsibility? Do we complain also like the boy in the anecdote about the distance we cover daily for the job? Does this happen in our spiritual life? Then it struck me. Often, I did carry my own personal, spiritual, or family problems to Jesus in prayer. Our Jesus suffered much. Then in prayer, I also meditate on the distance Jesus travelled from heaven to come to earth to offer us the promise of forgiveness and eternal life.

The distance Jesus walked during his teaching, healing, and preaching ministry; the miles Jesus walked to be with the grieving sisters where He learnt of Lazarus’ death; the distance Jesus covered walking after His crest at the Garden of Gethsemane; the shame Jesus suffered at the hands of those who crucified Him; the distance He covered for us, with our sins, the distance Jesus covered walking the Cross, the way Jesus was stripped off before His loved ones, both political and religious figures including strangers as a person representing a form of humiliation; His being nailed to the Cross; His experience of being crucified and nailed, and the Sufferings before Mary His mom; the agony of His mother looking at His Son Jesus’ crucified and lifeless body—being placed on her lap. Then I remain mum for a long time. I do not utter a word. I keep on meditating on His Crucifixion and forgiving me for my shortcomings. I experience stillness and silence.

Then, the words of that mother start ringing in my ears: “My son, it is a lot of distance for you walking from home to the ice cream shop. What about the distance I covered from India to fly to Canada to take up the job to provide for our family and my family back home. My son, remember that your mom came from India to work in Canada. The real distance for job is between India and Canada, not between our home and the ice-cream shop/orner here in Montreal.”

A spiritual lesson, a lesson to you and me! Just seeing our grievances, daily hassles, adversity, crisis, pain, strain, disappointments, difficulties, shame-filled experiences, struggle, trials, tribulations, persecutions, and misunderstandings in the light of Jesus’ suffering, we get a new meaning and insight. None of our suffering is our own because those are in the service of Jesus! For Jesus has carried them all by himself when He carried the Holy Cross.
By Francis Sunil Rosario
Kolkata: The city of joy. Kolkata is the birthplace of Hindi journalism. The maiden Hindi weekly newspaper ‘Udant Martand’, by Jugal Kishor Sukl was published from Kolkata, West Bengal, on May 30, 1826. This day has been celebrated as Hindi journalism day.

To celebrate this day, a well-organized Panel discussion was held on May 30, 2024 at Rajasthan Information & Media Centre, on the topic, ‘Hindi Journalism: its development and challenges in the post-modern society’.

It was a well thought out critical appraisal of Hindi journalism, highlighting both its dark side and brighter future. The goal of healthy journalism should be the common good of society. It is a subject that the readers need to think well, for well, the being of all and good of nation.

Mr. Bishwambahar Newar, the editor in chief, Chappar Chhathi, a leading daily journal from Kolkata city, also a proprietor and producer of Taza TV News channel has consistently observed this day to celebrate and promote Hindi literature and reporting. Both in print and electronic media, Mr. Newar has made a significant contribution to promote Hindi journalism. His yearly special issues, ‘Utsav’ bring together the intellectuals in Hindi literature across the city and beyond.

The pioneer in Hindi Journalism, Mr. Jugal Kishor Sukl’s endeavor to promote Hindi literature began with an idea to fight against oppressive policies of the British government. He was inspired by, among others, the great Hindi poet, Padmanabh Sinha, who in his works, had praised the Hindu religion and its values. Sukl’s endeavor to promote Hindi literature began on May 30, 1826, the day which has become the day of Hindi journalism.

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Where are all the pilgrims?

**By Mariella Bandini**

During the month of May in Jerusalem, the major holidays of the three major religions — Christian Easter, Jewish Passover, and the month of Ramaadan — passed with an almost total absence of pilgrims from abroad.

The holy sites and the streets of the Old City are usually crowded with tourists and pilgrims at this time of year, but they have been emptier for the past eight months due to the Israeli Hamas war. Muslims orderly make their way to the entrances of the Al-Aqsa mosque compound to pray, but otherwise, the Via Dolorosa is completely empty. There are no pilgrims coming to the Holy Sepulcher.

The Sanctuary of the Flagellation, maintained by the Franciscans at the starting point of the Via Crucis path, is always open — but that is empty, too. The "Sacred Garden," the oldest part of the Garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of the Mount of Olives where Jesus prayed on the night of Holy Thursday, "before the war, we had more than a hundred groups a day. Today, we welcome two or three groups on a good day," said Brother Simila Srebrenovil, the guardian of the Franciscan Convent of the Agony (Gethsemane), to CNA, May 2024.

Things aren’t any better at Gethsemane. "Before the war, we had more than a hundred groups a day. Today, we welcome two or three groups on a good day," said Brother Simila Srebrenovil, the guardian of the Franciscan Convent of the Agony (Gethsemane), to CNA, May 2024.

The Via Dolorosa is completely empty. There are no pilgrims coming to the Holy Sepulcher.

Even Bethlehem is empty.

"Tourism in Palestine is effectively zeroed out. Every day we lose $2.5 million" lamed Majed Ishaq, director general of the marketing department of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Palestine.

He described to CNA a dramatic situation: "Tourist facilities are closed; people working in the sector — including many Christians — have had no income for months. People are trying to sell houses, cars, furniture, to survive."

"International tourism passes through Israel; they control our borders. We are under a kind of siege," Ishaq continued.

"Reaching Bethlehem is still possible, but cities in the north, like Nablus or Jenin, and also Hebron further south, are almost unreachable. Even local tourism and internal travel are severely affected due to attacks by settlers."

Some groups arrive, especially via Jordan. The hope is that something will move at least by the end of the year, especially for the Christmas holidays.

According to data from the Israeli Ministry of Tourism, just over 80,000 people (tourists and pilgrims combined) entered the country in April — a decrease of 77% compared with April 2023 and 80% compared with April 2019, the peak year before the pandemic.

Cumulatively, from January through April, about 285,000 tourist arrivals were recorded, a decrease of about 78% in the corresponding period in 2023.

"The decline is attributed to the impact of the Iron Swords war whose name Israel has given to the campaign against Hamas in the Gaza Strip following the events of Oct. 7, 2023 although in the months that have passed since the outbreak of the war, there has been a certain increase in the number of tourist arrivals to Israel, but it is not yet possible to identify any trend. A small group of Orthodox Christians from Romania inside the Basilica of Gethsemane kiss the stone on which, according to tradition, Jesus sweated blood during the night of Holy Thursday, May 2024.

Dr. Varon Egar, director of research, statistics, and information management at the Israeli Ministry of Tourism, told CNA that "the Ministry of Tourism conducts a survey among incoming tourists, where they are asked several questions including the main purpose of their visit."

Hopes for the 2025 Jubilee

"A special exhibition of the Isiasha scrolls will be held in 2025 at the Israel Museum to commemorate its 60th anniversary. We are confident that many people will show interest. We will try to engage people who come on pilgrimage to the Holy Land to visit this special exhibition," Shani said.

Furthermore, in 2025, Catholics will celebrate a jubilee year. "We were very encouraged by the pope’s call for the jubilee," Shani said. "The churches of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, the Annunciation in Nazareth, and the Nativity in Bethlehem will be jubilee places; people will be encouraged to visit them, and we’re sure it will help to recover tourism. Some pilgrims pray at the eighth station of the Via Crucis. The holy sites and the streets of the Old City, usually crowded with tourists and pilgrims at this time of year, have been empty for the past eight months due to the war. "We want to encourage Jews and Christians leaders to push their believers to come on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land," Pini Shani, deputy director general and head of marketing administration of the Israel Ministry of Tourism, told CNA. May 2024.

The main Christian religious leaders in the Holy Land have never stopped lending you her heart so that you may come to the holy places. "Do not be afraid, return to Jerusalem and to the Holy Land!" Your presence is always a promise of peace, and we sincerely need peace today; may you come and bring us your peace," the Latin patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, at the end of the Palm Sunday procession.

"The interest that moves millions of tourists can come also with the commitment to brotherhood, so as to constitute a network of ‘messengers of peace’ who speak to the entire world to invoke the end of all war and the reopening of territories fall of history, culture, and peace. Peace building is not only possible; it is required of those who embark on a journey," the dicastery’s message said.

Seeing the Eucharist through the eyes of 10 saints

By ACT Prensa

Jesus is present in the Eucharist and the Catholic Church, and many of the Church’s saints have encouraged Catholics to prayerfully participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Throughout the centuries, the saints have taught us through their witness and their writings, the vital importance of the Eucharist in the Christian life.

Below 10 saints offer their wise counsel on loving the Eucharist more.

1. St. Alphonsus Mary Liguori

"Know for certain that the time you spend with devotion before this most divine Sacrament will be the time that will bring you the most good in this life and will console you the most in your death and in eternity. And know that perhaps you will gain more in a quarter day to push your believers to come on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land," Pini Shani, deputy director general and head of marketing administration of the Israel Ministry of Tourism, told CNA. May 2024.

2. St. John Bosco (Don Bosco)

"Dear young people, we want to be happy and joyful! Let us love Jesus in the Sacrament with all our hearts."

3. St. Charles Borromeo

"O boundless charity! Just as you gave us yourself, wholly God and wholly man, so let us leave all of yourself as food so that while we are pilgrims in this life we might not collapse in our weariness but be strengthened by you, heavenly food."

4. St. John Paul II

"Dear brothers and sisters: we must feel challenged by the needs of so many brothers. We cannot close our hearts to their requests for help. And we cannot forget that ‘man does not live by bread alone.’ We need the ‘living bread come down from heaven.’ This bread is Jesus. Feeding on it means receiving the very life of God, opening ourselves to the logic of love and sharing."

5. St. Therese of Lisieux

"I remember the words of a woman who said that some obtain all the favors asked for on one’s First Communion Day. This thought consoles me. I was only six years old at the time, I said to myself: ‘I pray that one poor old man (someone she had tried to give alms to) on the day of my First Communion.’"

6. St. Francis of Assisi

"When I cannot attend Holy Mass, I adore the Body of Christ with the eyes of the spirit in imagination, as I adore him when he is seen at Mass.”
Gopi Chand Narang (1931–2022) was an Indian theorist, literary critic, and scholar who wrote in Urdu and English. His Urdu literary criticism incorporated a range of modern theoretical frameworks including stylistics, structuralism, post-structuralism, and Eastern Poetics.

**Early life**
Narang was born in Dukki, a town in Balochistan, British Raj (now Pakistan). His father Dharam Chand Narang was a literator himself, and a scholar of Persian and Sanskrit, who inspired Gopi’s interest in literature.

**Education**
Narang received a master’s degree in Urdu from the University of Delhi, and a research fellowship from the Ministry of Education to complete his PhD in 1958. Almost like a lingua franca, Johnny Narang has said: “My journey with Urdu is a journey of ishq. Urdu was not my mother tongue; my paternal and maternal families spoke Seraiki. But I never realised that Urdu is not my mother tongue”.

**Teaching Career**
Narang taught Urdu literature at St. Stephen’s College (1957–58) before joining Delhi University, where he became a reader in 1961. In 1963 and 1968 he was a visiting professor at the University of Wisconsin, also teaching at the University of Minnesota and the University of Oslo. Narang joined Jamia Millia Islamia University in New Delhi as a professor in 1974, rejoining the University of Delhi from 1986 to 1995. In 2005, the university named him a professor emeritus.

Narang’s first book (Kurkhandi Dialect of Delhi Urdu) was published in 1961, a sociolinguistic analysis of an overlooked dialect spoken by indigenous workers and cultivators in Delhi. He has published over 60 books in Urdu, English, and Hindi.

**Achievements**

**Follow-up Penitential Rite**
There were some related questions to our piece on the penitential rite (June 28) which I would like to tackle here.

A Maryland reader asked: “In one parish the Mass started with the opening blessing and then to the prayer. There was no penitential rite... I later, I was told the penitential rite at that parish is skipped, but there was no pause between the opening blessing and the prayer. Is it OK to have a silent penitential rite at the Mass?”

Another reader, from Pennsylvania, inquired: “Instead of using one of the options for the penitential rite in the Roman Missal, our pastor makes up his own words, usually about the Gospel or feast day. When we are ‘calling to mind our sins,’ our pastor has us reflecting on the Gospel message, the Allel of the day, etc. I approached our pastor about this and he said, ‘We have options and I am using one.’”

“Then the priest invites those present to take part in the Act of Penitence, which, after a brief pause for silence, the entire community carries out through a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the priest’s absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance.”

Narang was an Indira Gandhi Memorial Fellow of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts from 2002 to 2004, and a 1997 resident of the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center in Italy. Narang received the Mazzini Gold Medal (Italy, 2005), the Amir Khusrow Award (Chicag, 1987), a Canadian Academy of Urdu Language and Literature Award (Toronto, 1987), an Association of Asian Studies (Mid-Atlantic Region) Award (US, 1982), a European Urdu Writers Society Award (London, 2005), an Urdu Markaz International Award (Los Angeles, 1995), and an Alami Farogh-e-Urdu Adab Award (Doha, 1995). He is the only Urdu writer to receive the Sahitya Akademi’s Bahadur Shah Zafar Award, the President’s National Gold Medal (Doha, 1998). He is the only Urdu writer honoured by the presidents of both India and Pakistan. In 1977 Narang received the President’s National Gold Medal from Pakistan for his work on Allama Iqbal, and received a addma Bhushan (1995) and Padma Shri (1990) from India. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1995, the Ghalib Award in 1996, Urdu Academy’s Bahadur Shah Zafar Award, Bharat Rashtra Parishad Award (both in 2010), Madhya Pradesh Iqbal Samman (2011) and the Sri Sairita Inamuddin Moori Devi Award (2012). The Sahitya Akademi conferred on Narang its highest honour, the Fellowship, in 2009.

Q: What is the efficacy of the penitential rite in the Mass as far as the forgiveness of sins are concerned? One prominent priest in our area advanced the reason for the reduction in Catholcs going to confession is because of the penitential. – J.W., Buffalo, New York

A: This subject is closely addressed in No. 51 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:

- “Then the priest invites those present to take part in the Act of Penitence, which, after a brief pause for silence, the entire community carries out through a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the priest’s absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance.”

- “It is clear that the absolution formula that concludes the act of penance is not sacramental absolution and in no way dispenses from the obligation of confessing grave sins before receiving Communion.”

- “Currently there have been some people purported this theory that this rite absolves sins and could substitute confession. It is certainly possible that such a defective catechesis regarding the sacramental nature of this rite could contribute to a falling away from the sacrament of reconciliation.”

- “However, I do not believe that the fault can be laid at the door of the rite itself. Some form of general admission of sin and unworthiness has formed part of the Mass since earliest times. It has always been seen as a positive element of confession, petition of forgiveness, and interior purification before entering into the celebration of the sacred mysteries.”

- “The non-absolutory nature of the penitential rite does not mean that venial sins are forgiven during this rite; they are also forgiven by receiving Communion and by the other intercessory prayers of Mass.”

- “This forgiveness is due to the general reparatory nature of all positive acts of prayer, sacrifice, devotion and worship which in some way create a positive counterbalance to those common sins, and the sinfulness of imperfections which plague our daily lives.”

- “Since participation in Mass is infinitely the greatest form of reparatory and intercessory prayer that a human being can undertake, it is clear that his or her venial sins are likewise forgiven during Mass.”

- “Thus it is clear that the absolution for-
By Dr. Somak Sen

The higher education department has created a chair professor post at St Xavier’s University, Kolkata (SXUK), in memory of Mother Teresa. The post will be called The Mother Teresa Chair Professor for Peace.

The post was created following an announcement by chief minister Mamata Banerjee at the fourth convocation of the university on February 6, 2023. The total grant approved by the government is Rs 30 lakh per annum, said Father John Felix Raj, the university’s vice-chancellor.

Speaking on the significance of the post, the VC said: “The chair professor will carry out a lot of research on peace both at the national and international levels. Today we need peace, especially immediately, when there are divisions, hatred, violence in the name of religion, in the name of even political parties, in the name of castes and interest groups.”

The chair professor will be attached to the university under the Father Lafont Centre for Excellence in Research and Innovation (LCERI).

The chair professor may also be required to take some classes as and when required,” the vice-chancellor said.