



INTERNOS

UBI CARITAS ET AMORIBI DEUS EST



DIOCESE OF TRINCOMALEE

APRIL 2024

“Through small Christian Communities
towards a Synodal Church”



Finally, all of you, have unity of mind,
sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. (1 Peter 3:8)



North - East Priests' Lenten gathering - Madhu Shrine - 04.03.2024



Diocesan Lenten Prayer Service - Palaiyoothu - 09.03.2024



Diocesan Way of the Cross - Nachchikudah (China-Bay) - 16.03.2024



Laying of foundation stone for Home for Senior Priests - 19.03.2024



Bishop's Message



My dear Fathers, Sisters and Brothers,

Greetings in the Name of the Risen Lord! The Lord is Risen, Alleluia!!

It is always joyful to read and listen to Easter events in the Gospels. Risen Christ gave joy and confidence to the disciples and strengthened their faith. They were bewildered at all appearances of the Risen Lord. Resurrection experiences of the disciples are unique, irreplaceable and incomparable events in the life of the disciples. The significance of Resurrection appearances were meant to inspire and encourage disciples not to be in the closed up room but to come out, move forward and share their “Jesus experience”. We have gone through the Season of Lent. Our mission is not over with Lent. We have to be ‘Easter people’ taking the teachings, attitude, life and mind of Jesus to our people.

Lenten season has been a great moment of spiritual renewal for all. We concentrated more on Lent this year and prepared different programmes. Lenten Prayer service, confessions, pilgrimages, Passion Play, Lenten education programmes and Way of the cross at Nachchikudah were very meaningful for the season. There were also other programmes organized at parish as well as vicariate level. Confessions in parishes were organized and priests in big number were available to hear confessions. Above all Holy Mass, Way of the Cross and Holy Triduum services were held. Chrism Mass was another remarkable experience for those who came to Cathedral from neighboring parishes. Fr. Kingsley Robert, conducted seminars on Holy Week services for all those who are involved in organizing them. I appreciate all the priests, religious and lay faithful who were directly or/and indirectly involved in Lenten programmes.

Divine Mercy Feast will be celebrated on Sunday the 7th of April. Shrine at Alles Garden is a fast-growing parish. Let us give our support to the parish priest and the parish community.

14th Sunday is National Small Christian Communities Sunday. “Through small Christian Communities Towards a Synodal Church” is the theme for this Sunday. Let us make use of this opportunity to encourage and revive SCCs in our parishes.

21st Sunday is Vocations Sunday. We pray for vocations and seminary formation. Our diocese has limited number of Minor and Major seminarians. I urge everyone to pray for vocations and encourage students to concentrate on their vocations.

Feast of St. Joseph Vaz Church at Vedha Thivu will be celebrated on Saturday the 13th of April. Fathers may organize their parish community to come for the festive celebration.

I wish you all a Happy Easter. May the Risen Lord guide and protect you always.

Blessings to all!

+ Sr. Emmanuel

✠ Rt. Rev. Dr. Noel Emmanuel

Bishop of Trincomalee.

Remembering with Gratitude

Birthdays:

- 11.04.2024 - Rev. Sr. M. Niroshini (AC)
- 24.04.2024 - Rev. Sr. M. Nirosha (AC)
- 27.04.2024 - Rev. Fr. M. Angelo Ponniah (SJ)
- 30.04.2024 - Rev. Bro. P. Lawrence (FC)
- 30.04.2024 - Rev. Sr. M. Sutharshana (AC)

Ordination Anniversary:

- 09.04.2024 - Rev. Fr. Roison Sparks (8 Years)
- 15.04.2024 - Rev. Fr. Emerson Ragel (1 Year)
- 24.04.1986 - Rev. Fr. Maria Sebastian (OMI) (38 Years)
- 27.04.2024 - Rev. Fr. Angelo Ponniah (SJ) (36 Years)
- 28.04.2024 - Rev. Fr. T. Kingsley Robert (41 Years)
- 30.04.2024 - Rev. Fr. Anton Devaseelan (13 Years)
- 30.04.2024 - Most Rev. Dr. Joseph Ponniah (43 Years)

Feast Day:

- 11.04.2024 - Rev. Sr. M. Niroshini (AC)
- 24.04.2024 - Rev. Sr. M. Nirosha (AC)
- 30.04.2024 - Rev. Sr. M. Sutharshana (AC)





Bishop's Diary

April - 2024

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|----------------|---|--|
| 06th Saturday | - | Session for Laity at Orr's Hill parish |
| 07th Sunday | - | Festive Mass at Divine Mercy Shrine, Alles Garden |
| 08th Monday | - | Meeting of the College of Consultors |
| 4.00 p.m. | - | Administrative Council Meeting |
| 09th Tuesday | - | Meeting of the Council of Priests |
| 13th Saturday | - | Festive Mass at Vedha Thivu |
| 14th Sunday | - | Session for Laity at Muthur parish |
| 17th Wednesday | - | North-East Bishops' Council Meeting at Vavuniya |
| 20th Saturday | - | Women's Day Celebrations |
| 21st Sunday | - | 5th Anniversary commemoration of the
Easter Bomb Blast |
| 23rd Tuesday | - | Meeting of the CNC for Laity in Colombo |
| 24th Wednesday | - | Meeting of the CNC for Migrants in Colombo |
| 25 & 26 | - | Meeting of the Family Apostolate in Kandy |
| 27th Saturday | - | 8.30 a.m. - Book Release
Ex-Co meeting of the Diocesan Pastoral Council |
| 28th Sunday | - | Session for Laity at Cathedral parish |

Pope's Prayer intention for the month of April 2024

For the role of women

We pray that the dignity and immense value of women be recognized in every culture, and for the end of discrimination that they experience in different parts of the world.



Small Christian Communities

(14.04.2024 – 3rd Sunday of Easter – Anbiyam Sunday)

What is a Small Christian Community (SCC)?

A gathering of people (usually 6 – 12) that:

- Pray, listen and reflect upon Scripture together
- Share ways the word of God relates to one's life experience and connect everyday life with faith
- Take on responsibility for living as Church in the world
- Encourage and support one another
- Serve others, fulfilling the call to discipleship

It's an experience of the larger Church at the smaller level.

Small Christian Communities (SCC) form to support members of the church who wish to be in an intimate and ever-deepening relationship with Jesus. Also known as Faith Sharing groups, SCCs represent a way for you to know Jesus, grow in your faith in Jesus by the study of His Holy Word. SCC groups demonstrate their discipleship through service to each other, the parish and the surrounding community.

Small Christian Communities are not:

- Bible study groups though Scripture is an important part.
- Counselling groups but they can be therapeutic.
- Prayer groups although prayer is the foundation.
- Social groups though relationships and caring are essential.
- Teaching groups but catechesis (faith formation) is an essential element.
- Justice groups although they work to transform society.

Courtesy: <https://www.nativitycatholicchurch.org/small-christian-communities>.

Pope's Vocations Day message: 'Pilgrims of hope, builders of peace'



The Pope's message focuses on the theme: "Called to sow seeds of hope and to build peace."

The Holy Father noted that all Christians are called to welcome our God-given vocation to serve Him in the world, whether it be through the consecrated life, the priesthood, marriage, or even as a single person. Gratitude, he said, should characterize World Vocations Day celebrations, as we recall the countless Christians who serve God in all walks of life. He especially invited young people to make room for God, so that they might find happiness in His call, which always respects our freedom. "Let Jesus draw you to Himself," said the Pope. "Bring Him your important questions by reading the Gospels; let Him challenge you by His presence, which always provokes in us a healthy crisis."

Synodal aspect to praying for vocations

Pope Francis went on to invite Christians to be "pilgrims of hope" as the Church journeys toward the 2025 Jubilee. Amid the vast variety of charisms and vocations in the Church, God's people are guided by the Holy Spirit and form the Body of Christ as members of a

great family and many parts of a whole, he said. “In this sense,” he added, “the World Day of Prayer for Vocations has a synodal character: amid the variety of our charisms, we are called to listen to one another and to journey together in order to acknowledge them and to discern where the Spirit is leading us for the benefit of all.”

The Pope also urged everyone to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life, so that the Lord may “send out labourers into His harvest.” As the Church prepares for the Jubilee with a Year of Prayer, Christians should engage daily in a prayer that listens for the voice of God and helps us become “pilgrims of hope and builders of peace.”

Pilgrims of hope and builders of peace

Turning to the heart of his message, Pope Francis recalled that Christian pilgrimage means keeping our eyes, minds, and hearts fixed on our goal—which is Christ—and set out every day anew. “Our pilgrimage on this earth is far from a pointless journey or aimless wandering,” he said. “On the contrary, each day, by responding to God’s call, we try to take every step needed to advance towards a new world where people can live in peace, justice, and love.”

The goal of every Christian vocation, added the Pope, is to become “men and women of hope,” bearing the Gospel message of hope and peace amid countless crises and “the baneful spectre of a third world war fought piecemeal.” Christ’s Resurrection, noted Pope Francis, is the force that drives our Christian hope and allows us to face the challenges our world present us.

Christian passion for life

In conclusion, the Pope invited Christians to “rise up” and awaken from our indifference by embracing our vocation and letting Christ guide our steps. “Let us be passionate about life,” he said, “and commit ourselves to caring lovingly for those around us, in every place where we live.”

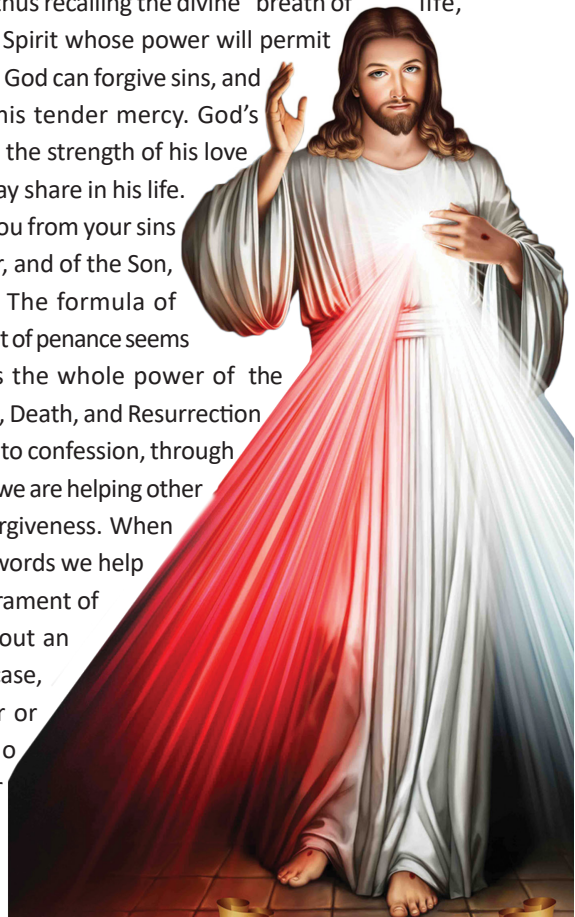
Courtesy:<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2024-03/pope-francis-world-day-prayer-vocations-message-hope-peace.html>.

Commentary on the Gospel:

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

The Gospel for this 2nd Sunday of Easter, also called Divine Mercy Sunday, recounts two apparitions of our Lord to his disciples. On the day of the Resurrection, under the two-fold sign of peace and joy, Jesus breathes on them, thus recalling the divine “breath of life,” and gives them the Holy Spirit whose power will permit them to forgive sins. Only God can forgive sins, and he does so because of his tender mercy. God’s omnipotence is shown in the strength of his love that cleanses us so we may share in his life.

“And I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The formula of absolution in the sacrament of penance seems so rapid, but it contains the whole power of the merits of the Life, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. Each time we go to confession, through the Communion of Saints we are helping other faithful to ask God for forgiveness. When through our example or words we help others to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, we carry out an act of mercy. Such is the case, for example, of a father or mother of a family who brings their daughters or sons to confession, with the parents going to confession first.



Thomas was not present for that apparition on the day of the Resurrection. The following Sunday Jesus once again became present in his glorious Body in the midst of his disciples. He addressed Thomas, inviting him to touch his wounds. Thomas, incredulous up until then, makes a profession of faith: “My Lord and my God!” It is the clearest statement of Christ’s divine nature in the Gospel. By repeating it, we can show our faith in Christ, true God and true Man, eternal Son of the Father (cf. Jn 5:1-6).

“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.” Thus our Lord blesses us; at the same time, we ask him to increase our faith in the love which, in the Spirit, God the Father has for us, his sons and daughters in Christ. And our gratitude should lead us to want to share our joy with many others, telling them: “His mercy endures forever” (Ps 118:2).

Under the protection of our Lady, mother of Mercy, we will learn to help our neighbors in their spiritual and material needs by carrying out the works of mercy – both the spiritual ones (instructing, advising, consoling, comforting, forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently) and the corporal (feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, burying the dead, and giving alms to the poor). This is the picture we see in the Acts of the Apostles of the life of the first Christians (cf. Acts 4:32-35). Our Lord’s Passion, Death and Resurrection has bestowed divine Mercy on them, and enabled them to share it with many others.

Courtesy: <https://opusdei.org/en/gospel/commentary-on-the-gospel-divine-mercy-sunday/>.



Laughter is the Best Medicine



THE HAND OF GOD

Little Philip was walking home in the rain with his mother following Sunday worship. It finally stopped raining as they rounded the corner, where to their surprise and delight appeared a vivid double rainbow in the sky.

“Doesn’t it look like an artist painted this rainbow?” his mother exclaimed. “I bet God painted this just for you!”

“Yes,” replied Philip, “God did it, and he did it left handed.”

Confused, his mother asked him, “What makes you say God did this with his left hand?”

“Well,” said Philip, “we learned in Sunday School that Jesus sits on God’s right hand.”



Blessing and opening of Parish House – Langanagar – 19.03.2024



Blessing of the Holy Oils – Chrism Mass, Cathedral – 25.03.2024



Visit of Students & Lecturers from the Department of Philosophy,
Peradeniyai University to Andankulam Church – 30.03.2024



Unity Octave Programme – Caritas-EHED, Trincomalee



Sustainable Agricultural
Techniques Seminar



Nutrition Programme



Livelihood Programme



Tree Planting campaign



Peace Building Programme

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