

# *The Diocese of Banjul* **NEWSLETTER**

*Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter*


**COVER STORY**

*Page 4-6*

## **Is It In The Bible?**

*Biblical and Historical  
Evidences Backing the  
Assumption of The Blessed  
Virgin Mary*

*(The Gambia too join  
Catholics all over the world to  
celebrate the feast of The  
Assumption of Mary on  
August 15th every year  
(locally called 'Sang Marie')*



**Regina Caeli Laetari  
Queen of Heaven**

O Queen of Heaven, rejoice,  
Alleluia.  
For He Whom thou didst  
merit to bear, Alleluia.  
Hath risen as He said,  
Alleluia.  
Pray for us to God, Alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad,  
O Virgin Mary! Alleluia.  
R. For the Lord  
is truly risen, Alleluia.

**Let us Pray:**

O God, Who by the  
Resurrection of Thy Son,  
Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
hast vouchsafed  
to make glad  
the whole world, grant,  
we beseech Thee,  
that, through the  
intercession  
His Holy Mother,  
the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
we may attain the joys  
of eternal life.  
Through the same Christ  
our Lord.  
Amen



**I AM  
SAYING  
THANK  
YOU  
- Fr. Peter  
Lopez**

## **EDITORIAL HINT**

*Read on in Page 3*

## **Gambia 2026 and Looming Disaster**

**A New Government of the Rich, by the  
Rich, and for the Rich**

# DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

## *Our Mission and Vision*

**We entertain, we encourage, and we enlighten.** More so, Diocese of Banjul Newsletter gives you the tools you need to feed your faith life, nurture our society and relationships, care for your family, and bring the light of Christ to others. We connect with our readers through personal stories of triumphs and struggles, joys and challenges, and the lighter side of Christian living.

**Diocese of Banjul Newsletter is a source of support and encouragement for our society,** especially those who love their faith, those who struggle with their faith, and those who long to learn more about the richness of Catholic tradition. More so, we strive to build a healthy society for the welfare of all.

**Diocese of Banjul Newsletter seeks the positive in the world and in our Church.** It emphasizes those things that our society is doing right and well, as a means of inspiring and encouraging others to do the same. It is hope-filled, optimistic, and forward-looking. In the main, the newsletter moves our readers beyond inspiration and toward action, and gives them the information, tools, and resources they need to answer God's call to holiness and bring the light of Christ to others.

## The Pope's Prayer Intentions 2025

### August - FOR MUTUAL COEXISTENCE

Let us pray that societies where coexistence seems more difficult might not succumb to the temptation of confrontation for ethnic, political, religious, or ideological reasons.

### September - FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ALL OF CREATION

Let us pray that, inspired by Saint Francis, we might experience our interdependence with all creatures who are loved by God and worthy of love and respect.

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## EDITORIAL

**Gambia 2026 and Looming Disaster****A New Government of the Rich, by the Rich, and for the Rich**

Just days ago, the National Assembly, rammed through sweeping amendments to the Elections Bill that will fundamentally alter the Gambian electoral landscape. Gone is the ambition of broad participation. Instead, electoral democracy now demands a deep-pocketed and super-rich candidate. Under the newly approved legislation:

- Presidential aspirants must stash D1,000,000 (Almost US \$14,000) to the IEC.
- National Assembly candidates must pay D150,000 (Almost US \$3,000).
- Mayoral/Chairperson hopefuls are hit with D100,000.
- Ward Councilor contenders now must ante up D10,000.

These are not idle increases. They dwarf the profound jump from D10,000 to D500,000 for presidential hopefuls and D5,000 to D50,000 for NAMs imposed by Yahya Jammeh in 2015; a move condemned by none other than the henchmen of the current leadership and the UDP at the time. A roll-back was championed in March 2017 to restore deposits to D10,000 and D5,000, respectively, justified that move as necessary to “encourage widespread participation of the ordinary citizenry”. The government now once again recruits the same barriers, this time twenty-fold higher. If Jammeh’s 2015 hike was branded “a deliberate attempt to thwart the democratic process,” this new amendment is nothing less than its full-scale invasion of Gambians’ political rights, cloaked in hypocrisy and crude craft.

**A Fatal Blow to Women and Youth Representation**

Over 65% of Gambian women and youth live in extreme poverty, according to development indicators. These are the very groups that, in any genuine democracy, should be empowered, encouraged, and elevated to political participation; not economically excluded by financial barricades. This new amendment imposes a cruel and unjustifiable penalty on those who already face systemic marginalization. For a young woman in Basse or a bright-minded youth leader in Farafenni, these astronomical nomination deposits are nothing short of a political death sentence to their aspirations. It is an explicit message: your poverty disqualifies you from leadership.

In an era when global democracies are moving toward inclusive governance, The Gambia is regressing into a plutocratic model; where money, not merit, is the primary qualification for leadership. This amendment doesn’t just undermine inclusion; it institutionalizes exclusion and a national disaster. Make no mistake; these fees are not merely administrative. They are tools of exclusion. At a time when 50% of Gambians survive on less than US \$1/day, and The Gambia is among the 15 poorest countries worldwide, requiring someone to deposit D1 million in advance of a presidential nomination is a deliberate chokehold on political competition. Moreover, this move shifts the electoral funding dynamic dangerously: party coffers and private sponsors gain newfound influence in candidate selection. What accountability or oversight ensures that such sponsorships are free from money laundering, illegal wealth acquisition, or undue influence? Sadly, nothing in the bill addresses these systemic concerns.

**Undermining the IEC’s Democratic Legitimacy**

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) established by statute to manage fair and inclusive elections—has been repurposed as a quasi-revenue agency. This is both absurd and dangerous. The IEC’s role is not to gate keep based on wealth, but to safeguard electoral rights, ensure impartiality, and uphold transparent processes. Elevating it to a revenue collection body erodes its democratic function, turning it into a barrier rather than a facilitator of elections.

**A Parliament Without a Conscience**

What is perhaps most disturbing in this entire saga is the soulless complicity of the National Assembly Members who voted in favor of this draconian amendment. These are individuals elected not to entrench privilege, but to protect the powerless—not to erect barriers, but to amplify access. Yet, in one swift, cold-hearted legislative act, they chose to betray the

very people who entrusted them with power. By endorsing a bill that locks out the poor, muzzles the youth, and erases the dreams of aspiring female leaders, these lawmakers have abandoned their moral compass. They have become willing agents of a system that reduces democracy to a cash auction. How do you sit in a parliament built on the back of a democratic struggle and turn around to strangle that very democracy with the cord of elitism? It is not just a legislative misstep; it is a historic shame and parliamentary self-embarrassment. These NAMs, by their votes, have aligned themselves with oppression, prioritized power over principle, and demonstrated that their allegiance is not to the people, but to their pockets and their absurd politics of exclusion. History will remember them; not as nation-builders, but as gatekeepers of inequality and enablers of democratic regression. And when the doors of political participation slam shut in the faces of the ordinary Gambian, we must remember who held the keys, and chose cruelty over conscience.

**Soulless Gatekeepers: Condemning the 33 National Assembly Members (NAMs)**

In the absence of public names and despite our demand for transparency, the 33 NAMs who endorsed this unrelenting, barbaric law have shown themselves as soulless gatekeepers, prioritizing their private pocket and privilege over public good. Their vote is not merely a political act; it is a betrayal of trust and democratic ethics:

- They have turned their backs on the poor, the youth, and Gambian women, many of whom live below the poverty line and cannot afford deposits ranging from D10,000 to D1 million in pursuit of public service.
- They have chosen to weaponized money, not merit, as the gateway to leadership.

In voting for this bill, these NAMs have betrayed the nation’s Constitution which guarantees that “all power emanates from the sovereign will of the people”, and instead endorsed a system where only the wealthy can rule. Without naming names, we must still hold them accountable: the 33 who voted yes are the ones who caged democracy in chains of elitism. Their legacy isn’t one of courage or representation; it is one of complicity in exclusion, and history will remember them as the architects of a plutocracy; a government for the rich, by the rich, and of the rich.

**Why This Matters for 2026 and Beyond**

Restricting access to political office to the wealthy undermines social cohesion, deepens inequality, and corrodes public trust. This reversal by those who once opposed it, and going from reformer to gatekeeper delivers a killing-blow to their legacy. For a truly participatory democracy, we must shift focus from gatekeeping candidates to regulating party finance, enhancing transparency, and ensuring equal opportunity, regardless of a candidate’s wealth. Women and youth, the majority of the country’s population and the most affected by inequality, are now structurally locked out of national political leadership. Gambians deserve more than governance skewed towards the rich. Therefore, international development partners, the civil society, journalists, religious leaders, women groups, youth organizations, opposition parties, and legal advocates must unite to highlight the unconstitutionality, unjust socioeconomic barriers, and democratic harm this bill inflicts. A transparent review of party and candidate funding sources is urgently needed to ensure money is clean and power is accountable. The IEC must cease being a financial Bouncer at the gates of democracy and return to its core mandate: equal, impartial, and accessible elections. The gambit is clear: weaponized wealth to limit competition. But democracy is not a financial club; it is a public right. The upcoming 2026 elections must not become “The Political Lottery of the Rich.” Only by exposing the absurdity, rallying public outcry, and demanding renewed commitment to inclusive democracy can Gambians hope to break this new archaic elitist cycle. Gambia 2026 must not be the nation of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich. It can, and must be, a democracy that truly belongs to all.

## COVER STORY

## Is It In The Bible?

*Biblical and Historical Evidences Backing the Assumption of The Blessed Virgin Mary*

**B**iblical and non-biblical evidences about that, Mary is immortal to the present time through him who had his abode in her and who assumed and raised her above the higher regions. Truly, Virgin Mary assumed into heaven. However; "Is It in the Bible?" Is a recurring challenge faced by Catholics from other denominations and religious groups. This question is often posed in debates over doctrine, where Catholic beliefs and practices are challenged. This question affects almost all catholic dogmas. Particularly, these doctrinal questioning groups claim Scripture has no evidence of the Immaculate Conception; however, the evidence is all over the place. Thus, it has become pertinent to address this lingering question especially, as it affects the assumption of the Virgin Mary into heaven, as we approach the great feast of Her Assumption, also called "Sang Marie" in our local parlance, in honor of this year's feast day.

The catholic church over several centuries have always believed in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, and it stems from evident biblical verses, for instances:

- Mary is revealed to be "full of grace" in Luke 1:28.
- Mary is revealed to be the fulfillment of the prophetic "Daughter of Zion" of Isaiah 12:1-6; Zephaniah 3:14-16; Zechariah 2:10; etc.
- Mary is revealed to be "the beginning of the new creation" in fulfillment of the prophecy of Jeremiah 31:22.
- Mary is revealed to possess a "blessed state" parallel with Christ's in Luke 1:42.
- Mary is called not just "blessed" among women, but "more blessed than all women" (including Eve) in Luke 1:42.
- Mary is revealed to be the spotless "Ark of the Covenant" in Luke 1.
- Mary is revealed to be the "New Eve" in Luke 1:37-38; John 2:4, 19:26-27; Revelation 12; and elsewhere.
- Mary is revealed to be free from the pangs of labor in fulfillment of Isaiah 66:7-8.

Mary was "saved" from sin in a most sublime manner. She was given the grace to be "saved" completely from sin so she never committed even the slightest transgression. The problem here is that these people who question the catholic church's belief in Mary's sinlessness tend to emphasize God's "salvation" almost exclusively to the forgiveness of sins actually committed. However, Sacred Scripture indicates that salvation can also refer to man being protected from sinning before the fact. Jude 24-25 states: "Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of His glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever".

The great Franciscan theologian, Duns Scotus, explained about 600 years ago that falling into sin could be likened to a man approaching unaware a massive twenty-foot-deep ditch. If he falls into the ditch, he will need someone to lower a rope and save him. But if someone were to warn him of the danger ahead, resulting in him not falling into the ditch at all, the man would have been saved

from falling in the first place. Analogously, Mary was saved from sin by receiving the grace to be preserved from it. But she was still saved.

**But what about "all have sinned,"** and "if any man says he has no sin he is a liar and the truth is not in him?" Wouldn't "all" and "any man" include Mary? On the surface, this sounds reasonable. But this way of thinking carried to its logical conclusion would list Jesus Christ in the company of sinners as well. No Christian would dare say that! Yet no Christian can deny the plain texts of Scripture declaring Christ's full humanity, either. Thus, if one is going to take 1 John 1:8 in a strict literal sense, then "any man" would apply to Jesus as well!

The truth is, and all Christians agree, that Jesus Christ was an exception to Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:8. And the Bible tells us He was, as in Hebrews 4:15: "Christ was tempted in all points even as we are and yet he was without sin." The real question now is, are there any other exceptions to this rule? Yes, there are. In fact, there are millions of them.

First of all, we need to recall that both of these texts; Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:8, are dealing with personal rather than original sin. Romans 5:12 will deal with original sin. And there are two exceptions to that general biblical norm as well. But for now, we will simply deal with Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:8. 1 John 1:8 obviously refers to personal sin because in the very next verse, St. John tells us, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." We do not confess original sin; we confess personal sins.

The context of Romans 3:23 makes clear that it too refers to personal sin: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands, no one seeks for God. All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong; no one does good, not even one. Their throat is an open grave. They use their tongues to deceive. The venom of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness". (Romans 3:10-14). Original sin is not something we do; it is something we have inherited. Romans 3 deals with personal sin because it speaks of sins committed by the sinner. With this in mind, consider this: has a baby in the womb or a child of two ever committed a personal sin? No, he hasn't (see Rom. 9:11)! Or how about the mentally challenged who do not have the use of their intellects and wills? These cannot sin because in order to sin, a person has to know that the act he is about to perform is sinful while freely engaging his will in carrying it out. Without the proper faculties to enable them to sin, children before the age of accountability and anyone who does not have the use of his intellect and will cannot sin. Right there you have millions of exceptions to Romans 3:23 and 1 John 1:8.

The question remains: how do we know that Mary is an exception to the norm of "all have sinned"? And more specifically, is there biblical support for the Immaculate Conception? Yes, there is. Indeed, there is much biblical



support, but in this brief article I shall cite just three examples, among the eight, as noted before, that give us biblical support for this ancient doctrine of the Faith.

**Luke 1:28:** “And [the angel Gabriel] came to [Mary] and said, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.”

Many of the contestants of catholic doctrine will insist that this text is little more than a common greeting of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary, and would ask; What would this have to do with an immaculate conception? Yet the truth is, according to Mary herself, this was no common greeting. The text reveals that Mary was “greatly troubled at the saying and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be” (Luke 1:29). What was it about this greeting that was so uncommon for Mary to react this way? There are at least two key reasons:

First, according to many biblical scholars as well as Pope St. John Paul II, the angel did more than simply greet Mary. The angel actually communicated a new name or title to her. In Greek, the greeting was *kaire*, *kekaritomene*, or “hail, full of grace.” Generally speaking, when one greeted another with *kaire*, a name or title would almost be expected to be found in the immediate context. “Hail, king of the Jews” in John 19:3 and “Claudias Lysias, to his Excellency the governor Felix, greeting” (Acts 23:26) are two biblical examples of this. The fact that the angel replaces Mary’s name in the greeting with “full of grace” was anything but common.

In Hebrew culture, names, and name changes, tell us something that is permanent about the character and calling of the one named. Just recall the name changes of Abram to Abraham (changed from “father” to “father of the multitudes”) in Genesis 17:5, Saray to Sarah (“my princess” to “princess”) in Genesis 17:15, and Jacob to Israel (“supplanter” to “he who prevails with God”) in Genesis 32:28.

In each case, the names reveal something permanent about the one named. Abraham and Sarah transition from being a “father” and “princess” of one family to being “father” and “princess” or “mother” of the entire people of God (see Isa. 51:1-2; Rom. 4:1-18). They become patriarch and matriarch of God’s people forever. Jacob/Israel becomes the patriarch whose name, “he who prevails with God,” continues forever in the Church, which is called “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16). The people of God will forever “prevail with God” in the image of the patriarch Jacob, who was not just named Israel, but truly became “he who prevails with God.” An entire tome could be written concerning the significance of God’s revelation of his name in Exodus 3:14-15 as “I AM”. God revealed to us volumes about his divine nature in and through the revelation of his name: God is pure being with no beginning and no end, he is all perfection, etc.

When you add to this the fact that St. Luke uses the perfect passive participle, *kekaritomene*, as his “name” for Mary, we get deeper insight into the meaning of Mary’s new name. This word literally means “she who has been graced” in a completed sense. This verbal adjective, “graced,” is not just describing a simple past action. Greek has the undefined tense for that. The perfect tense is used to indicate that an action has been completed in the past, resulting in a present state of being. That’s Mary’s name! So, what does it tell us about Mary? Well, the average Christian is not completed in grace and in a permanent sense (see Phil. 3:8-12). But according to the angel, Mary is. You and I sin, not because of grace, but because of a lack of grace, or a lack of our cooperation with grace, in our lives. This greeting of the angel is one clue into the

unique character and calling of the immaculate Mother of God.

One objection to the above is rooted in Ephesians 2:8-9. Here, St. Paul uses the perfect tense and passive voice when he says, “For by grace you have been saved.” Why wouldn’t we then conclude that all Christians are complete in salvation for all time? There seems to be an inconsistency in usage here.

Actually, the Catholic Church understands that Christians are completed in grace when they are baptized. In context, Paul is speaking about the initial grace of salvation in Ephesians 2. The verses leading up to Ephesians 2:8-9, make this clear: “We all lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and so, we were by nature children of wrath . . . even when we were dead in trespasses and sins” (verses. 3-5).

But there is no indication here, as there is with Mary, that the Christian is going to stay that way. In other words, Ephesians 2:8-9 does not confer a name. In fact, because of original sin, we can guarantee that though we are certainly perfected in grace through baptism, ordinarily speaking, we will not stay that way after we are baptized; that is, if we live for very long afterward (see 1 John 1:8)! There may be times in the lives of Christians when they are completed or perfected in grace temporarily; for example, after going to confession or receiving the Eucharist well disposed. We let God, of course, be the judge of this, not us, as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 4:3-4: “I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted (Gr., justified). It is the Lord who judges me”. But only Mary is given the name “full of grace,” and in the perfect tense, indicating that this permanent state of Mary was completed’ that she was conceived immaculate.

### The Assumption of Mary in History

The doctrine of the Assumption of Mary began with a historical event to which Scripture alludes and that been believed in the Church for 2,000 years. It was passed down in the oral tradition of the Church and developed over the centuries, but it was always believed by the Catholic faithful. Let us examine the facts: Archaeology has revealed two tombs of Mary, one in Jerusalem and one in Ephesus. The fact that Mary lived in both places explains the two tombs. But what is inexplicable apart from the Assumption is the fact that there is no body in either tomb. And there are no relics. Anyone who peruses early Church history knows that Christian belief in the communion of saints and the sanctity of the body in radical contrast to the Gnostic disdain for “the flesh” led early Christians to seek out with the greatest fervor relics from the bodies of great saints. Cities, and, later, religious orders, would fight over the bones of great saints.

This is one reason why we have relics of the apostles and so many of the greatest saints and martyrs in history. Yet never was there a single relic of Mary’s body? As revered as Mary was, this would be very strange, except for the fact of the assumption of her body.

On the historical front, Fr. Michael O’Carroll, in his book, *Theotokos: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, writes: We have known for some time that there were widespread “Transitus Stories” that date from the sixth century that teach Mary’s glorious Assumption. It was the promulgation of the dogma of the Assumption by Pope Pius XII that rekindled interest in these stories of the end of Mary’s life. In 1955, Fr. A.A. Wenger published *L’Assomption* (p. 59). Fr. Wenger found a Greek manuscript that verified what scholars had previously believed to be true. Because there were whole families of manuscripts from different areas of the world in the sixth century that told a similar story of Mary’s

Assumption, there had to be previous manuscripts from which everyone received their data. Fr. Wenger discovered one of these earlier manuscripts, believed to be the source later used by John of Thessalonica in the sixth century in his teaching on the Assumption. Fr. O'Carroll continues: "Some years later, M. Haibach-Reinisch added to the dossier an early version of Pseudo-Melito, the most influential text in use in the Latin Church. This could now, it was clear, be dated earlier than the sixth century. . . . V. Arras claimed to have found an Ethiopian version of it, which he published in 1973; its similarity to the Irish text gave the latter new status. In the same year M. Van Esbroeck brought out a Gregorian version, which he had located in Tiflis, and another, a Pseudo-Basil, in the following year, found in Mount Athos". Much still remains to be explored. The Syriac fragments have increased importance, being put as far back as the third century by one commentator. The whole story will eventually be placed earlier, probably in the second century. This is significant. Recently discovered Syriac fragments of stories about the Assumption of Mary have been dated as early as the third century. And there are undoubtedly more manuscripts to be found. It must be remembered that when we are talking about these "Transitus stories," we are not only talking about ancient

manuscripts and fragments of manuscripts, but we are talking also about two different "families" of manuscripts written in nine languages. They all agree on Mary's Assumption and they presuppose that the story was already widely known.

### A Final Thought

Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe, that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords and the conqueror of sin and death (*Lumen Gentium* 59). Since the time of the promulgation of the dogma of the Assumption of Mary, there has been much new discovery. We now have written evidence of belief in the Assumption of Mary as far back as the third century. Though it is not necessary for there to be written evidence all the way back to the second century for us as Catholics because we have Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture as interpreted by the Magisterium of the Church first and foremost that has already given us the truth of the Matter, it is really exciting that new historical discoveries continue to be made and once again, they confirm the Faith of our Fathers.

## OPINION

BY FR. GABOU SECKA



# SOME TRUTHS ABOUT MARY

### Mary Corredemptrix

The Latin word '*Corredemptrix*' is the feminine form of the noun *Corredemptor*, so that it means a female Co-redeemer, and has been used of Mary because of her association with the Redeemer Jesus Christ in salvation. This word *Corredemptrix* is perhaps the most exalted of several honorific Latin titles that have been applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Others are *Mediatrix*, meaning a 'female Mediator' and this expression seems to be no less exalted than *Corredemptrix*. There are other titles such as *Auxiliatrix* and *Adjutrix*, both meaning 'helper', but these carry less weight of honour than do *Corredemptrix* and *Mediatrix*, especially when the latter is expanded to '*Mediatrix* of all graces'. Of course, it is not only Mary who is honoured by such titles, but the female sex in general, for they carry an explicit recognition of the part played by a woman in the scheme of salvation and diminish the reproach that in Christianity women have only a passive and dependent role.

In the early part of the twentieth century, when there was a great upsurge of Marian devotion, culminating in the promulgation of the dogma of the Assumption in 1950, one heard a good deal of the terms *Corredemptrix* and *Mediatrix*. In fact, it appears that many Catholics were hoping that there would be a formal acknowledgement of Mary's co-redemptive or mediatorial participation in salvation. But that has never happened, Pope Pius XII turned his attention to the Assumption.

Since the time of Vatican II, such expressions as *Corredemptrix* and *Mediatrix* have been more rarely heard than they were in earlier years. It is well-known that at Vatican II there was a division of opinion over the way in which the Council should speak about the place of Mary in Christian faith. By a quite narrow vote, it was decided not to compose a separate document on Mary, as had been originally intended, but to include the Council's mariological teaching in a chapter of *Lumen Gentium*, the

dogmatic constitution of the Church. It was freely acknowledged, of course, that there are two possible contexts for the theological consideration of Mary. She may be considered in the context of Christ's redemptive work, in which she played an indispensable part as Mother of the Redeemer. In this context, mariology may be regarded primarily as a branch of christology. On the other hand, Mary may be considered in the context of the Church, as did in fact happen. In this case, mariology is related primarily to ecclesiology, and this is equally proper, since Mary is the type of the Church and, in the Council's own words, the Church's 'pre-eminent member'. If Mary had been treated in the first of these two possible contexts, it would have been almost inevitable that the Council would have said something about the meaning of the title *Corredemptrix*, and expressed a view on its suitability or otherwise. Actually, this term does not appear at all in the Council's teaching about Mary.

We do, however, find the term *Mediatrix* which seems to express a somewhat broader concept than does *Corredemptrix*, so that one could probably assume that the notion of Mary as *Corredemptrix* is included in the term *Mediatrix*. But all that is said about '*Mediatrix*' is to acknowledge that it is a legitimate expression, but one that has to be used with care so that it is understood as neither taking away from nor adding to 'the dignity and efficacy of Christ, the one Redeemer'. Clearly, any 'co-redemption' or 'mediation' in which Mary has a place is subordinate to and derivative from the redeeming work of Christ. This has always been the teaching of the Church, and from time to time it has even been felt necessary to cool down the fervour of Marian devotions when they seemed to be getting out of hand and encroaching on the centrality of the worship which is offered to the triune God alone. After the encouragement given to mariological developments by Pius XII, especially the dogma of the Assumption, it was probably believed that the development had gone far

enough for the present and that other matters called more urgently for attention. Thus, although the part of *Lumen Gentium* dealing with Mary is divided into two sections which consider her respectively in relation to the redemptive work of Christ and in relation to the redeemed community of the Church, it is the latter topic which seems to be accorded greater weight.

Again, although there is no actual discouragement to using the more honorific terms about Mary, and although it is clearly stated that she had an *active* and not merely passive role in the economy of salvation, the impression can hardly fail to be received that such ideas as are conveyed by words like *Corredemptrix* and *Mediatrix* have been pushed into the background. It is quite possible too that the Council was soft-pedalling the importance of Mary not so much out of anxiety that Marian devotions were becoming too exuberant as out of a desire to make the Council's pronouncements as palatable as possible to the so-called 'separated brethren' of the Protestant Churches. If even a very moderate mariology were to be commended to the Protestants, then it would have to be stated in a way that would not suggest any encroachment on the unique place of Jesus Christ. But it may turn out to be very difficult to reconcile even a watered down mariology with a hardline Protestant insistence on such themes as *sola gratia* (grace alone) and *sola scriptura* (scripture alone). Even the very moderate claim that Mary had some *active* role in redemption threatens to rekindle the old disputes over justification and grace. Can Mary really be a centre for reconciliation and unity among Christians of different traditions, as the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary has hoped? Or must she be an embarrassment who will perpetually remind Christians of some deep divisions that may never be fully healed?

We have to concede that it may have been a sound policy on the part of the Council to tone down or leave in the background some of the more exalted ways of speaking of Mary. As early as the fourth century, Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis was finding it necessary to restrain members of his flock from offering to Mary devotions which he considered were suitable only to the persons of the Trinity. There have been times in the history of Christianity when Christ himself has become such a divine, exalted, numinous figure that the worshippers found him so distant that they needed a new mediator or *mediatrix* closer to their own humanity to fill the space that had opened between themselves and the original mediator. No doubt this is something that should never have happened, and the New Testament itself teaches clearly, 'There is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. 2:5). Not only should it not have happened, I think we can say that in fact it is not happening at the present time, because for several generations theologians have been stressing the humanity of Christ. The Christ of post-Enlightenment theology is not a distant and exalted Christ in glory but more commonly a Christ reduced to all-too-human proportions. So the need for a *mediatrix* is not likely to be felt today with the intensity that was sometimes known in the past.

However, the matter cannot be settled by pointing to the dangers of exaggeration and abuse, or by appealing to isolated texts of scripture such as the verse quoted above from 1 Timothy, or by the changing fashions in theology and spirituality, or by the desire not to say anything that might offend one's partners in ecumenical dialogue. Unthinking enthusiasts may have elevated Mary to a position of virtual equality with Christ, but this aberration is not a *necessary* consequence of recognizing that there may be a truth striving for expression in words like *Mediatrix* and *Corredemptrix*. All responsible theologians would agree that Mary's co-redemptive role is subordinate

and auxiliary to the central role of Christ. But if she does have such a role, the more clearly we understand it, the better. It is a matter for theological investigation. And, like other doctrines concerning Mary, it is not only saying something about her, but something more general concerning the Church as a whole or even humanity as a whole. At this point as at others, mariology impinges on anthropology.

The general question which, as it seems to me, is raised by the specifically mariological question about the co-redemptive role of the Virgin, is that of the human role in any adequate theology of salvation. Is this human role purely a *passive* one, or is it, as Vatican II asserted about Mary, a role that is also *active*? This is where mariology threatens to revive old controversies.

First, we have to consider Mary in the context of the Church in which, as we have seen, she is judged to be its preeminent and paradigmatic member. This means that in her are concentrated those qualities which ideally belong to the whole Church but which in fact are always obscured by the sin affecting the historical Church at any given time. Life in the Church, we could say, is the continuation and strengthening of that first act of faith by which the human being responds to God's initiative, that is to say, it is the flowering of the co-working that has been present from the moment at which redemption has begun. We see the Church in its essence as not merely passive but actively co-operating with God, just as Vatican II declared about Mary. The Church in its mission, preaching and sacraments has a mediatorial function under Christ, the one ultimate Mediator. The Church itself then has its role in redemption.

Because Mary personifies and sums up in herself the being of the Church, she also exhibits in an exemplary way the redemptive role that belongs to the whole Church. In the glimpses of Mary that we have in the gospels, her standing at the cross beside her Son, and her prayers and intercessions with the apostles, are particularly striking ways in which Mary shared and supported the work of Christ—and even these are ways in which the Church as a whole can have a share in co-redemption. But it is Mary who has come to symbolize that perfect harmony between the divine will and the human response, so that it is she who gives meaning to the expression *Corredemptrix*.

There is the further context in which Mary has to be considered, the context of the incarnation of the Word. In this context, the language of co-redemption is also appropriate, but in a different way, for in this regard her contribution was unique and by its very nature could not be literally shared with anyone else. We are thinking of her now not just as representative or pre-eminent member of the Church, but as *Theotokos* or Mother of God. Mary's willing acceptance of her indispensable role in that chain of events which constituted the incarnation and the redemption which it brought about, was necessary for the nurture of the Lord and for the creation of the Church itself. So Mary is not only in the Church and of the Church, she is also prior to the Church, as is implied in her title, Mother of the Church. So although Vatican II did not actually use the word *Corredemptrix*, I do not think that one could find a better explanation of the meaning of the expression than is found in the following words of the Council:

The Father of mercies willed that the consent of the predestined Mother should precede the incarnation. She gave the world that very life that renews all things, and she was enriched by God with gifts befitting such a role. Rightly, therefore, the holy fathers see her as used by God not merely in a passive way but as co-operation in the work of human salvation through free faith and obedience.<sup>13</sup>

The title *Corredemptrix* should not be inflated nor turned into another dogma, but it does stand for important truths concerning both Mary and all Christians.

## REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES: "Requiem Aeternam."

### THE LATE HENRY GOMEZ 'Affectionately Called Uncle Henry'

27<sup>th</sup> February, 1953  
- 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022

A Dear Colleague, Uncle And Father To  
Everyone At GPI.  
May he continue to rest in perfect peace.



### THE LATE FRANCES MATILDA GODDARD Nee Betz (Fondly known as Auntie Matty) 5<sup>th</sup> November, 1932 - 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Frances Matilda Goddard (nee Betz), fondly called 'Auntie Matty', was born on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1932 in Bathurst, The Gambia. She was the second child of Mberry Marong of India Baddibu (in the North Bank Region) and George Daniel Betz, a seasoned commercial merchant who had a business in the small village of Katchang in the Upper Baddibu District.



As a young girl, Auntie Matty attended the Methodist Girls' High School all the way up to Form Four. When she left school, she joined the teaching staff of the Methodist Pre-paratory School. In her quest to upgrade herself in the teaching profession, Auntie Matty enrolled in the newly opened teachers' college, Yundum College, where, after two years of study, she successfully obtained the Teachers' Certificate and became a Qualified Teacher. As a teacher, Auntie Matty was extremely committed and devoted, as a result, over the years, she was deployed to various schools, namely Malfa Primary, Windley Primary, Crab Island Secondary Modern School and Latrikunda Secondary School, from which she eventually retired. During the latter part of her teaching career, she was encouraged to specialize in Domestic Science by Miss Rosamond Fowllis of blessed memory, which led to her being nominated for further training at the Seafort College of Education in the United Kingdom. Following her retirement from the Civil Service, she was engaged by the Girl Guides Association, where she served for several years.

It was while she was pursuing her training course at Yundum College that Auntie Matty met her husband-to-be, Gabriel Goddard, who was a member of the lecturing faculty. They were joined in matrimony on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 1956, a union that was blessed with twins: Martin Joseph and Gabriel Louis Goddard. As fate would have it, on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 1958, a little over two years after they got married, her husband passed away. Despite this traumatic setback, thanks to her strong faith and her unshakable fortitude, she soldiered on as a single mother and successfully raised her family. Auntie Matty was an easy-going and down-to-earth person who had a pleasant disposition. As a staunch Methodist and a regular church-goer, she will always be remembered for her smart, colour-outfits whenever she was attending Church.

She will be sorely missed by her children, her nieces, nephews, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, in-laws and friends. The strife is over, the battle is done .... May her gentle soul rest in perfect peace.

### THE LATE DR. HECTOR LOUM (Commonly known as Hector) 31<sup>st</sup> March, 1950 - 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Dr. Hector Emmanuel Loum was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, 1950, to Anthony Thomas Loum and Margaret Louisa Loum nee Roberts, both of blessed memory, in the historic Half-Die district of Bathurst, now Banjul. His academic journey began at St. John's Primary School and continued through Saint Augustine's Secondary

### THE LATE REV'D VICTOR ADOLPHUS CLAYTON JOHNSON (Commonly known as Kuku) 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1946 - 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2025



Victor Adolphus Clayton Johnson was born on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1946 to Samuel D. and Eliza I. Johnson both of blessed memory. He attended Stanley Street and St.

Mary's Schools before proceeding to Freetown, Sierra Leone where he was enrolled in the Cathedral Boys' School. He returned to Banjul where he was granted a scholarship to study theology in Sierra Leone. He graduated with a diploma in Theology in June 1972. On his return to The Gambia, he was appointed director of Christian Education in the Anglican Diocese by his Lordship Bishop Regal Elisee.

He served in this position for a year before returning to Sierra Leone to take up an appointment as youth worker for the Koidu joint parist in Kono. He was promoted to YFC national director for Sierra Leone. In that capacity, he attended conferences and training activities in Kenya, Brazil, England, India, Singapore, Switzerland, Malawi, Ghana and Liberia. Victor served on several committees and ministries including the National Committee for youth policy and the bible society advisory committee. He served as adviser to the Cathedral AYPAs and secretary to the cathedral parish council upon his return to The Gambia in 1985.

In 2005, he was appointed Cathedral Administrator and deployed to the Anglican Mission Institute in Farafenni as administrator, chaplain and christian religious education teacher. He also doubled as Lay Reader in charge of St. Cuthbert's Base and parts adjacent. He became a licensed Lay Reader and Chalcist after completing courses of study at the Diocesan School of Evangelism.

On 15<sup>th</sup> February 2009, Victor was ordained a deacon by his brother, the late Solomon Tilewa Johnson, then Bishop of Gambia and later Primate and Archbishop of the Church of the Province of West Africa. He was posted to St. Mary's Cathedral where he served diligently for a number of years before being posted back to St. Cuthbert's, Basse. He retired from there upon reaching the age of 65 after many years of service.

He was a stalwart for the good, a man with forbearance, humility and deep faith. He spent his entire life in service to God and his fellow man.

He is survived by his son: Eku, nieces: Njilan and Dado and Nephew: Jeggan.

May his gentle soul rest in eternal peace and rise again in glory.

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School, where he distinguished himself in both scholarship and athletics.

During his high school years, Hector excelled in athletics, and by his eighteenth birthday, he had become the SeneGambian champion in the Triple Jump (formerly known as Hop, Step, and Jump) and the Long Jump.

Following the attainment of the GCE 'O' Levels, Hector answered the call to serve his nation, joining the then Gambia Field Force, a paramilitary wing of the Police. In 1973, he travelled to Russia to pursue his lifelong calling in medicine at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Moscow State Medical University, Russian State Medical Institute. During his stay in Russia, he met and married Svetlana Mikhailovna nee Kerov. Their union was blessed with three children, Alex Samba (deceased), JC and Anthony.

Music was the heartbeat of Hector's life, and this propelled him to join the St. Cecilia's Choir at a young age and fell in love with the Gregorian Chants. Hector took the mantle of leadership of the Choir in the early 2000's joining the list of Choirmasters in the Catholic Church. The psalm 'chi sa ndeyjor la tahaw,' which is sung during the feast of Our Lady of the Assumption, was composed by him. Hector dedicated himself tirelessly as a physician to the service of all and sundry, in the hospital and out. He was a founding member of the Roman Catholic Church's Cathedral Men's Solidarity, the organizers of the Annual Kite Flying Festival on Easter Monday. His spirit of service extended into the cultural and spiritual life of his community. His resonant voice and musical leadership inspired reverence and unity in worship.

A man of many gifts, He lived a life of integrity, purpose, and grace. His legacy endures in the lives he healed, the souls he uplifted, and the nation he so nobly served. Requiescat in pace.



indeed a social organizer.

Rene was into sports too, and a founding member of Saints Marie Sports and Social Club and Vous Brigittey at Dobson Street. He also played for Young Lions, Augustinians, and the Black Star football clubs then.

His memory will forever remain in the hearts of his friends, family and loved ones. He lived a complete legacy of humbleness, kindness, and self-esteem. He is survived by his wife and children: Fanny, Ya Sarah, Fallou Lemu, Leese Nampacorr, Authur and Malen Gomez, brothers, cousins, grandchildren and a hosts of nieces and nephews.

May his gentle soul rest in peace.

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**THE LATE AGNES MIRAM KUYE**  
*(nee Betz)*  
*(Commonly called Agie)*  
**9<sup>th</sup> November, 1946 - 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2025**



Agnes Mariam Kuye (Nee Betz) commonly called Agie was born in Bathurst (now Banjul). The Gambia on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1946, as the 6<sup>th</sup> child of Mberry Betz (Nee Marong) from India in the Upper Baddibu District of NBD and George Daniel Betz who was a renowned merchant in Kachang, in the Upper Baddibu, NBD. Agnes started her education at Wesley Primary School in 1955, from where she proceeded to the Gambia High School for her secondary education in 1960. Upon completion, she was admitted at the school of Nursing and Midwifery, Marina Parade, where she attained a Qualified Registered Nurse (QRN) Certificate in 1969 and also a Qualified Registered Midwife ((QRM) Certificate in 1970. She was a brilliant student who won a Gold Medal for the Best All Round Nurse and the St. Joseph of Cluny Sisters' Prize on graduating from the School of Nursing and Mid-wifery in 1969. After graduating from the school of Nursing and Midwifery, she worked at the RVH for sometime before being posted to Bansang Hospital in the CRR, where she also worked briefly before proceeding to the UK in 1974 to further her education. In the UK, she studied for a Stated Registered Nurse (SRN) Certificate Course at Mayday Hospital (now Croydon University Hospital), and then a State Registered Midwife (SRM) at North West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospital. She also did a Certificate course in Education at Garnett College from 1983-84 before returning home.

On returning, Agnes lectured at her Alma Mater - School of Nursing and Midwifery - for 8 years before going back to UK for an MSe-degree in Community Health at the University of Liverpool, which she completed in 1992 and came home finally to continue teaching, training and mentoring students in the Nursing and Midwifery professions. At the Gambia School of Nursing and Midwifery, Agnes rose from Lecturer to Principal Lecturer in 1993. She was later seconded to the WHO Country Office at the Kotu Layout, KM in 1995; where she worked as National Professional Officer / Family Health Programme Adviser until her retirement.

She got married to Dr. Rex Kuye in 1999; and they had a blissful life together until her passing. She was also a regular worshipper at Christ Church. Agnes was a kind, gentle, humble, polite, patient and honest person with a generous attitude of caring and sharing, but discipline and respect, especially for elders. She is survived and greatly missed by her husband, nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great grandchildren. May her soul rest in perfect peace.

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**THE LATE FURMOSE GOMEZ**  
**Commonly Known as Baby Rene /**  
**Uncle Babe**  
**14<sup>th</sup> April, 1947 - 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2025**



Rene Furmose Gomez, *profoundly known as Baby Rene or Uncle Babe* was born on 4 April 1947 in Banjul. He was the 6<sup>th</sup> child of Furmose James Karofan Gomez and Mam Marie Sylva Gomez, both of blessed memory. Rene began his educational career at the St Augustine's Primary and Secondary Schools. After completion, he worked in various places, starting off - at the United African Company. He later opted for a Mechanical Course at Ceasar Mendy. From there He proceeded to work at AK Bensouda Mineral Factory, PWD, Seagull fisheries, NPE fishing company, Capital Insurance Company and lastly the Gambia Technical and Office Equipment respectively, before travelling abroad. On 27<sup>th</sup> November, 1980, Rene got married to Abie Clothilda Gomez - *Nee Jobe* - a woman who stood by him and the union was blessed with children which she help to ensure a better and healthy family upbringing.

Rene was deeply attached to music. He was an active member of St Cecilia's choir in Banjul and later transferred to St Kizito's choir in Bakoteh as choir master until he left for the USA. He was a true servant and leader, and was very instrumental in the formation of the famous 'Sangmarie Atlanta celebrations (The GCO). He was

## IN MEMORIAM

## WHO WAS REVEREND FATHER REGINALD GILLOOLY - REGGIE

*By Anthony Sang Njie aka Omadi, Gingori Mansatenda.*

**Confer Matthew 19: 21:** *Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor; and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."*

From privilege to poverty, the life of Spiritan founder Claude-François Poullart des Places is an inspiring tale of transformation through the Holy Spirit. In 1679, Claude was born into wealth and status as the son of a French aristocrat. He lived during the reign of Louis XIV and enjoyed the lavish lifestyle of a nobleman. His early education was with the Jesuits, which laid the foundation for his later entry into the seminary. *"On Pentecost Sunday 1703, Claude assembled a small band of impoverished fellow seminarians to form a community dedicated to the Holy Spirit, under the special patronage of Mary."*

The intention was that these priests would in turn serve the poor people of rural France and people in missions overseas. Claude was still a seminarian when he formed the group. He was ordained four years later in 1707, at the age of 28.

**Confer Matthew 6: 19-21:** *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

## A Legacy Lives On

After ordination, Fr. Claude continued to administer to his rapidly growing community which Fr Reggie joined later. It was a short-lived assignment; two years later Fr. Claude died 1709, at the age of 30. He was buried in a pauper's grave. Fr. Claude's legacy lives on in the Congregation through its service to those in need. The Holy Ghost Fathers, or the Spiritans, became recognized by the Church for going places that no one else wanted to go and for living simply in deep faith.

**The Man - Confer Matthew 9: 36-38:** *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." "He who puts his hand on the plough and turns back is not fit for the Kingdom of God".*

Fr Reggie certainly did not put his hand on the plough and turned back because he knew the harvest was plentiful but laborers few. Fr Reggie arrived in the shores of the Gambia in 1951 just before 2nd Vatican Council aboard MV Aureole after a two-week sojourn from Liverpool flanked by Rev Fathers Costello and Coughlan. The latter returned to Ireland two weeks after his arrival due to an emergency and never returned. The former taught at SAINTS for thirteen years and returned. Fr Reggie never turned back but continued to serve in the Gambia. Fr Reggie also saw the Gambia grow from a British Colony to Independence and finally a Republican status.

A native of Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin and a past pupil of the local CBS, Fr Reggie in 2022 delayed the celebration of his 70th anniversary of his ordination due to COVID, spent over 50 years of the 73 years he served as a priest in the Gambia as a Holy Ghost Priest Congregation of the Holy Spirit.

**Pastoral Work:** Fr Reggie was posted in Bwiam where Rev Father Andy Carrol also served and together a mission house and church were built. 1958 stands tall in the annals of history and growth of the Catholic Church. It was at this time that the then Prefecture Apostolic became a diocese with the ordination of the first Spiritan Bishop in the person of non, but Fr Micheal Maloney blessed memory was consecrated after successfully serving in

Basse for several years. As this eulogy is being recorded tears were flowing down my cheeks reminiscing how in 1962, bishop Maloney personally facilitated my transfer from Saint Augustine's Primary to Kanifing Primary to sit the common entrance. It is with heavy heart therefore, that I pen this eulogy for one of the Spiritan stalwarts Fr Reggie who contributed a lot to the transformation of the church in the Gambia to what we all enjoy now.

Fr Reggie's final posting in the Gambia was in Lamin from 1977 through 2008 when he returned to Ireland on retirement. During this period, he was never late and never absented. He built both Saint Peter's church and residence where he resided. While in Lamin his first out station was MAKUMBAYA which is now St Paul's Church. He was also instrumental in the building of the Holy Rosary Church situated in WAYOTO.

**Administrative Work:** Fr Reggie served in a variety of educational, and administrative roles and had a long association with the Catholic Bookshop which sourced and imported educational and liturgical supplies, making them available at cost in line with one of the vows he took as a Spiritan – Poverty (running a non-profit business concern) on behalf of the diocese.

**Visionary:** Together with the Spiritan team resident and working in the Gambia under the leadership of Bishop Michael Maloney, Fr Carol, James White, Fr Farrell aka Fr Poncal, Dassy, Cleary (later bishop), Sharpe, Flynn, Little, Thomas Tarmey, Vincent Comer, Corrigan, Hughes Fagan, Ellison (later bishop) Murray, William Cleary and his humble self, worked towards the transformation of the Gambian church from a Missionary to a Local church mandated by 2nd Vatican Council. The Junior seminary was established in Fajara where prospective seminarians stayed going through their formation and now Lamin. To attract more converts for the church liturgy was translated to Wolof, Manjago and Mandinka spear headed by Fr Reggie who encouraged priests and seminarians to learn the local languages to facilitate evangelization in conformance with 2nd Vatican Council directives.

**Legacy:** At Lamin in conformance of the vows he took based on the Evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience, he worked as a passionate advocate of nature, a foster father to the many young children in the community. He cared and loved to nurture and grow the community he was in charge. Those around him found him attractive and approachable to relate and follow his lead. His mentorship included His Lordship Bishop Dr Gabriel Mendy, Fr Antoine Sambou, Fr Gabriel Secka, all of whom followed his path to become priests serving the needs of the church. His style was grounded simplicity, obedience and selfless sacrifice. These attributes made him a great man, and a great leader. Later when his core group of sons became adults and moved on to the seminary, he brought another batch that included the likes of Fr Joseph Carl Gomez and Fr Etienne Colley, who all later became priests later. Fr Reggie guided the first Local Spiritan to his ordination as priest in the person of Dr Gabriel Mandy who later transitioned and consecrated the first local Gambian/Spiritans bishop. Congratulations to Fr Reggie Gillooly C.S.Sp who celebrated his 100th birthday on 15th January 2025. He is the first of the province to have reached this milestone since the late Fr Tim O'Driscoll in 2010.

## Quotes dedicated to our Fallen hero: Proverbs 16:16

*"How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding to be chosen rather than silver!" "Whoever listens closely to God's word finds happiness". "Whoever trusts in God is blessed". "He was a wise person, words simple but measured". "Interest in Fr Reggie never waned as he was always sought out by young priests he encouraged. "A tower of strength, with a helping*

*hand and gave advice". "A man of God, lived lightly but prayed often". "He valued visitors, welcomed visitors who knew they were valued".*

**Fun memories:** Nieces describe him as a quiet, loyal, confident, disciplined continued to find time for them except on Wednesdays when he was unavailable – guess why because he was busy serving as receptionist and telephone operator at the Nazareth House at age 96 and 97. Long life is a reward of the righteous, with many challenges. Fr Reggie was humorous and was the first to put on the Christmas paper hat. He will be remembered as one who was fond of eating crackers and cheese every evening. He was non-judgmental and was someone people sought for advice/support cognizant of the fact that such discussions will stay in-house. He will be remembered as a legendry and special-exotic uncle in Africa they always thought of. He was hard working and loved the Gambia and the Gambian people. As much as communication prior to social media was difficult Fr Reggie cherished sending/receiving air mails and post cards to and from the family.

**Extracurricular Activities:** The saying “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” means that if someone focuses solely on work and neglects leisure fun activities, they can become bored, uninteresting, and even dull or lacking in life’s enjoyment. It highlights the importance of balance between work and play for a well rounded and enjoyable life. Fr Reggie will and cannot be associated with this type of life. He played golf and when not in the course playing always had one club somewhere in the house. When quizzed why to use against intruding snakes.

He loved the game of Rugby and spent hours watching his national and other teams he supported. This is how he got his amusement and maintained life balance.

**Passing to Eternity:** Fr Reggie we pause to remember you, pray for you and celebrate you as the father figure you were. May God who on this day of Ascension Thursday called you to be home, have mercy on your soul and rest you in eternal glory. May the good shepherd whom you modeled your life, taking vows of poverty, chastity and obedience escort you and welcome you to Paradise. Confer, friend, brother, uncle, mentor you successfully put your hand to the plough and never turned back. Take your rest in the mansion prepared by the God you served all your life. Amen.

### TESTIMONIES

**John Prospere Joof:** As the celebration of the feast of the Ascension of the Lord. It was also a celebration of life for a man who has given his life to be a shepherd like Christ. Rev. Fr. Reginald Gillooly C.S.Sp. Commonly known as Gills died today at Nazareth House, in Ireland. He was 100 years old. Fr. Gillooly came to the Gambia from Ireland in 1951. He was stationed in Bwiam and later in Lamin where he worked and set up what would later define his career and legacy. At Lamin, he worked as a passionate advocate of nature, a foster father to the many young children in the community. He was a visible tall man that can always be seen and identified through his slim and humble stature.

He was a gentle man, a quiet man, a man who cared and loved to nurture and grow the community given to him. It was by no means that those around him found him attractive and approachable to relate and follow his lead. His work included the likes of Fr Antoine Sambou, Bishop Gabriel Mendy, Fr Gabriel Secka, all of whom followed his path to become a priest serving the needs of the church. Others in that group were Valley Jammeh, and Joe Badjie who is now an inspector of police in the Gambia. His style was simple, obedient and selfless sacrifice. This is what made him a great man, and a great leader. Look around these people and you see the same trait and philosophy of himself in them. Later when his core group of sons became adults and moved on to the seminary, he brought another batch that included the likes of which all later became priests again. Fr Joseph Carl Gomez, Fr Etienne Colley, amongst others, and Justin Manneh. Having given everything and

making the vineyard blossom, he left the shores of the Gambia in 2008, after witnessing the ordination of his sons.

Fr Gills, oversaw the Catholic bookstore in Banjul at the cathedral. During that time, he made sure that all the area Catholic school in the diocese were equipped with the required books needed to fulfill the educational requirements of the students. He also was instrumental in supplying the area churches with the church liturgical. Fr Gillooly at some point made sure to use his resources bringing in books from Ireland so the schools were never short of materials. He left his mark as a book for all of us to read, learn and share, that life is a precious thing to live. As we paused to remember him, pray for him and celebrate him as the father figure he is. May God who on this day of ascension Thursday called him to be home, have mercy on his soul and rest him in eternal glory. May the good shepherd whom you modeled your life after, escort you to be sitter at the right hand of the Father. Rest in peace, adios papa Gills, take your rest and know that we are always here writing and sharing your stories and your book of life.

**Rev Father Gabriel Secka:** Rev. Fr. Gillooly was a spiritual man and a great spiritual leader. He lived a simple life of humility and prayer. A life he lived almost unnoticed. One of the good practices I learnt from him is his great attachment to the Blessed Sacrament. He used to be at different times in the Church praying the breviary or some spiritual reading. You may enter the church and think you are the only person there praying. But just look back. There he sits quietly at the last bench at the back of the church. He very much loved to say his prayers in the church.

Not only a man of prayer but very steady and focused. He was very vast in

Wolof vocabulary, and it is from him that I learnt to read in Wolof at an early age. One may think that he lived a lonely life, but no he was living in the spirit of God if I reflect on his lifestyle. One of the greatest Christian virtues I will always remember him for is humility, his spiritual strength. May his soul rest in peace.

**Rev Father Joseph Carl Gomez** - I met Fr Gillooly when my family moved from Banjul to Lamin in the late 80s. I joined the CYO - Catholic Youth Organization and the mass servers and lectors' ministries all under the watch of the late Fr Gillooly. He was not only a priest for me but a formator, a guide, a teacher, a leader and a mentor. Indeed, a moral compass. He could easily perceive the potential in people and worked hard to tap it or let the individual realize those potential or gifts. He was soft spoken but to the point. He believed in order and discipline in every aspect of life and that made him to be like a programmed person. At every given moment, he had something to do.

I and some of my Boy colleagues in those days enjoyed his company when we joined him to the outstations in the parish and to Kunkujang Mariama on Independence Day and to the beach in Bakau (behind star of the Sea) and the beach opposite the mile 2 prisons. His simplicity was heart touching and exemplary. Seen as a difficult person to deal with or a hard person, he meant the good always. While he was alive, we remembered him a clear sign that he has engraved his name and legacy in the hearts of many by his work.

**Rev Father Etienne Colley**—Rev. Fr. Reginald Gillooly: A man who talks little and prays more Fr. Gillooly was a priest I loved as a young boy growing up in Lamin. Serving him at the Altar was a joy. This is a man who embodies holiness, simplicity, availability, etc. He was very serious with what he does, especially what had to do with the liturgy. His masses were all solemn and prayerful. He was a disciplinarian and instilled that in us (Altar Servers). He made sure that we practiced every Saturday and before any big liturgical function, and made us to respect time, he was always on time for liturgical functions. Pastoral availability defines his priestly life. He was available to all communities under St. Peter's Parish. Establishing Small Christian Communities within the parish.

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## I AM SAYING THANK YOU

I have been overwhelmed and inundated with messages and gifts in the month of July in which I celebrated my 25th anniversary in the priesthood. I can't remember when last I experienced this amount of love and joy from people around me. Celebrating 25 years as a priest is a significant milestone, prompting reflection on God's grace, the joys and challenges of ministry, and the importance of perseverance and prayer. Reflecting on this anniversary, I cannot but express gratitude for the support of the community, family and friends and to renew my commitment to serving God and the Church. I want to acknowledge the constant presence of God's grace throughout the journey of priesthood. God has sustained me through both joyful and challenging times. I must recognize the unmerited favour of being called to serve as a priest.

After all I have seen and heard from 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2025 when I celebrated my thanksgiving mass at the GPI followed by a dinner, I want to say **THANK YOU**. Thank you to God who called me, and thank you to God who has allowed me by His grace to do this ministry. Thank you to my family, siblings, uncles, aunties and relatives, who are ever supportive of my priestly vocation and ministry. They have supported me over the years. Thank you to my

parishioners and staff, who have loved and encouraged me. Please forgive me for anything that was over this period amiss in my ministry. I make mistakes all the time. The grace of ordination empowers a man to celebrate the sacraments of the Church. It doesn't make him a saint. I also look forward with hope. May God continue to strengthen me in my priestly ministry and bless me with good health of mind and body, joy and the grace to continue to work as a priest and communicator in the Diocese of Banjul. May the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John Vianney and all the saints sustain me in my journey.

Let this celebration be a reminder to all of us of the beauty of the priesthood and the vital role of the priest in the Church. I continue to pray that as I embark on the next chapter of my ministry, my life will remain a shining example of what it means to serve Christ with an undivided heart.

Please pray with me and for me daily, that I will continue to have the zeal, enthusiasm, energy, generosity and willingness to humbly serve God and his people, in the most humble way, to win the weak, for the Lord. Lord, bless me and fill me with your grace today, and the days ahead in my ministry, and help me fulfill my call to share the Good News of the One, who was lifted up, died and resurrected from the dead.

*Fr. Peter S. Lopez*





## THE HOMILY BY FR. DAVID JIMOH JARJU ON 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2025 AT FR. PETER S. LOPEZ SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF ORDINATION AT GPI

### First Reading – Jeremiah 1: 4

**-9** - Israel was threatened by a powerful nation. The king went out to another country to forge some security alliance. Israel sought to secure itself by depending on human alliance instead of turning to God, Jeremiah was called to go and tell the king that the security of Israel did not depend on the

power of human alliances. Jeremiah complained to God that he was not fit to deliver this message to the king. He was merely a boy and he did not see himself capable of carrying out the task. However, God promised to help him: God touched his lips and put the appropriate words he was to use in speaking to king.

**Second Reading – 1 Peter** - The Christians were persecuted because of their faith in Jesus. We know of those who killed Stephen laid their clothes at “the feet of a young man called Saul.” This same Saul went as far as Syria, looking for Christians to bring them to Israel for persecution. It was at this time that God chose him and made him an apostle to the gentiles so that the message shall reach the ends of the earth. At this time some Christians

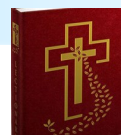
abandoned the faith, but some remained steadfast to the faith. Peter addressed his letter to these telling them that they have hope of reward because they had kept the faith. However, their faith shall be tested by trials so that their faith is made pure- a reward awaits such people.

**Gospel – Luke/John 15: 16** - The love of God for Jesus was the basis for the apostles’ love for Jesus who had chosen them to go out and bear lasting fruit. Yes the apostles were assured of God’s help in carrying out God’s mission. They were given the command – love one another.

**Reflection** - Fr. Peter’s silver jubilee celebration today began twenty-five years ago and even beyond. He would remember the last day he finished his formation, took the plane for his home, The Gambia. After some hours of flying over forests and much greenery from Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the two Guineas, South Senegal, the plane descended gently unto the relatively dry and semi-desert land of Yundum Airport. He left the routine life of the Seminary with a bell distinguishing the times: rising, prayer, work, study, sports, meals... and many more. Now was the time to listen to bell from within himself. After some pastoral work at his home Diocese, Fr. Peter was ordained in July, 2000 and now he is a priest with twenty-five years of experience; he has many more years to go by the grace of God.

*(Cont'd at the back page)*





## Daily Mass Readings

## August & September

### 1 August, 2025 – Friday

Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop, Religious Founder, Doctor  
Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Leviticus 23](#): 1, 4-11, 15-16, 27, 34b-37

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 81](#): 3-4, 5-6, 10-11ab

Alleluia: [First Peter 1](#): 25

Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 54-58

### 2 August, 2025 – Saturday

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed  
Virgin Mary/ Eusebius of Vercelli, Bishop/ Peter Julian  
Eymard, Priest

First Reading: [Leviticus 25](#): 1, 8-17

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 67](#): 2-3, 5, 7-8

Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 10

Gospel: [Matthew 14](#): 1-12

### 3 August, 2025 – Sunday

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Ecclesiastes 1](#): 2; 2: 21-23

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 90](#): 3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 & 17

Second Reading: [Colossians 3](#): 1-5, 9-11

Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 3

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 13-21

### 4 August, 2025 – Monday

John Mary Vianney, Priest Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Numbers 11](#): 4b-15

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 81](#): 12-13, 14-15, 16-17

Alleluia: [Matthew 4](#): 4

Gospel: [Matthew 14](#): 13-21

### 5 August, 2025 – Tuesday

Ordinary Weekday/ Dedication of the Basilica of Saint  
Mary Major in Rome

First Reading: [Numbers 12](#): 1-13

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 51](#): 3-4, 5-6ab, 6cd-7, 12-13

Alleluia: [John 1](#): 49b

Gospel: [Matthew 14](#): 22-36 or [Matthew 15](#): 1-2, 10-14

### 6 August, 2025 – Wednesday

Transfiguration of the Lord Feast

First Reading: [Daniel 7](#): 9-10, 13-14

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 97](#): 1-2, 5-6, 9

Second Reading: [Second Peter 1](#): 16-19

Alleluia: [Matthew 17](#): 5c

Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 28b-36

### 7 August, 2025 – Thursday

Ordinary Weekday/ Sixtus II, Pope, Martyr, &  
Companions, Martyrs/ Cajetan, Priest

First Reading: [Numbers 20](#): 1-13

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 95](#): 1-2, 6-7, 8-9

Alleluia: [Matthew 16](#): 18

Gospel: [Matthew 16](#): 13-23

### 8 August, 2025 – Friday

Dominic, Priest, Religious Founder Obligatory  
Memorial

First Reading: [Deuteronomy 4](#): 32-40

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 77](#): 12-13, 14-15, 16 and 21

Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 10

Gospel: [Matthew 16](#): 24-28

### 9 August, 2025 – Saturday

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin  
Mary/ Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Virgin, Martyr

First Reading: [Deuteronomy 6](#): 4-13

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 18](#): 2-3a, 3c-4, 47 and 51

Alleluia: [Second Timothy 1](#): 10

Gospel: [Matthew 17](#): 14-20

### 10 August, 2025 – Sunday

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Wisdom 18](#): 6-9

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 33](#): 1, 12, 18-19, 20-22

Second Reading: [Hebrews 11](#): 1-2, 8-19 or 11: 1-2, 8-12

Alleluia: [Matthew 24](#): 42a, 44

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 32-48

### 11 August, 2025 – Monday

Clare, Virgin, Religious Founder Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Deuteronomy 10](#): 12-22

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 147](#): 12-13, 14-15, 19-20

Alleluia: [Second Thessalonians 2](#): 14

Gospel: [Matthew 17](#): 22-27

### 12 August, 2025 – Tuesday

Ordinary Weekday/ Jane Frances De Chantal, Married  
Woman, Religious Founder

First Reading: [Deuteronomy 31](#): 1-8

Responsorial Psalm: [Deuteronomy 32](#): 3-4ab, 7, 8, 9 & 12

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 29ab

Gospel: [Matthew 18](#): 1-5, 10, 12-14

### 13 August, 2025 – Wednesday

Ordinary Weekday/ Pontian, Pope, Martyr, and  
Hippolytus, Priest, Martyr

First Reading: [Deuteronomy 34](#): 1-12

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 66](#): 1-3a, 5 & 8, 16-17

Alleluia: [Second Corinthians 5](#): 19

Gospel: [Matthew 18](#): 15-20

### 14 August, 2025 – Thursday

Maximilian Mary Kolbe, Priest, Martyr Obligatory  
Memorial

First Reading: [Joshua 3](#): 7-10a, 11, 13-17

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 114](#): 1-2, 3-4, 5-6

Alleluia: [Psalms 119](#): 135

Gospel: [Matthew 18](#): 21 – 19: 1

### 15 August, 2025 – Friday

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Solemnity, Holy  
Day of Obligation

First Reading: [First Chronicles 15](#): 3-4, 15-16; 16: 1-2

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 132](#): 6-7, 9-10, 13-14

Second Reading: [First Corinthians 15](#): 54b-57

Alleluia: [Luke 11](#): 28

Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 27-28

OR

### 15 August, 2025 – Friday

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Solemnity, Holy  
Day of Obligation

First Reading: [Revelation 11](#): 19a; 12: 1-6a, 10ab

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 45](#): 10, 11, 12, 16

Second Reading: [First Corinthians 15](#): 20-27

Gospel: [Luke 1](#): 39-56

**16 August, 2025 – Saturday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary/ Stephen of Hungary, Married Man

First Reading: [Joshua 24](#): 14-29

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 16](#): 1-2a & 5, 7-8, 11

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 25

Gospel: [Matthew 19](#): 13-15

**17 August, 2025 – Sunday**

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Jeremiah 38](#): 4-6, 8-10

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 40](#): 2, 3, 4, 18

Second Reading: [Hebrews 12](#): 1-4

Alleluia: [John 10](#): 27

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 49-53

**18 August, 2025 – Monday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Judges 2](#): 11-19

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 106](#): 34-35, 36-37, 39-40, 43ab & 44

Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 3

Gospel: [Matthew 19](#): 16-22

**19 August, 2025 – Tuesday**

Ordinary Weekday/ John Eudes, Priest, Religious Founder

First Reading: [Judges 6](#): 11-24a

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 85](#): 9, 11-12, 13-14

Alleluia: [Second Corinthians 8](#): 9

Gospel: [Matthew 19](#): 23-30

**20 August, 2025 – Wednesday**

Bernard, Abbot, Doctor Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Judges 9](#): 6-15

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 21](#): 2-3, 4-5, 6-7

Alleluia: [Hebrews 4](#): 12

Gospel: [Matthew 20](#): 1-16

**21 August, 2025 – Thursday**

Pius X, Pope Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Judges 11](#): 29-39a

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 40](#): 5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10

Alleluia: [Psalms 95](#): 8

Gospel: [Matthew 22](#): 1-14

**22 August, 2025 – Friday**

Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Ruth 1](#): 1, 3-6, 14b-16, 22

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 146](#): 5-6ab, 6c-7, 8-9a, 9bc-10

Alleluia: [Psalms 25](#): 4b, 5a

Gospel: [Matthew 22](#): 34-40

**23 August, 2025 – Saturday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary/ Rose of Lima, Virgin

First Reading: [Ruth 2](#): 1-3, 8-11; 4: 13-17

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 128](#): 1b-2, 3, 4, 5

Alleluia: [Matthew 23](#): 9b, 10b

Gospel: [Matthew 23](#): 1-12

**24 August, 2025 – Sunday**

Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Isaiah 66](#): 18-21

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 117](#): 1, 2

Second Reading: [Hebrews 12](#): 5-7, 11-13

Alleluia: [John 14](#): 6

Gospel: [Luke 13](#): 22-30

**25 August, 2025 – Monday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Louis of France, Married Man/ Joseph Calasanz, Priest, Religious Founder

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 1](#): 1-5, 8b-10

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 149](#): 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a & 9b

Alleluia: [John 10](#): 27

Gospel: [Matthew 23](#): 13-22

**26 August, 2025 – Tuesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 2](#): 1-8

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 139](#): 1-3, 4-6

Alleluia: [Hebrews 4](#): 12

Gospel: [Matthew 23](#): 23-26

**27 August, 2025 – Wednesday**

Monica, Married Woman Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 2](#): 9-13

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 139](#): 7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab

Alleluia: [First John 2](#): 5

Gospel: [Matthew 23](#): 27-32

**28 August, 2025 – Thursday**

Augustine, Bishop, Doctor Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 3](#): 7-13

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 90](#): 3-5a, 12-13, 14 & 17

Alleluia: [Matthew 24](#): 42a, 44

Gospel: [Matthew 24](#): 42-51

**29 August, 2025 – Friday**

Martyrdom of John the Baptist Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 4](#): 1-8

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 97](#): 1 and 2b, 5-6, 10, 11-12

Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 10

Gospel: [Mark 6](#): 17-29

**30 August, 2025 – Saturday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 4](#): 9-11

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 98](#): 1, 7-8, 9

Alleluia: [John 13](#): 34

Gospel: [Matthew 25](#): 14-30

**31 August, 2025 – Sunday**

Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Sirach 3](#): 17-18, 20, 28-29

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 68](#): 4-5, 6-7, 10-11

Second Reading: [Hebrews 12](#): 18-19, 22-24

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 29ab

Gospel: [Luke 14](#): 1, 7-14

**1 September, 2025 – Monday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Labor Day (Labor Day)

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 4](#): 13-18

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 96](#): 1 and 3, 4-5, 11-12, 13

Alleluia: [Luke 4](#): 18

Gospel: [Luke 4](#): 16-30

**2 September, 2025 – Tuesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [First Thessalonians 5](#): 1-6, 9-11

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 27](#): 1, 4, 13-14

Alleluia: [Luke 7](#): 16

Gospel: [Luke 4](#): 31-37

**3 September, 2025 – Wednesday**

Gregory the Great, Pope, Religious, Doctor Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Colossians 1](#): 1-8

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 52](#): 10, 11

Alleluia: [Luke 4](#): 18

Gospel: [Luke 4](#): 38-44

**4 September, 2025 – Thursday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Colossians 1](#): 9-14

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 98](#): 2-3ab, 3cd-4, 5-6

Alleluia: [Matthew 4](#): 19

Gospel: [Luke 5](#): 1-11

**5 September, 2025 – Friday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Colossians 1](#): 15-20

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 100](#): 1b-2, 3, 4, 5

Alleluia: [John 8](#): 12

Gospel: [Luke 5](#): 33-39

**6 September, 2025 – Saturday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First Reading: [Colossians 1](#): 21-23

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 54](#): 3-4, 6 & 8

Alleluia: [John 14](#): 6

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 1-5

**7 September, 2025 – Sunday**

Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Wisdom 9](#): 13-18b

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 90](#): 3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17

Second Reading: [Philemon 1](#): 9-10, 12-17

Alleluia: [Psalms 119](#): 135

Gospel: [Luke 14](#): 25-33

**8 September, 2025 – Monday**

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Feast

First Reading: [Micah 5](#): 1-4a or [Romans 8](#): 28-30

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 13](#): 6ab, 6c

Gospel: [Matthew 1](#): 1-16, 18-23

**9 September, 2025 – Tuesday**

Peter Claver, Priest, Religious, Missionary Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Colossians 2](#): 6-15

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 145](#): 1b-2, 8-9, 10-11

Alleluia: [John 15](#): 16

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 12-19

**10 September, 2025 – Wednesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Colossians 3](#): 1-11

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 145](#): 2-3, 10-11, 12-13ab

Alleluia: [Luke 6](#): 23ab

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 20-26

**11 September, 2025 – Thursday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Colossians 3](#): 12-17

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 150](#): 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6

Alleluia: [First John 4](#): 12

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 27-38

**12 September, 2025 – Friday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Holy Name of Mary

First Reading: [First Timothy 1](#): 1-2, 12-14

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 16](#): 1b-2a & 5, 7-8, 11

Alleluia: [John 17](#): 17b, 17a

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 39-42

**13 September, 2025 – Saturday**

John Chrysostom, Bishop, Doctor Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Timothy 1](#): 15-17

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 113](#): 1b-2, 3-4, 5a & 6-7

Alleluia: [John 14](#): 23

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 43-49

**14 September, 2025 – Sunday**

Exaltation of the Holy Cross Feast

First Reading: [Numbers 21](#): 4b-9

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 78](#): 1bc-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38

Second Reading: [Philippians 2](#): 6-11

Gospel: [John 3](#): 13-17

**15 September, 2025 – Monday**

Our Lady of Sorrows Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Timothy 2](#): 1-8

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 28](#): 2, 7, 8-9

Gospel: [John 19](#): 25-27 or [Luke 2](#): 33-35

**16 September, 2025 – Tuesday**

Cornelius, Pope, Martyr, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyr Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Timothy 3](#): 1-13

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 101](#): 1b-2ab, 2cd-3ab, 5, 6

Alleluia: [Luke 7](#): 16

Gospel: [Luke 7](#): 11-17

**17 September, 2025 – Wednesday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Robert Bellarmine, Bishop, Religious, Doctor

First Reading: [First Timothy 3](#): 14-16

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 111](#): 1-2, 3-4, 5-6

Alleluia: [John 6](#): 63c, 68c

Gospel: [Luke 7](#): 31-35

**18 September, 2025 – Thursday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [First Timothy 4](#): 12-16

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 111](#): 7-8, 9, 10

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 28

Gospel: [Luke 7](#): 36-50

**19 September, 2025 – Friday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Januarius, Bishop, Martyr

First Reading: [First Timothy 6](#): 2c-12

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 49](#): 6-7, 8-10, 17-18, 19-20

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 25

Gospel: [Luke 8](#): 1-3

**20 September, 2025 – Saturday**

Andrew Kim Taegon, Priest, Martyr, Paul Chong Hasang, Catechist, Martyr, & Companions, Martyrs Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [First Timothy 6](#): 13-16

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 100](#): 1b-2, 3, 4, 5

Alleluia: [Luke 8](#): 15

Gospel: [Luke 8](#): 4-15

**21 September, 2025 – Sunday**

Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Amos 8](#): 4-7Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 113](#): 1-2, 4-6, 7-8Second Reading: [First Timothy 2](#): 1-8Alleluia: [Second Corinthians 8](#): 9Gospel: [Luke 16](#): 1-13**22 September, 2025 – Monday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Ezra 1](#): 1-6Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 126](#): 1b-2ab, 2cd-3, 4-5, 6Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 16Gospel: [Luke 8](#): 16-18**23 September, 2025 – Tuesday**

Pio of Pietrelcina, Priest Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Ezra 6](#): 7-8, 12b, 14-20Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 122](#): 1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5Alleluia: [Luke 11](#): 28Gospel: [Luke 8](#): 19-21**24 September, 2025 – Wednesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Ezra 9](#): 5-9Responsorial Psalm: [Tobit 13](#): 2, 3-4a, 6, 8Alleluia: [Mark 1](#): 15Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 1-6**25 September, 2025 – Thursday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Haggai 1](#): 1-8Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 149](#): 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9bAlleluia: [John 14](#): 6Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 7-9**26 September, 2025 – Friday**

Ordinary Weekday/ Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs

First Reading: [Haggai 2](#): 1-9Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 43](#): 1, 2, 3, 4Alleluia: [Mark 10](#): 45Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 18-22**27 September, 2025 – Saturday**

Vincent De Paul, Priest, Religious Founder Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Zechariah 2](#): 5-9, 14-15aResponsorial Psalm: [Jeremiah 31](#): 10, 11-12ab, 13Alleluia: [Second Timothy 1](#): 10Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 43b-45**28 September, 2025 – Sunday**

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Amos 6](#): 1a, 4-7Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 146](#): 7, 8-9, 9-10Second Reading: [First Timothy 6](#): 11-16Alleluia: [Second Corinthians 8](#): 9Gospel: [Luke 16](#): 19-31**29 September, 2025 – Monday**

Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Archangels Feast

First Reading: [Daniel 7](#): 9-10, 13-14 or [Revelation 12](#): 7-12abResponsorial Psalm: [Psalms 138](#): 1-2ab, 2cde-3, 4-5Alleluia: [Psalms 103](#): 21Gospel: [John 1](#): 47-51**30 September, 2025 – Tuesday**

Jerome, Priest, Doctor Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Zechariah 8](#): 20-23Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 87](#): 1b-3, 4-5, 6-7Alleluia: [Mark 10](#): 45Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 51-56**Weekday Celebrations****August & September**

SAINTS

**8<sup>th</sup> August: St. Dominic**

DOMINIC was a Spaniard, born in 1170 in Castille. In 1196, he joined a religious community. On a visit to southern France, he gathered a group of preachers (Dominicans) to travel in barefoot poverty. In 1206, he founded a convent of sisters converted from heresy. He became a friend of St. Francis of Assisi, and in 1216, received approval for his order from Pope Honorius III. Dominic established theological schools at two of his houses. He died in 1221 and was canonised in 1234.

**9<sup>th</sup> August: St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross**

ST. TERESA BENEDICTA of the Cross, also known as St Edith Stein, was born into a Jewish family at Breslau (then in Germany, now Wroclaw, Poland). From being an atheist, Edith was baptised in 1922. In 1934, she was received into the Carmelite Order. Although she moved from Germany to the Netherlands, Edith was arrested in 1942 and sent to Auschwitz concentration camp, where she died in the gas chamber. Edith was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1987 and canonised by him in 1998. Edith Stein is remembered for her attempts to use knowledge to promote peace and understanding in the face of hatred and war.

**14<sup>th</sup> August: St. Maximilian Kolbe, martyr**

ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE (born 1894) was a Polish Franciscan priest. Ordained in 1918, he founded the City of Mary Immaculate religious centre in 1927, becoming its Superior, as well as director of Poland's chief Catholic publishing house. He was arrested by the Nazi Gestapo in 1939, and again in 1941, on charges of helping Jews and the Polish underground resistance movement. He was imprisoned at Warsaw, then transferred to the extermination camp at Auschwitz. When a fellow inmate was condemned to death in reprisal for another prisoner's escape, Fr. Kolbe volunteered to take the condemned man's place. He was beatified by Pope Paul VI in 1971 and canonised in 1982 by Pope John Paul II, who declared him 'patron saint of our difficult [20th] century'.

**21st August: St. Pius X, pope**

POPE PIUS X was born Guiseppe Sarto in Lombardy, Italy, the second of 10 children of a postman. After a poverty stricken childhood, he was granted a seminary scholarship and was ordained in 1858. He helped the sick in the cholera plague that swept northern Italy in the early 1870s and struggled to bring religious instruction to young

people who did not have the opportunity to attend Catholic schools. In 1884, Pope Leo XIII appointed him Bishop of Mantua, and in 1893, Cardinal Patriarch of Venice. Patriarch Sarto avoided political involvement and devoted himself to social work. After Leo's death in 1903, he was elected Pope, taking the name Pius X. His pontificate was notable for his implacable opposition to 'modernism'. But in other ways, Pius was a reformer. He restructured the Roman Curia and established seminaries. Pius died in August 1911. He was beatified by Pius XII in 1952 and canonised in 1954.

### **27<sup>th</sup> August: St. Monica, *matron***

MONICA, a fifth-century saint, is regarded as a model mother. She devoted her life to her son Augustine, guiding him towards his conversion, as related in Augustine's *Confessione* (autobiography). Monica died on her way home to North Africa, a few days after her son had been baptised by St. Ambrose.

### **28<sup>th</sup> August: St. Augustine of Hippo, *doctor***

AUGUSTINE taught rhetoric in Carthage (near modern Tunis). After moving to Milan, he converted to Christianity and returned to Africa to pursue a contemplative life. In 396, he was made Bishop of Hippo (now Annaba, in Algeria), a post he held until his death in 430. Augustine's writings have had great influence until this day. They include the *Confessione*, 'The City of God', and sundry theological works.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> September: St. Gregory the Great, *pope & doctor***

GREGORY lived from 540 to 604, a period notable for the expansion of the Church. He came from a rich family, but abandoned a career in politics, and gave away his possessions to become a monk. He founded monasteries and represented successive popes in Constantinople before being invited to become Pope himself. Gregory was a great administrator. He wrote theological works, insisted on priestly celibacy, reformed the calendar and the liturgy, and established choir schools where 'Gregorian chant' was taught.

### **5<sup>th</sup> September: St. Teresa of Calcutta, *religious***

TERESA (born in Albania in 1910) founded the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta in 1950. For over 45 years, she ministered to the poor, sick, orphaned and dying, while guiding the Missionaries of Charity's expansion, first throughout India, and then in other countries. By the 1970s, Mother Teresa was internationally famed as an advocate for the poor and helpless. In 1979, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and in 1980, India's highest civilian honour, the *Bharat Ratna*. After her death in 1997, Teresa was beatified by Pope John Paul II and canonised by Pope Francis. *The Missionaries of Charity have worked in The Gambia since 1994.*

### **13<sup>th</sup> September: St. John Chrysostom, *doctor***

JOHN was born in 347 at Antioch, Syria. After brilliant studies, he became a hermit. When his health gave way, he

returned to Antioch, was ordained, and as a preacher, won many converts. 'Chrysostom' means 'golden mouthed'. He angered the rich by his concern for the poor, and was banished to Armenia. He later died on the way to a more distant exile on the Black Sea.

### **20<sup>th</sup> September: St. Andrew Kim Tae-gon, *martyr of Korea***

CATHOLICISM took root in Korea in the late 18th century. When French missionaries arrived in 1830, they found that Catholicism was already being practised. Kim Tae-gon's father was martyred for being a Catholic. Kim - or Andrew—was baptised when he was 15, and ordained nine years later in Shanghai, China. He returned to Korea as the first Korean priest, at a time when thousands of Christians were being persecuted. In 1846, aged 25, Fr. Tae-gon was beheaded near Seoul. His last words were, 'Become Christians if you want to be happy after death...' In May 1994, during a visit to Korea, Pope John Paul II, now St. John Paul II, canonised Andrew Kim Tae-gon and 103 other Korean martyrs.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> September: St. Pius of Pietrelcina (*'Padre Pio'*) *priest***

PIO was born in southern Italy in 1887. Until he was 10, he worked on his family's farm, attending Mass and saying the rosary daily. His father went to the USA to pay for Pio to be tutored and enter the Capuchin Order. Pio was ordained in 1910. After the First World War, he became spiritual director at the mountain friary, where he lived until his death. Pio suffered poor health, and believed that the love of God was inseparable from suffering. In September 1968, he died. In 2002 he was canonised by Pope John Paul II (now St. John Paul II).

### **27<sup>th</sup> September: St. Vincent de Paul, *priest***

VINCENT was of peasant stock. Captured by pirates, he spent two years in Tunis as a slave. After his escape, he devoted his life to succouring the poor. He founded the Congregation of Mission Priests (called Lazarists, after the Church of St. Lazare in Paris). He died in 1660 and was canonised in 1737. Vincent is patron of charitable work and societies.

### **30<sup>th</sup> September: St. Jerome, *doctor***

JEROME was born around 341 in Venetia, Italy. He travelled throughout France and became a monk. After a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he retired to the Syrian desert, where he lived as a hermit. He returned to Rome in 382 as secretary to Pope Damasus, who ordered him to produce the standard Latin text of the Bible (the *Vulgate*, or 'People's Bible') from Hebrew and Greek sources. Jerome spent over 15 years on the task. He died in 420 and was buried in Jerusalem. The Council of Trent (1545-63) revised the Vulgate and declared it the approved text for Catholic use. (The English translation most often used in our present-day Missal is the Jerusalem Bible, though other translations may be used.)

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## August & September

### Gambian Christian



**3rd September, 1949:** Opening of St. Joseph's Infants' School, Banjul.

**15th September, 1954:** Death of Fr. John Meehan CSSp, who had served the Mission for 50 years, from 1908 to 1946.

**21st September, 1957:** Death in Nigeria of Daniel Joof, Gambian seminarian, who had spent six years studying for the priesthood.

**14th August, 1961:** Renovations to the clergy house at Bakau were completed.

**1st August, 1964:** The new primary school building at Lamin was opened.

**4th August, 1967:** Fr. Michael Flynn opened the mission house at Lamin.

**1st September, 1968:** Official opening of the new premises in Campama, Banjul of St. Augustine's High School, with late Fr. Michael Cleary (Bishop Emeritus) as Principal. Other Spiritan priests teaching at the school were Fr. Vincent Comer, Fr. John Hogan, Fr. Seán Little and Fr. Tom Tarmey.

**6th September, 1973:** Arrival of Fr. Joseph Gough to assist Fr. Pierre Sagna, Rector of the new Junior Seminary at Fajara. [Later, Fr. Sagna became Bishop of St. Louis du Sénégal, and Fr. Gough became Principal of St. Augustine's High School].

**19th August, 1979:** Fr. John Hogan was appointed District Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans) and Parish Priest at Bakau.

**15th September, 1979:** Sr. Madeleine Mendy, first Gambian vocation to the Presentation Sisters, took her final vows.

**21st September, 1987:** Blessing by the Vicar-General, Fr. Vincent Comer, of the Cluny Sisters' Convent at Barra.

**5th August, 1999:** Opening of St. Andrew's, Berending.

**13th September, 2003:** Death in Britain of Coleridge Wallace ('Sonnie') Cole, former Director of Education, WAEC Representative in London, and Headmaster of Marina International School, Fajara.

**1st August, 2006:** Fr. Joseph Karbo succeeded Sr. Philomena Barry as Director of GPI.

**11th August, 2006:** Farewell at the Catholic Educational Secretariat to the Assistant Education Secretary, Br. Milton Lawrence. He had worked in The Gambia since 1988, his posts including the headship of Our Lady of Fatima High School Bwiam.

**28th August, 2006:** The Presentation Sisters in The Gambia, who since 1968, had been attached to the Region of Senegal, were reconstituted as a mission linked to the Generalate of their Congregation in Rome.

**8th August, 2007:** Death of Sebastian Njie, Executive Director of the National Youth Service Scheme, Chairman of the Catholic Education Commission and Chairman of the Board of St Peter's Senior Secondary School, Lamin.

**15th August, 2007 (Sang Marie):** Bishop Ellison convened an Assembly for the Diocese of Banjul to be held from 30th March to 4th April, 2008.

**20th August, 2007:** Bishop Ellison appointed Fr. David Jimoh Jarju as Vicar-General of the Diocese of Banjul.

**25th September, 2007:** Death in Britain of Antoine Nicholas Tabbal ('CB'), prominent businessman.

**18th-29th August, 2008:** A course for new teachers was conducted by the Catholic Education Secretariat.

**21st September, 2008:** During tree-felling at St. Francis' Nursery School, Tranquil, the new D20,000 roof and newly acquired furniture were damaged.

**22nd August, 2009:** Fr. Michael Murray CSSp died in Dublin at the age of 64, after a protracted illness. During his service in the Diocese of Banjul, beginning in 1972, he was variously Parish Priest at Holy Spirit Banjul, chemistry master at St. Augustine's High School, Parish Priest at Basse, Vocations Director, and Director of the Junior Seminary.

**8th September, 2009:** Fr. Joseph Karbo blessed 'Nazareth', a grotto at the Presentation Sisters' compound in Brikama.

**21st September, 2009:** Death of Dermot Roach, Irish layman, who, since the 1990s, had helped many students. He worked at Fatima School, Bwiam before retiring to Kunkujang-Mariama.

**5th August, 2010:** The Blessed Sacrament Choir of Kanifing visited Dakar to give a concert and sing at the Cathedral.

**17th September, 2010:** Pupils of St. John Vianney's School, Bullock, took part in a live television link with London as part of a programme in which Pope Benedict XVI, then visiting Britain, addressed Britain's school children.

**24th September, 2010:** A GPI workshop was held for priests and others on the forthcoming new English translation of the Mass.

**15th September, 2011:** Sr. Jeanne-Thérèse of the Cluny Sisters celebrated the golden jubilee of her profession.

**During September, 2011:** Three priests arrived to serve the diocese: Fr. Jean-Marie Faye, Fr. Job Addai CSSp and Fr. Frederick Agama CSSp.

**10th August, 2013:** St. Martha's Society celebrated its fortieth anniversary.

**17th August, 2013:** Bishop Robert Ellison, Fr. Jean-Noël Faye and Fr. Yenes Manneh took part in Sang Marie celebrations in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

**10th September, 2013:** Death of the long-serving catechist, 'OJ' – Matthew Jarjou.

**21st - 28th September, 2013:** The Knights of St Peter & St Paul hosted the Biennial Council Meeting of the International Alliance of Catholic Knights.

**1st September, 2015:** In retirement in Ireland, Bishop Emeritus Michael Cleary CSSp celebrated his 90th birthday.

**30th August, 2017:** A fire at the Junior Seminary at Lamin, attributed to an electrical fault, caused considerable damage to the multi-purpose hall.

**1st September, 2020:** Death of Mr. George F. Gomez, fondly called Uncle George, in Banjul, The Gambia. He was born in Bathurst on September 17th, 1938. He was a practising Catholic Christian. He played key roles in the church, especially during mega events. He was a lover of sports from his teens and known well in the GNOC (Gambia National Olympic Committee) for his contribution to the sports.

**6<sup>th</sup> September, 2021:** Death of Rev. Fr. Emile Sambou in Banjul, The Gambia. The Vigil, mass and burial rites were done at St. Therese's Parish, Kanifing on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 and interment at Banjul Cemetery.

**19<sup>th</sup> September, 2022:** Funeral and burial service of Queen Elizabeth II of England, age 96 at St. George's

Chapel in Windsor. She died on September 8th, 2022.

**30<sup>th</sup> September, 2022:** Death of Uncle Henry Gomez, a dear colleague of GPI, who worked in the production unit for many years until his untimely death at the age of 69 years.

**August & September**

*Saviour of the world, by Your Cross and  
Resurrection You have set us free.*



# Our Sunday Readings

**3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2025**  
**Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**1st Reading:** Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 & 17

**2nd Reading:** Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11

**Alleluia:** Matthew 5:3 **Gospel:** Luke 12:13-21

**Homily Theme:** You Fool, This Night Your Life Will be Demanded of You – Luke 12:13-21

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** These are some of the things that are driving a wedge between us and God. Jesus knows very well that people tend to start worshipping all these earthly things and forget our God who in the first place is the owner of us human beings together with all the wealth we are boasting with. We acquire a little wealth and think that we can now survive on our own without the help of God. How wrong we are! Jesus tells us that God, the giver of life, will demand that life from us on the last day, and depending on where you stored your treasures, your souls will be taken to that destination. If you store your treasures in material wealth here on earth, your destination will be in the fiery Gehennah. If you store your treasures in the Kingdom of God, then your destination will be in that Kingdom. You serve God by using the wealth he has given to you to serve His church and the least of your brothers like the sick, prisoners, people living with disabilities, etc. Let us today stop substituting the Lord our God with the material wealth we have acquired because we are just passers-by here on earth. The one who created and placed us here on earth will come for us and demand to see if we fulfilled the purpose He created us for. If we did, then we rejoin Him in His Kingdom.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus Christ, help us to put our treasures in the Kingdom of Heaven so that on the last day we may be accepted into everlasting life in heaven where we will praise and glorify You together with the Communion of Angels and Saints. Jesus, I love you. Amen.

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**10<sup>th</sup> August, 2025**  
**Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**1st Reading:** Wisdom 18:6-9

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 33:1, 12, 18-19, 20-22

**2nd Readings:** Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19 / 11:1-2, 8-12

**Alleluia:** Matthew 24:42A, 44

**Gospel:** Luke 12:32-48 / Luke 12:35-40

**Homily Theme:** Open the Door When Jesus Comes and Knocks – Luke 12:35-38

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** The key here is that we are to “open immediately” when Jesus comes and knocks on the door of our heart. This passage reveals the disposition that we are to have in our hearts regarding the way Christ comes to us, by grace, and “knocks.” Jesus is knocking on your heart. He is continually coming to you seeking to come in and recline with you so as to converse, strengthen, heal, and help. The question to honestly ponder is whether or not you are ready to let Him in immediately. Too often we hesitate in our encounter with Christ. Too often we want to know the full plan for our lives before we are willing to submit and surrender. What we must come to know is that Jesus is trustworthy in every way. He has the perfect answer to every question we have and He has the perfect plan for every aspect of our lives. Do you believe this? Do you accept this as true? Once we accept this truth we will be better prepared to open the door of our heart at the first prompting of grace. We will be prepared to be immediately attentive to all that Jesus wants to say to us and to the grace He wants to give us. Reflect, today, upon how ready you are to open immediately every part of your life to the grace and will of God. Let Him in with great joy and enthusiasm and let His plan continue to unfold in your life.

**Prayer:** Lord, I do wish to let You into my life more deeply each day. I desire to hear Your voice and respond generously. Give me the grace to respond to You as I ought. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

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**17<sup>th</sup> August, 2025**  
**Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**1st Reading:** Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 40:2, 3, 4, 18

**2nd Reading:** Hebrews 12:1-4

**Alleluia:** John 10:27 **Gospel:** Luke 12:49-53

**Homily Theme:** I Have Come To Set a Son Against His Father, a Daughter Against Her Mother – Matthew 10:34-42, Luke 12:49-53

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** It's important when reading this passage that we read it in light of everything else Jesus has ever written. We must read it in light of all His teachings on love and mercy, forgiveness and unity, etc.

But with that said, what was Jesus talking about in this passage? In large part, He was speaking about one of the effects of the Truth. The Truth of the Gospel has the power to deeply unite us to God when we fully accept it as the Word of Truth. But another effect is that it divides us from those who refuse to be united to God in the Truth. We are not intending this and we ought not do so by our own will or intention, but it must be understood that by immersing ourselves in the Truth, we are also putting ourselves at odds with everyone who may be at odds with God and His Truth. He has set His moral law over all of humanity and this cannot be undone. This passage above offers us the sobering reality that by rejecting all forms of relativism and by holding onto Truth, we also run the risk of division, even with those in our families. Jesus offers this passage especially to strengthen us when divisions arises in our faith. If division happens as a result of our sin, shame on us. If it happens as a result of the Truth (as offered in mercy), then we should accept it as a result of the Gospel. Jesus was rejected and we should not be surprised if that happens to us, too. Reflect, today, upon how fully you are ready and willing to accept the full Truth of the Gospel no matter the consequences. The full Truth will set you free and will also, at times, reveal the division present between you and those who have rejected God. You must pray for unity in Christ, but not be willing to compromise so as to bring about a false unity.

**Let us Pray:** Lord, give me the wisdom and courage I need to accept all You have revealed. Help me to love You above all things and to accept whatever the consequences are of me following You. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

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## 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

### Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

**1st Reading:** Isaiah 66:18-21

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 117:1, 2

**2nd Reading:** Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

**Alleluia:** John 14:6      **Gospel:** Luke 13:22-30

**Homily Theme:** Depart From Me, All You Evildoers! – Luke 13:22-30

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** *“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, ..... After the master of the house has arisen and locked the door, then will you stand outside knocking and saying, ‘Lord, open the door for us.’ He will answer, ‘I do not know you. And you will say, ‘We ate and drank in your company and you taught in our streets.’ Then he will say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from. Depart from me, all you evildoers!’ This clear and somewhat shocking statement from our Lord and would have the effect of causing you to step back and look at your life so as to sincerely and humbly examine the path you are on. It takes true humility to face the truth, at times, and to admit if we are trying to rely more upon ourselves than upon Christ. The “narrow gate” is that gate through which the humble enter. Pride and self-sufficiency lead us to attempt to make our own path to Heaven. But this path is never the correct one. Entering the “narrow gate” also means that we listen to God. He, as the divine Shepherd, is always calling to us in a gentle way. Only when we are attentive to His voice will we know where He is leading us. Only then will we discover the way through the one and only narrow gate. Reflect, today, upon that moment when*

you meet our Lord face to face. That will that encounter be like? Will it be one where He greets you with open arms saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into your reward.” Or will it be one in which He says, “I do not know you.” Now is the time to face your life of faith with honesty, striving to rely only upon the strength of our divine Lord.

**Prayer:** Lord, I do desire to enter the narrow gate. I choose to follow Your gentle voice, leading me to Heaven. Help me to remain humble in life, shedding all that leads me to rely upon myself. May I rely only upon You, dear Lord, and trust You in all things. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

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## 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2025

### Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

**1st Reading:** Sirach 3:17-18, 21, 29-30

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11

**2nd Reading:** Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24A

**Alleluia:** Matthew 11:29AB      **Gospel:** Luke 14:1, 7-14

**Homily Theme:** Parable of the Great Banquet – Luke 14:7-24

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** Jesus is teaching us how rewarding, humility is, and will be, here on earth and also in heaven. He also teaches us of how shameful, unrewarding, and embarrassing pride is, and will be, here on earth and on the last day. It is pride and self-righteousness that makes a man invite to his feast, only the people who can in return be of material benefit to him. But it is humility, love, and meekness that makes a man invite to his feast, everyone including the poor, beggars, lepers, widows, and other people with no material wealth to repay him. When Jesus tells this parable, He is trying to tell us that we were created by God to be of service to those who need our help with the talents He has given us. This great banquet is used figuratively to mean offering freely to people what God has blessed you with in abundance. God may have blessed you with medical knowledge, engineering skills, legal skills, etc. Therefore, Jesus is urging us to offer what we have in plenty to those people who really need it because the rewards will be in heaven. Let's mainly be of service to the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, etc, because Jesus said, “Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me.”

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for reminding us to serve the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind because it is from this service that we will be storing our treasures in heaven. Jesus, I love you. Amen.

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## 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2025

### Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

**1st Reading:** Wisdom 9:13-18B

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 & 17

**2nd Reading:** Philemon 9-10, 12-17

**Alleluia:** Psalms 119:135      **Gospel:** Luke 14:25-33

**Homily Theme:** Choosing God Above Everything Else – Luke 14:25-33

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** It's a strong statement and like everything Jesus said, it must be read in the context of

the entire Gospel. Remember, Jesus said that the greatest and first commandment was to “Love the Lord your God with your whole heart...” He also said, “Love your neighbour as yourself.” This most certainly includes family. However, in the passage above, we hear Jesus telling us that if anything whatsoever gets in the way of our love of God, we must eliminate it from our lives. If it is money, prestige, power, the flesh, alcohol, etc., then we must eliminate it from our lives. Shockingly, some will even find that they must distance themselves from their own family in order to keep their relationship with God alive. The family was designed to be a place of peace, harmony, and love. But the sad reality that many have experienced in life is that sometimes our family relationships directly interfere with our love of God and others. But it is a call from God to act in justice and truth and to refuse to allow anything to separate us from the love of God. Reflect, today, upon that which is the greatest obstacle to your relationship with God. Who or what tears you away from loving God with your whole heart? Hopefully, there is nothing or no one who fits this category. But if there is, hear the words of Jesus today encouraging you to be strong and calling you to put Him first before anything else in life.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to constantly see those things in my life that keep me from loving You. As I identify that which deters me in faith, give me the courage to choose You above all things. Give me the wisdom to know how to choose You above all things. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

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**14<sup>th</sup> September, 2025**

**Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

**1st Reading:** Numbers 21:4B-9

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 78:1BC-2, 34-35, 36-37, 38

**2nd Reading:** Philippians 2:6-11

**Gospel:** John 3:13-17

**Homily Theme:** Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross – The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up – John 3:13-17

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** In this passage, Jesus refers to the story from the Old Testament where Moses lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, and those who looked upon it were healed. Jesus uses this imagery to foreshadow his own crucifixion, emphasizing that he too will be lifted up for the healing and salvation of humanity. The central message of this passage revolves around the concept of belief. Jesus states that just as those who looked upon the lifted serpent were healed, so too will those who believe in him have eternal life. We the Christians perceive the Cross, not from a secular point of view, but from a divine perspective. We believe that Jesus Christ was lifted up on the Cross for all to see. We believe that He died a horrible death on the Cross to atone for our sins. Jesus, ultimately became victorious for He defeated death on that Cross and rose from the dead. So whenever we see the Cross we see a victorious and glorious throne that deserves to be exalted all the time. Therefore, Just as the Israelites looked upon the lifted serpent in the desert, so also look upon Jesus on the Cross for our healing. We suffer from many issues in life such as ill-health, emotional problems, personal, relational, spiritual and financial issues. Jesus tells us today that when we, with sincere and repentant hearts, direct our gaze at Him on the exalted Cross, with faith, we

shall be healed. Therefore, today, let us spend some time gazing upon the Cross of Christ in our crucifixes. With faith, in that crucifix, you will see the answer to your problems. Ask Jesus for the solution to your problems for He says, “Ask and you will get, seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened for you.”

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, always give me the grace to gaze upon your Cross. May You help me to experience the victory You won for me on the Cross. May I receive your help all the times I seek it when I look at You. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

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**21<sup>st</sup> September, 2025**

**Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**1st Reading:** Amos 8:4-7

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8

**2nd Reading:** 1 Timothy 2:1-8

**Alleluia:** 2 Corinthians 8:9

**Gospel:** Luke 16:1-13 Or Luke 16:10-13

**Homily Theme:** The Parable of the Dishonest Steward- Luke 16:1-8

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** Jesus told this parable as a way of highlighting the fact that the “children of the world” are indeed successful in their manipulation of worldly things, whereas the “children of light” are not as shrewd when it comes to worldly things. So what does this tell us? In fact, by acknowledging this fact about the worldly, Jesus is presenting us with a strong contrast as to how we should think and act. We are called to be the children of light. Therefore, we should not be surprised at all if we are not as successful in worldly things as others who are immersed in the secular culture. This is especially true when we look at the numerous “successes” of those who are fully immersed in the world and the values of the world. Take, for example, the entertainment industry. Compare that to those who are filled with virtue, humility, and goodness. We often find that they go unnoticed. So what should we do? We should use this parable to remind ourselves that all that matters, in the end, is what God thinks. How does God see us and the effort we make in living a holy life? As children of the light, we must work only for that which is eternal, not for that which is worldly and passing. God will provide for our worldly needs if we put our trust in Him. We may not become huge successes in accord with worldly standards, but we will obtain greatness in regard to all that truly matters and all that is eternal. Reflect, today, upon your priorities in life. Are you focused on building up riches that are eternal? Or do you continually find yourself caught up in the manipulations and shrewdness that has as a goal only worldly success? Strive for that which is eternal and you will be eternally grateful.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to keep my eyes on Heaven. Help me to be one who is wise in the ways of grace, mercy and goodness. When I am tempted to live only for this world, help me to see what is of true value and stay focused on that alone. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

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**28<sup>th</sup> September, 2025**  
**Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C**

**1st Reading:** Amos 6:1A, 4-7

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalms 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

**2nd Reading:** 1 Timothy 6:11-16

**Alleluia:** 2 Corinthians 8:9      **Gospel:** Luke 16:19-31

**Homily Theme:** The Riches of Lazarus – Luke 16:19-31

**Verse of the Day Reflection:** The key to this story is that even though Lazarus was in a miserable physical condition, his soul was in the hands of God. We know that to be true, because we are told that when he died, he was “carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham” (Luke 16:22). This story provides us all with an opportunity to look at what is most important in life. The rich man had all he wanted in this life but lacked charity because he ignored the physical needs of Lazarus. For that reason, the rich man was spiritually impoverished, whereas Lazarus was spiritually prosperous. When you can keep your eyes on

what is most important in life, spiritual wealth, it will make the many other hardships you endure less burdensome. Perhaps you will never be in the same physical condition as Lazarus, but you may encounter other great pains and hardships in life. When this happens, the tendency may be to become fixated upon those sufferings and to take your eyes off your interior union with God. Reflect, today, upon how you would deal with living like Lazarus. Reflect upon what your own “sores” are in life. They may be varied in type, degree and number from those of other people’s sufferings, but they will be encountered in your life. As you identify your suffering, turn your eyes from it to the presence of God in your soul, and allow His presence to fill you with the riches of His grace.

**Prayer:** Lord, I offer to You my suffering and pain, my misery and hurt. Help me to always keep my eyes on You and to seek satisfaction only in the riches of Heaven. Fill my heart, especially, with love of You and charity for others so that I will be truly rich in what matters most. Jesus, I love You. Amen.

### ST CHARLES L’WANGA PARISH, FAJI-KUNDA

#### PARISH FEAST INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT AS AT 8TH JUNE 2025 (ST. CHARLES L.B.S)

INCOME (REVENUE)	GMD
ASHOBE SALES	1,311,660.00
FOOD & BEVERAGE SALES	724,815.00
MASS PROGRAMME SALES	7,750.00
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	192,795.00
MASS COLLECTION	36,390.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,273,410.00</b>
<b>LESS EXPENSES</b>	
ASHOBEE PURCHASED	780,000.00
<u>GROUPS &amp; COMMUNITIES FOOD PREPARATION</u>	
SENIOR CHOIR	20,000.00
JUNIOR CHOIR	26,000.00
YOUTH CHOIR	10,075.00
CHARISMATIC	9,595.00
ST. DOMINIC	10,100.00
SINCHU WILLINGARA COMMUNITY	6,130.00
LATRIKUNDA COMMUNITY	10,400.00
ABUKO CENTRAL COMMUNITY	9,100.00
ABUKO SANCHABA COMMUNITY	8,285.00
TALLINDING COMMUNITY	11,550.00
FAJI-KUNDA COMMUNITY	14,880.00
NIGERIAN COMMUNITY	10,000.00
SIERRA LEONIAN COMMUNITY	10,000.00
COST OF FOOD RPEPARATION	102,875.00
DRINKS	382,350.00
COST OF PIGS	75,925.00
WATER	12,700.00
ICE	3,800.00
PRINTING - MASS PROGRAMME / BROCHURE	9,500.00
TENTS	47,000.00
CHAIRS	9,250.00
TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS	5,000.00
FOOD BOWLS / CUPS / SPOONS - ETC	8,500.00
RELIGIOUS REFRESHMENT / FOOD	10,000.00
CASH POWER	1,000.00
DECORATION	8,814.00
EVENT TAGS	2,800.00
CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT	8,500.00
DJ	25,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,649,129.00</b>
<b>INCOME SURPLUS (PROFIT)</b>	<b>624,281.00</b>
MANY THANKS TO YOU THE PARISIONERS, FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE PARISH FOR A SUCCESSFUL PARISH FEAST. MAY GOD REWARD YOU GENEROUSLY.	

**25% GMD 624,281 = GMD 93,642.15**



# WHO WAS REVEREND FATHER REGINALD GILLOOLY - REGGIE

*Cont'd from page 11*

Celebrating masses daily was in his blood. He was fond of saying that a priest who concelebrates is a lazy priest. There are lot of communities in need of a priest. He was very active in listening to confessions. Every month, he would sit for hours listening to confessions of all the primary school students (Grade 2 to 6). His catechetical classes were well organized and fruitful.

His prayer life defines him. He was a prayerful and a holy priest. He would always begin his day with prayer and meditation. Then the community will join him to pray the Divine Office and then

sum it up with the mass. He is often seen walking around the school compound in the evening hours praying his rosary.

He was a generous priest. He would always share whatever he had with all in need. He had a bookshop that operated at less cost to help the underprivileged. This generosity was abused by many who would turn back to steal from him. Time without number, burglars would invade his house, but he would always resolve to prayer.

In Fr. Gillooly, one sees holiness, humility, generosity, and love. Indeed, his cause for sainthood should commence with immediate effect. Truly, he was a man who talked little and prayed more.

## THE HOMILY BY FR. DAVID JIMOH JARJU ON 19<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2025 AT FR. PETER S. LOPEZ SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF ORDINATION AT GPI

*Cont'd from page 13*

**Mission** – Like Jeremiah, the apostles and Jesus himself, he had a mission to carry out: to bring the message of Jesus to the places he is sent; beginning from schools in Basse, down the hills at Bansang, across the river in Tankong-kunda, Kunting and Jalokoto. In the Kombos at Faji-Kunda, Blessed Sacrament in Kanifing, then Gambia Pastoral Institute (GPI). It is said that “if you want to explain how you ran after a red monkey and killed it, it will get rotten in your hands.” Fr. Peter’s mission is clear and so he should avoid promoting missionary baggage and teach the message by word and the way of life he lives. Missionary baggage includes showing one’s expertise in the sacred writings, living among one’s parishioners and not with them; condescending attitude of not learning the language of the people with whom one works.

**Work with others in the vineyard of God** - On the day of your ordination, many who were present came close to identify with your call and showed how they were related to you. Your blood relatives proudly came close; priests at the time called you “our brother priest.” However, novelty has worn away and without doubt your faith was tested like the followers of Jesus during the time of Peter. Some day may come your way and like the apostles at the arrest of Jesus, the very priests who called you brother will not be seen anywhere. Like the mother of Jesus, your relatives will show that ‘blood is thicker than even the baptismal water.’ Be reminded that reward awaits those who are steadfast in their faith.

### **Priests, prophets and kings**

**At baptism we become priests** – and as ordained priests we are to offer the sacrifice of the mass, administer the sacraments and bring God’s message to the ends of the earth. This is our focus. In addition, we care for the basic needs of people as far as possible. Take the mass, as an example: the word of God read at the celebrations of the eucharist makes the difference. How well do we prepare ourselves to share the word of God during our homilies? Sometimes our ill-prepared homilies are reduced to entertaining stories without any message relating to the readings. Parishioners go home remembering our jokes for that week. In our zeal to offer our services we ought to be careful that we do not give others a chance to misuse us – e.g. our

peers can easily turn us to taxi drivers. Young priests should take heed.

**As prophets** – we are called to be the spokespersons of God. There is that tendency of condemning people’s wrong deeds. Nothing is wrong with that. However, let us be reminded that the perpetrators of the evil we condemn are created “in the image and likeness of God” and they need our services and attention. In fact, are we better than them? If we are to judge The Gambia by the information we receive from our commissions of enquiry and the TRRC we will be blind to the improvements on the roads, electricity and provision of water in different parts of the country.

**We are kings** – Priests have an administrative role in the parish. Parishioners should recognize this and work in harmony rather than competition with their priests. We, as Priests, should recognize the expertise of the parishioners. It is said that we should “give work to its friend and not to our friends.” The value of honesty will go a long way in making sure things go accordingly in our parishes. I invite you to watch the old movie from Ghana, “Church money.”

### **I turn to you in the Diocese of Banjul**

Let us look at vocations in the Diocese. Some mathematics may help us here. In the late 1970s to early 1980s the average number of senior seminarians was about nine and we had a high number of seminarians from any diocese in the Inter-Territorial Catholic Bishops conference of Liberia, Sierra-Leone and The Gambia (ITCABIC). More than forty years on, we do not have much of a difference in terms of numbers of senior seminarians. Yet the number of parishioners has greatly increased. We may need to consider some conversation on vocation to the priesthood, discussions, and probably a week of conference on vocations at the diocesan level. The reason for the existence of the church is mission. How can this mission be carried out if we do not have enough priests?

**“...You chose me to go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last.”**

The gospel of today tells us that we did not choose this mission, we did not place these responsibilities on our shoulders. It is God who has sent us and as he has helped Jeremiah, Jesus and the apostles to fulfill their mission so also God will help us in our mission to love one another.

God bless us all. Amen

