

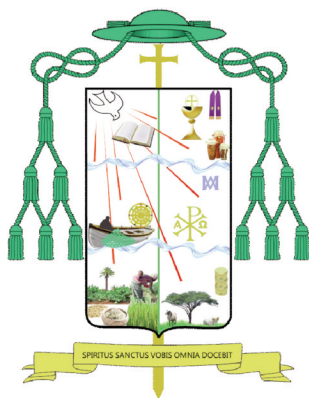


The Catholic contribution to education in Gambia

Volume 43 No. 4

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2019

D50



The Diocese of Banjul **NEWSLETTER**

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

Celebrating *Sang Marie*



Mama Ansel Sanyang's prize essay

Thoughts, prayers and readings
for Mass on Sundays
and for Sang Marie





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By way of introduction

Keeping holy days and holidays

SINCE the first issue of the *Newsletter* in 1976, this opening piece, or editorial, has always been labelled 'By way of introduction'. But during the month of August two celebrations need no introduction: *Tobaski* and *Sang Marie*.

By happy chance, this year we celebrate these two great festivals in the same week. There could be no more tangible reminder that in our nation the majority Muslim population and their Christian fellow-citizens live, work and socialise together in mutual harmony and respect.

By a further happy coincidence, in the Catholic Church the second reading of the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time, just two days before *Tobaski*, celebrates the faith of Abraham, as *Tobaski* does.

Both *Tobaski* and *Sang Marie* can be said to exalt trust in God and obedience to him. Abraham's trust and obedience prefigure the trust and obedience, and the absolute fidelity, of Mary, Mother of our Lord.

May these two holy-days, Muslim and Christian, bring us closer together as worthy citizens, intent on building up our nation in peace and true progress.

Every year, August sees another kind of holy-day – or we'd better write 'holiday': the long school holiday, when nearly every schoolchild and teacher takes a break from the classroom.



For over a century and a half the Catholic mission in The Gambia has made a significant contribution to the provision of schooling. But though we draw inspiration from the past - and are particularly indebted to many devoted teachers - we need to live for the present and build for the future.

Nearly all of us pay lip-service to the importance of education. Yet, as with religious observance, lip-service is not enough. If our schools and their pupils are to flourish, the educational authorities, teachers, parents and pupils need to work together with a common vision: that every child, in the home and in school, should realise their moral and intellectual potential. It's a tall order: but every worthwhile human endeavour calls for effort and co-operation.

We might note that the Pope's prayer intention for August is 'that families, through their life of prayer and love, become ever more clearly 'schools of true human growth'.

As we sing Mary's praises on 15th August, let us ask God to increase our faith and trust in him, and our witness to him, so that we may serve our community in love and with practical usefulness. 'All things are possible to those who love and serve the Lord.'

Danger in the house!

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Our Eucharistic Lord
Faith, adoration and love
by Cardinal Francis Arinze
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First published Palm Sunday 1976

THE DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2019 Volume 43 No. 4

Published by The Gambia Pastoral Institute

33 Kairaba Avenue

PMB 296 Serrekunda, The Gambia, West Africa

Telephone 4394847 Email info@gpi.gm

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Production *Henry Gomez, Frédéric Diatta*



Here & there

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE

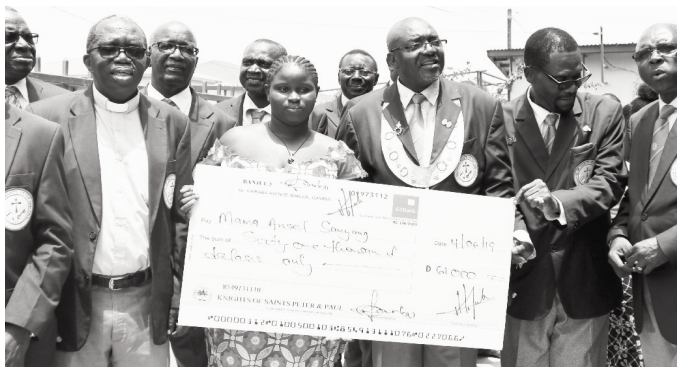


Bishop Mendy ordains two deacons

THE MOST Revd Gabriel Mendy on Friday 19th July conducted his first ordinations as Bishop of Banjul when he admitted two young Gambians, the Revd Etienne Colley and Richard René Mansal to the Order of Deacons.

The Mass also marked the end of the Pastoral Year in the Diocese of Banjul.

Etienne and Richard studied French in Zinguichor from 2014 to 2015, and pursued their priestly formation at the François Libermann Seminary, Dakar, from 2015 to 2019.



9th-grade schoolgirl wins national and international competition

A 9th-Grade pupil at St Peter's Technical Junior Secondary School Lamin, 16-year-old Mama Ansel Sanyang, has won a national and international essay competition sponsored by the International Alliance of Catholic Knights.

In a ceremony at the end of Mass at Holy Cross Church Brusubi on 9th June, Pentecost Sunday, Mama was awarded a prize of £1,000 (about D61,000) by the International Alliance of Catholic Knights, as well as a D12,000 national prize.

Second and third in the competition at national level were Sarah Elizabeth Joof of Holy Cross Brusubi and Mai Jai Sonko of St Peter's.

The competition was open to boys and girls in the final three years of secondary school with essays in English between 1,200 and 2,000 words.

Fr Michael Ndecky, Parish Priest at Holy Cross, welcomed the Knights of St Peter & St Paul, participants and winners

of the essay competition, their parents and the young people from the four communities that form the parish at Brusubi.

The Supreme Knight, Michael O. Sock, René Geoffrey Renner and Lawrence H. Bruce presented the National Awards.

The Knights of St Peter & St Paul awarded certificates of participation, certificates of merit and a certificate of excellence. In the national essay competition they provided D12,000 for the first place, D10,000 for the second place; D7,500 for the third place; and a D500 consolation prize for each of the other participants.

'Walking in joy...'

Brother Lawrence Bruce, a Past Supreme Knight, member of the Education Fraternity of the Order, explained that the essay competition came about after the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Rome in October 2018, which considered the role of youths in the Universal Church.

The International Alliance of Catholic Knights came up with the idea of inviting young people to express themselves in an essay competition. All 15 member countries of the alliance were asked to organise national essay competitions, and select the best for entry in an international competition.

The theme of the competition was 'Walking in Joy to Serve the Lord'. Participants were expected to demonstrate understanding the Good News of the Gospel. The competition opened in February 2019.

The Knights of St Peter & St Paul worked through Fr Anthony Gabisi, Chaplain of the Order, and the 'Anointed Reigning Mighty Youths' (ARMY) co-ordinated by Deborah Linguere Sock.

Preliminary workshops were held at the American Corner and various parishes in the Greater Banjul Area. Thirteen students from five parishes and five senior secondary schools participated. The first, second and third places were selected, and the first place entered for the international competition.

Mama Ansel Sanyang's prize essay: page 6

Following the Youth Cross at Soma

HISTORY was made in Soma from Friday 14th to Sunday 16th June, when young people from throughout the diocese converged to celebrate the Youth Cross Weekend – being held for the first time outside the Greater Banjul Area.

Around 700 young people, supported by many others, took part in the Friday evening procession from the entrance of the town to the Church of Mary, Mother of God.

Eight priests took part, in addition to the Parish Priest, Fr Anthony Lippo CSSp.

The procession was followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, beginning at 8 pm in the adjacent football field.

On Saturday registered participants were divided into five discussion groups – named as Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and James. Later, there were games and other activities, and in the evening another procession, followed by a gospel and cultural concert, which concluded at 2 am.

The following morning the inspiring Youth Weekend concluded with Mass for Trinity Sunday, at which Fr Peter S. Lopez gave the homily.

The Youth Cross Weekend is now celebrated annually. In 2020 the venue will be Kunkujang Mariama.

This year's *Tobaski* comes just before *Sang Marie*

THIS year, Muslims in The Gambia and throughout the world will be celebrating *Eid el Adha* on or about Monday 12th August – just three days or so before *Sang Marie*.

In this country the Muslim celebration of the *Eid* – locally-known as *Tobaski* – is sometimes described as the ‘Muslim Christmas’. Actually, in the doctrinal sense, *Tobaski* and Christmas are very different; but *Tobaski*, like Christmas, is certainly an occasion for great family rejoicing and hospitality.

Christians can feel particularly close to Muslims at *Tobaski*, because what it celebrates is Abraham’s faith in God, and his willingness to sacrifice his own son, if that was God’s will.

Abraham is ‘father in faith’ to Jews, Christians and Muslims. Christians do not keep special days for the heroes of the Old Testament, but we do honour Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Elisha and all the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets who point the way to God.

Christians, like Muslims, give thanks for the faith and witness of holy men and women who throughout the ages valued service to God before all else, which is why we rejoice with Muslims in the faithfulness of Abraham - and pray that our own faith and service to God may be strengthened.

Abraham’s readiness to sacrifice his son is narrated in the Qur’an and in the earlier account in Genesis 22:1-19.

Mary’s acknowledgement

Christ’s Mother proclaimed: ‘My soul magnifies the Lord... He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promises he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and his descendants for ever.’ (*Magnificat*, the Song of Mary, Luke 1:46-55)

The witness of Abraham and his successors is proclaimed in the New Testament Letter to the Hebrews, chapter 11: 4-38.

At Mass, the Roman Canon (the First Eucharistic Prayer) says, ‘Be pleased to look upon these offerings... and to accept them as once you were pleased to accept the gifts of your servant Abel the just, the sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith, and the offering of your high priest, Melchizedek...’

Six Anglican ordinations

THE ANGLICAN Bishop of Gambia, the Rt Revd James Allen Yaw Odico, at his Cathedral in Banjul on Saturday 27th July ordained four men and two women deacons as priests in the Anglican Communion.

The new priests are the Revd Sang Beyai, the Revd James Bowen, the Revd John Henry Fullah, the Revd Mary Paulina Anniemaude Josephine Pedro-Deker, the Revd Matilda Rebecca Cole and the Revd Christopher Temis Manley.

The Anglican Province of West Africa agreed to the ordination of women as priests in 2000, but so far only Liberia and The Gambia have done so.



Fr Joseph Karbo returns

Fr Joseph Karbo has recently successfully completed a master’s degree in psycho-spiritual therapy and counselling at the Marist International University College, Kenya, and returned to his home Diocese of Banjul before taking up a post at St Paul’s Major Seminary in Kenema, Sierra Leone, where over the years a number of Gambian priests have undergone training.



The Vicar-General of the Diocese of Banjul, Fr Anthony Sonko, has been Director of Studies at Kenema.

Fr Karbo was ordained by Bishop Michael Cleary at Farafenni - together with Fr Michael Ndecky - in April 1999. He was Director of GPI from 2006 to 2013, and subsequently studied at St Anselm’s Institute in Margate, southern England.

O JESUS, our great High Priest, hear our humble prayers for the priests of this Diocese of Banjul and priests everywhere. Show them that they are needed by the Church, they are needed by souls, they are needed for the work of redemption. Amen.

Parishes & Parish Priests

- 1 Cathedral Parish: Fr Antoine Sambou & Fr Gabriel Secka
- 2 Blessed Sacrament Kanifing Estate: Fr Joseph Carl Gomez
- 3 Christ the King Darsilami: Fr Yenes Manneh
- 4 Holy Cross Brusibi: Fr Michael Ndecky
- 5 Holy Spirit Banjul: Fr Bruno Toupan
- 6 Mary Mother of God Soma: Fr Anthony Lippo CSSp
- 7 Our Lady of Fatima Bwiam: Fr Benjamin Juana assisted by Fr Matthias Atubu CSSp
- 8 Resurrection Brikama: Fr James Mendy
- 9 Sacred Heart Bansang: Fr Fredrick Agame CSSp
- 10 St Anthony Kololi: Fr Anthony Sonko (Vicar-General)
- 11 St Charles Lwanga Fajikunda: Fr Joseph Colley
- 12 St Francis Kunkujang: Salesians led by Fr Peter Wojnarowski SDB, Fr Peace Ike SDB & Fr Carlos Valdiviezo SDB
- 13 St John the Baptist Farafenni: Fr Cornelius Umoren MSP

14 St Joseph Basse: Fr Joseph Kojo Fynn CSSp assisted by Fr Magashi Aernan Terungwa Samuel

15 St Kizito Bakoteh: Fr Victor Ndecky

16 St Martin Kartong: Fr Pius Gidi CSSp

17 St Michael Njongon: Fr Matthew Mendy

18 St Peter Lamin: Fr Godwin Nnadozie MSP assisted by Fr John Ezeike MSP

19 St Therese Kanifing: Fr Anthony Gabisi assisted by Fr Tanislaus Ndecky

20 Star of the Sea Bakau: Fr Michael Gomez assisted by Fr Peter Jammeh CSSp

Also

St Peter’s Junior Seminary Lamin: Fr Paschal Mendy, Rector & Director of Vocations

Gambia Pastoral Institute: Director, Fr Peter S. Lopez



Walking in joy to serve the Lord

By MAMA ANSEL SANYANG

LOOKING at the key words in the topic, one realises the happiness that could be derived in the journey in life to fellowship with God through love and service to one's neighbour.

There can be no better way of expressing love than the joy of serving those around you. As stated in John 13:34: 'A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love another.'

As a teenager, how can this be done?

Serving God through your family

As it is said, 'Charity begins at home.' Serving God should begin by serving those immediately around you - that is, those in our families.

The house chores we do at home, such as cleaning, washing, cooking and many others, may often feel overwhelming, but this is the beginning of the journey to serve the Lord. Of course, this may not seem easy, but the key is to know and understand your ability and limitations, and then to pace yourself. The service to our families should not be limited to doing household chores, but giving our full attention and resources to those we serve.

As we joyfully dedicate ourselves to our family, our acts will also be counted as service to God.

Give tithes and offerings

One of the ways young people can serve the Lord is by helping God's people through tithes and offerings.

We should be ready to share with others the little we are blessed with, particularly our brothers and sisters who are in need of our help. Hence the saying, 'It is in giving that you receive.'

One should not consider age in giving.

As a young girl growing the faith, the issue of tithes has ever been misunderstood. It is the duty of every faithful to help the kingdom of God on earth by giving back to God.

Therefore it is not only when you are working, even students and everybody who is blessed by God in any way. Contributing financially or in kind to God's work is a great way to serve the Lord. The little token you give either in the form of tithes or normal offerings may go a long way in feeding, clothing the less privileged and even supporting humanitarian work locally or worldwide.

All these services can only be possible through financial and physical support of many volunteers as we serve God by serving our fellow man.

Community service

Community service is one of the ways to serve God. Helping people who are less able and the less fortunate can be a self-gratifying act. The joy of serving people in hospital, especially those who are in need of life-saving acts, can never be measured.

When you select causes to devote your time, talents and treasure to, be careful to select causes which will produce much joy and happiness for you and for those you serve. You can easily become involved in your community. It only takes a little effort to contact a local group, charity or other community programme.

Donate clothing and other goods

Walking in joy to serve to Lord includes donating clothing and goods to those in need. Sufficiency in our communities is an illusion, so we need to reach out to those who need to be helped.

Giving simply should not be giving what one does not want, but what needs to be given because it is needed for a good purpose. Things like clothing, dishes, blankets, toys, books, furniture and many others can be given directly to those around who are in need of these things, or to charity organisations like St Vincent de Paul for onward

distribution to beneficiaries. Needless to say, the giving of such items to help others is an easy way to serve God.

Be a friend

Building relationships calls for selflessness. So as we take the time to serve and support those around us we are making friendship. Through service we will not only support others but also build a network of support for ourselves, and make others feel at home.

Kindness and the readiness to serve is the essence of greatness and the fundamental feature nobility of men and women in our communities; hence the saying, 'Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant.' I believe that kindness and service can be the passport that opens doors and fashions friendship. It softens hearts and moulds relationships that can last lifetimes, Let us make friends through our actions in the joy to serve the Lord.

Serve God by serving children

As a teenager growing up in a troubled world, I know what it is to be loved. Many children and teenagers need love – and we can provide it.

There are many ways that love can be provided for the young ones. This can be through involvement in school



or library work or children-centred church group activities like Missionary Child, altar servers, choir and others. I sit and wonder what Jesus Christ would have done for us children if he were to be physically here with us. He loves children, and so we too should love and serve them.

Jesus said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for such is the kingdom of God.' (Luke 18:16). If only we want to build the kingdom of God on earth, we must endeavour to love and serve children.

Serving God as a youth

Christians enjoy the inestimable privilege of journeying with God.

As we journey through life we do so in fellowship with God our Creator and the Sustainer of all that is walking in the joy to serve the Lord. When you have joy in your heart from being a faithful servant of God, this will give you stability in your life that produces joy and hope, taking great delight in serving God as youths. The word of God says, 'So remember your Creator while you are still young.' (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

As a youth, walking in the joy of serving the Lord means to start with serving in our families. Daily we work, clean, love, support, listen, teach and endlessly give of ourselves to members of our family.

The key to all these acts is to know and understand your own self.

'We must back the proclamation of God's kingdom by what we do'

Serving the poor is serving God

Jesus Christ said, 'Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, you do unto me.' The joy of serving should be the priority of young people in life. The ultimate goal of noble service is not to serve those you expect to serve you for worldly material benefit but for the joy of putting a smile on the face of those who are yearning for it. Since we are told that the image of God can only be seen in the person next to you, helping the poor could be a great service to God.

As someone once testified, 'I met him [Jesus] one day on my rounds in community service. He showed me where he lives and how he suffers. I did not know at the time it was him.' To serve the poor is to serve them with clothes and other things, and for the needy ones we show love.

Share your talents

Each of us has been given talents by the Lord that we should use to serve God and others. We should reflect on our lives to find out what talent we have that we can use in the service of God and humanity.

I would like to take an example from myself. I am a person who goes to church and fellowship, but did not discover my talent earlier. When I began constant study of the word of God, and spending more time in his presence, I began to discover that I have a talent for singing. Singing is not an easy thing, but with the grace of God we are more than conquerors. Now I stand boldly and teach the young ones in the junior choir in St Cecilia's Church at Busumbala.

The grace of patience in the service of the Lord is the

greatest gift in walking in joy to serve the Lord.

In teaching songs to young ones. I realise that there are fast learners and slow learners. It is not easy to teach a slow learner to sing a song, but that is the joy of serving the Lord.

Fulfil your calling

We are all called to serve God in the Church. Answering the calls in the Church is sometimes difficult due to societal norms and values. Temptations could be hindrances, as well. Most vocational calls are not easy, but we must be ready to roll up our sleeves and work, no matter whatever and wherever that work may be. Vocational calls are not fashion, but selfless service.

This probably explains the saying, 'Many are called but few are chosen.' When we seek to serve others we are motivated not by selfishness but by charity and emptied self. Serving others and serving God should not be done for worldly recognition and showing-off. It should be done in humility and the joy of serving those around you.

Those who dedicate their life in serving others are prepared to sacrifice everything in life. Priests, religious sisters, volunteers and many others are cases in point to demonstrate what selfless service means. The Lord Jesus lived such a selfless life on earth to serve the lowly, the meek, the sick, etc., in order to spread the Good News.

As it is said, actions speak louder than words, So we must back the proclamation of God's kingdom by what we do.

We are not asked to do more than what we can do, but things like visiting the sick, the elderly and places where we can render our genuine service such as cleaning, fetching water for the elderly, and caring for the sick.

In conclusion, 'Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant' (Matthew 20:26). When I hear the word 'servant', this is the image that always comes to mind: a maid who is there to serve, to meet whatever demands are placed upon her. She might look good outside, but could be really hurting inside.

At other times I think of the real servant of all, Mother Teresa's selflessness service in the slums of Calcutta for long. She literally gave everything to those around her. The acts and deeds of Mother Teresa have captured my imagination and make me feel inadequate in the things that I do.

Francis 'draws strength' from Benedict XVI

Pope Francis has said that his relationship with Benedict XVI gives him strength and reminds him of the living tradition of the Church.



Speaking on 2nd June on the papal flight from Romania, Francis said that each time he visits Pope Emeritus Benedict, he feels more 'like family'.

'Every time I go to visit him I feel like that; I take his hand and get him to talk. He speaks little, slowly, but with the same depth, as always - because Benedict's problem is his knees, not his head; he has a great lucidity, as always.'



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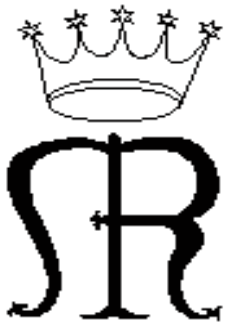
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Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy! Blessed be her glorious Assumption!

THE GREAT Catholic feast on Thursday 15th August celebrates the assumption into heaven, body and soul, of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In Spain and Latin America the feast is called the *Immacolata*; in The Gambia and Senegal it's *Sang Marie*; and throughout the world it's the Assumption.

In The Gambia, the Catholic Cathedral and Diocese are dedicated to Our Lady of the Assumption; and the Anglican Cathedral is also dedicated to Mary.

Sang Marie has been a public holiday in The Gambia since 1958.

Mary's greatest feast day has long been revered by Gambian Catholics, and the *Sang Marie* procession in Banjul attracts big crowds, including many other Christians and Muslims. The procession begins at Holy Spirit Banjul after Vespers, and makes its joyous way to the Cathedral for Benediction.

For many years Gambians in England have assembled near London for a *Sang Marie* procession; and a parallel event is held each year at Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States.

Taken into glory

Mary's assumption is not mentioned in the New Testament, but as a joint Catholic and Anglican statement declared in 2005: 'We affirm together the teaching that God has taken the Blessed Virgin Mary in the fullness of her person into his glory as consonant with Scripture, and only to be understood in the light of Scripture.'

Belief in the assumption was held throughout the Catholic Church for centuries. In 1950 Pope Pius XII declared as a dogma revealed by God that 'Mary, the immaculate, perpetually Virgin Mother of God, after the completion of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into the glory of heaven'.

Mary's privileges

Catholic teaching is that God granted Mary three privileges:

- * Her immaculate conception: Mary possessed the Divine Life from the first moment of her existence.
- * Her sinlessness, granted her as the mother of the Sinless One, Jesus Christ.
- * Her assumption: Mary is the 'first fruits' of the harvest of salvation.

Baptism restores us to the life of the Spirit, but Christians - like all mankind - must submit to death and the corruption of the body. Those who die possessing the life of the Spirit are assured that their mortal bodies, like Mary's, will share God's life and joy at the Final Resurrection.

See also 'Question Box', page 23



Sing the greatest joy of Mary
When on earth her work was done,
And the Lord of all creation
Brought her to his heavenly home:
Virgin Mother, Mary blessed,
Raised on high and crowned with grace,
May your Son, the world's Redeemer,
Grant us all to see his face.

G.B Timms



family circle

Danger at home!

WE are, or should be, well-aware of the danger of road accidents, especially during the rainy season. But we may not be so conscious of dangers nearer home - in fact, in the house itself.

Hospital staff can tell us how often they have to treat victims of accidents at home. Many home accidents are minor, but some are serious.

The most dangerous room

Nowhere in the house is more dangerous than where we do the cooking.

Open fires and cooker flames are highly hazardous. Make sure that young children understand that they must keep well away.

If you use a gas or electric cooker, ensure that saucepan handles are facing inwards.

Using gas

Using gas is an efficient way to cook. Take care to attach the gas regulator securely to the gas bottle and the cooker.

Gas leaks can be lethal. If you smell gas, check that a gas tap hasn't been accidentally left open. If there is a pilot light in the oven, check that it hasn't gone out.

Turn off all taps and extinguish any naked flames and cigarettes at once. Open doors and windows. Keep them open until the smell of gas has gone.

If the smell of gas is strong, don't hesitate: get everyone out of the house, and telephone the fire authority.

If you want to buy a second-hand gas appliance, or an electric one, have it properly checked to ensure that it is in safe, usable condition.



Utensils

Don't leave knives and other kitchen utensils where children can play with them.

When knives are not in use they should be kept together in a drawer or cupboard. You can secure sharp-pointed kitchen tools into old corks



before storing in a drawer; in that way you won't hurt your fingers when searching for them.

Use kitchen knives only in the kitchen, and not for other purposes around the house.

If you're using a particular cleaning product for the first time, read the instructions carefully.

Don't store chemicals and other cleaners under a sink. It's safer to store them in a locked cupboard or well beyond the reach of children. Remember that full-strength bleach and oven-cleaners are highly dangerous.

If you store liquids in bottles that formerly contained something else, make sure you label the bottles carefully.

Store substances such as varnish, adhesives, kerosene and metholated spirits in air-tight containers well away from heat - and children.

Petrol, diesel and kerosene should never be stored in the house, but only in suitable containers locked away in a suitable, secure outhouse.

You may use candles every evening, or only when the power supply has been cut off. Use proper candle-holders if possible; otherwise make sure that candles are firmly-fixed.

Never place a candle in a draught or near curtains or anything inflammable.

Don't allow children to play with candles or matches.

Buy a fire-extinguisher, and see that everyone knows how to use it.

The refrigerator

Don't leave refrigerator doors open, and keep freezers closed.

Don't refreeze food that has been defrosted. Don't use food that is 'going off' or canned food that is markedly past its 'sell-by' or 'best-before' date.

If you use a micro-wave, never forget that nothing metallic should be placed in it.



Electric wiring

Is the electric wiring in your house in safe condition throughout? If in doubt, consult a qualified and reliable electrician.

You should also consult an electrician before buying a second-hand electrical appliance.

Check that all your electrical appliances are correctly wired to their plugs, and that the wires are gripped tight where they come out of the socket.

Three-pin plugs are the safest. If a plug contains a fuse, make sure it is the correct voltage for the apparatus concerned.

When examining or mending any electrical apparatus, ensure that it is unplugged - not just switched off.

Always replace broken and cracked sockets and plugs without delay.

Make sure that you have enough electric sockets in your house for all the apparatus you use, so that you don't over-load those you have.



Safety for the elderly

In the bathroom, ensure that elderly members of your household don't slip in the bathtub or shower. You should install a rubber mat (obtainable at supermarkets).

Elderly people are also at risk of falling in other parts of the house. Rugs, mats and carpets should be the type that people can't trip over.

And there should be no trailing wires.

Medical matters

Keep a well-stocked first-aid box in the house.

Always keep medicines where children can't get at them.

Don't share your medication with anyone else, and make sure you read the instruction leaflet carefully. If for some reason you don't complete prescribed medication, flush any remaining tablets down the WC and throw the container away.

If you have a pet dog, never let it eat from a human's plate, and never allow a child to take anything from a dog's mouth.

WATER - for washing and drinking



Washing our hands

TWO types of bacteria live on our hands: *resident bacteria* - which are rarely implicated in infection and are good for the skin - and *transient bacteria*, which we pick up on our fingertips when we touch soiled surfaces. The latter are the ones we want to remove.

You should wash your hands after going to the toilet, before preparing food, after handling

raw meat, and before eating.

It is easy to pick up bacteria and viruses when travelling on public transport, so wash your hands afterwards.

You need soap and, ideally, running water, but a bowl of water will do.

Wet your hands thoroughly, then use bar or liquid soap.

Rub your palms together, then interlink your fingers and rub them together. Next, place the fingertips of one hand in the palm of the other and rub, and vice versa.

Rubbing the hands together creates friction, which removes the bacteria and creates a lather. Within that lather is the bacteria you have removed, ready to be washed away. Once you have worked up a good lather and rubbed all the surfaces together, rinse your hands and dry thoroughly, not forgetting in between the fingers.

If you are using a paper towel, don't lift the lid of the waste bin with your clean fingers. At home, change hand towels twice a week, or more often if someone has an infection.



How much water should we drink?

WATER is essential for the body's maintenance. It helps get rid of waste, regulates temperature, and provides a medium for biological reactions in the body.

The body gets its fluid from three sources:

- *Drinks*: either plain water or as part of other beverages such as tea, coffee and soft drinks.

- *Solid foods*, especially fruit and vegetables.

- *Chemical reactions within the body*.

Most healthy adults need between one-and-a-half to three litres of water per day. Aim to drink between six to eight medium glasses of fluid daily. You need more fluid during hot weather and if you're physically active.

You can see whether you're drinking enough by the colour of your urine. If it's a pale straw colour, your intake is probably fine. If your urine is dark yellow, you need to take more.

Back to school

How can parents help?

ALMOST no one is entirely uneducated. We learn our mother tongue at our mother's knees. While very young we learn how to live in a family. We also acquire a moral sense, especially if we have parents whose way of living is orderly and responsible.

But of course making the best of formal schooling is of crucial importance if young people are to cope with the complex demands of today's urban society.

Becoming literate and numerate is just the start. In every school, pupils should discover the joy of learning, acquiring self-confidence as their curiosity about the world about them develops. It's a big challenge for teachers to make lessons appealing and arouse their pupils' enthusiasm. They know that there is more to a successful school than good exam results - important though these are.



The family environment

All parents can do a great deal by creating a family environment which is stable and loving.

From their first years, children should enjoy a regular domestic routine, with adequate food, regular sleep - and in a Christian household, daily prayer and regular Sunday Mass.

Good parents pay school fees on time, ensure that their children are properly dressed for school and attend regularly.

Good parents show a keen interest in their children's school work and homework, and contact the school if they become aware of difficulties.

They regularly attend parent-teacher meetings.

In these and other ways, bonds between families and schools foster pupils' progress - for the benefit of the child, the family, the community - and indeed, the nation.



Education in The Gambia: The Catholic Contribution

AS our children return to school in September, we should remind ourselves what we and countless boys and girls in earlier generations owe to our teachers and our schools. Catholics can take modest pride in the contribution that the Catholic Mission has made to the education of many Gambians, and to the social and economic development of this country.

Since Independence 54 years ago, there has been a great expansion of educational provision in The Gambia, greatly accelerated in recent years - not only in the urban area, but in the rural areas as well.

'Partners in development'

The Catholic and other Christian missions in The Gambia have always been notable 'partners in development' – though that phrase wasn't in use until comparatively recent times; and to this day the Catholic Mission is continuing to expand its provision for the education of Gambian children - Christian and Muslim - throughout the country.

The 19th-century colonial government felt it had neither personnel nor revenue to set up schools, not even in Banjul and the Kombos. They left educational provision to the Christian missions.

Although the missions served in a devoted way, they had no facilities or money to provide schooling except for a very few.

Government financial assistance was almost non-existent. In 1900 the government grant for education was only £650, whereas the cost of maintaining the police force was £4,701 – over seven times greater.

As late as 1940 (when Sir Dawda Jawara was a schoolboy) out of total government expenditure of £217,925, less than a fortieth - a meagre £5,228 - went to education.

The colonial government continued its 'hands-off' policy until 1947, when it assumed responsibility for funding primary schools while retaining school links with the missions.

The 1950s

In Banjul by 1951 there were three primary schools for boys, three for girls as well as a Muslim primary school and a Muslim school for infants.

In 1951 there were four secondary schools in Banjul: two Methodist (one for boys, the other for girls) and two Catholic (one for boys, the other for girls). But the total number of pupils at these four schools was only 181 boys and 175 girls.



In the provinces in 1951 there were fewer than 400 pupils in the three Catholic schools, at a time when the provincial population was 246,000.

At Jajangbureh (then known as Georgetown) there was a government elementary school named after Sir Cecil Armitage (Governor 1920-27), with a roll-call of 137. But the great majority of boys up-river received no education beyond that provided by Qur'anic schools.

In 1959 the Methodist Boys' High School and the Methodist Girls' High School were united as Gambia High School (which has recently celebrated its 60th anniversary). The government had asked the Catholic Mission to merge its two secondary schools with the new Gambia High School, but under the leadership of Bishop Michael Moloney the mission decided to retain St Augustine's and St Joseph's high schools as separate institutions.

The Catholic Mission was meanwhile opening primary schools all over the country - for example, at Kudang (1952), Sambang (1955), Njongon (1959) and Lamin (1964).

As Fr William Cleary pointed out in his history of the diocese, 'Reaping a Rich Harvest' (1990): 'The Catholic Mission founded schools originally to protect the faith of its young members by providing an alternative education to that offered by the Methodist Mission.'

But public control over mission schools from the 1950s led to a new approach to Catholic education in The Gambia.

'Meeting-point'

Fr Cleary comments: 'Given the increase in Muslim pupils, mission schools were seen as a meeting-point between Christian missionaries and Muslim youth in a society which offered few contacts between the two. The Catholic Church in The Gambia realised that its service plays an important role in the development of the country and also contributes much to promoting harmonious relations between Muslim and Christian. The Mission's involvement in education at primary and secondary level ensures an influence and an involvement in mainstream Gambian society that it would not otherwise have enjoyed.'

What are the aims of a Catholic school?



THE CATHOLIC school aims to provide every pupil what Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* called 'integral human development': intellectual, physical, social and spiritual.

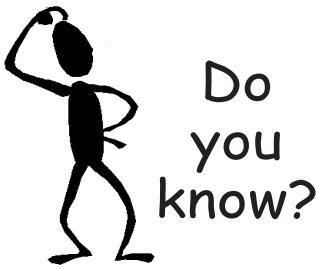
The Catholic school also aims to promote social cohesion in the local community.

Thirdly, the Catholic school aims to provide an anchorage for religious faith - tempering the growth of individualism and materialism in society.

In an address to the bishops of The Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia in April 2010, Pope Benedict said: 'In your countries the Church is held in high regard for her contribution to the good of society, especially in education, development and health care, offered to all without distinction....'

'I encourage you to continue to provide school programmes that prepare and motivate new generations to become responsible citizens, socially active for the good of their society and their country.'

We are sorry that in our August edition we printed the answers to 'Do you know?' but omitted the questions! So, in this issue, 'Do you know?' contains a few extra questions.



1 Who, in the Old Testament, exclaimed, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening'?

2 Who in the Gospels is named as Caiaphas?

3 Which country has the world's largest Muslim population?

4 In the Order of Mass, what is the Introit?

5 Which two books of the Old Testament bear the names of women?

6 What is the difference between a diocesan priest and a missionary priest?

7 Name the 'five glorious mysteries' of the rosary.

8 In whose honour is the church at Basse named?

9 What is the nationality of Pope Francis?

Answers on page 25



Pious practices

Many devotional practices in the Church are so habitual that we don't think about them. But whenever we make the sign of the Cross, for instance, or dip our fingers into holy water, we should do so in awareness of what the action means.

We shouldn't perform such actions to impress others or to tell ourselves how holy and good we are.

We perform them to honour God and our membership of his Church.



Holy medals

MANY Catholics and other Christians habitually wear a cross, crucifix or 'holy medal'. Unlike other necklaces or brooches, they are more than mere decorations.

Crosses, crucifixes and medals are badges of the Christian faith. Many have been blessed by a priest. The wearing of them should recall the wearer to his or her discipleship as an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

But crosses, crucifixes and medals do not have magical properties. To think that they do is superstitious. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: 'To attribute the efficacy of prayers or of sacramental signs to their mere external appearance, apart from the internal disposition that they demand, is to fall into superstition.' (2111)

No Catholic, apart from those in certain religious orders, is obliged to wear a cross, crucifix or religious medallion. It is entirely a personal matter. Those who do choose to wear them should remember never to say or do anything that profanes or degrades what these outward signs represent: namely, faith in Christ and membership of his Church.

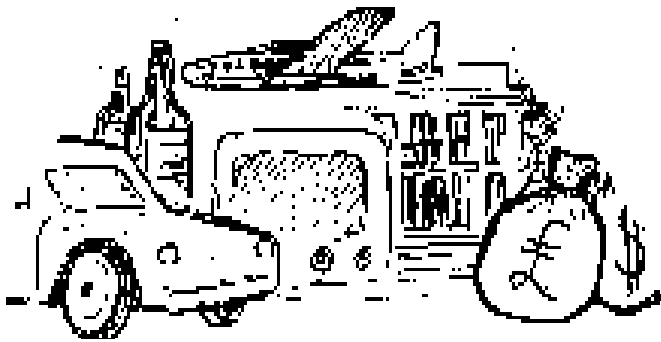
A selection of medals and rosaries is available at GPI

Et Verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us

Sunday Reflections

Reflections, readings and prayers for Mass on all the Sundays
in August & September, and for *Sang Marie*



4th August

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

'All is vanity'

THOSE who've read Ecclesiastes, written about 300 years before the time of Christ, may be perturbed by its insistence that however much we strive for happiness and success in this world, 'all is vanity'. Ecclesiastes declares that true wisdom is not to be found 'under the sun', but can only be derived from faith in God, the Judge who reigns for ever.

In fact, such teaching makes good, practical sense when we consider Jesus' admonition that earthly success, particularly in seeking money, cannot last. 'Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.'

Elsewhere, Jesus said, 'Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailling treasure in heaven.' (Luke 12:33)

Collect

DRAW near to your servants, O Lord, and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness, that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide, you may restore what you have created, and keep safe what you have restored...

Readings: Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23. Psalm 89:3-6, 12-14,17. Response: O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next. (*An alternative psalm and response may be used.*) Colossians 3:1-5,9-11.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Your word is truth, O Lord; consecrate us in the truth.

Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

Prayer over the Offerings

GRACIOUSLY sanctify these gifts, O Lord, we pray, and, accepting the oblation of this spiritual sacrifice, make of us an eternal offering to you...

Preface: *the priest may use any one of the eight prefaces provided for Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

ACCOMPANY with constant protection, O Lord, those you renew with these heavenly gifts, and, in your never-failing care for them, make them worthy of eternal redemption...

11th August
**19th Sunday
in Ordinary
Time**

Our calling

'YOU made us glorious by calling us to you' - words from today's first reading.

We Christians know no greater calling than that of Jesus Christ in all four Gospels: 'Come, follow me.'

Today's reading from Luke reminds us that Jesus told his disciples to seek treasure in heaven - treasure that would never fail. They should therefore be 'dressed for action' - ready for whatever might lay ahead.

We, too, should be prepared for whatever lies ahead. The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews (today's second reading) extols the faith that Abraham and the heroes of the Old Testament had in God; and that's the kind of faith that we need today: faith in God, faith to follow Jesus, faith to seek the heavenly city. Faith that puts God and serving our neighbour before our own desires.

By happy chance, this second reading comes a day or two before the celebration by our Muslim brothers and sisters of *Tobaski*. We, with them, give thanks for the faith of Abraham and all the prophets and saints. *See page 5.*

Collect

ALMIGHTY, ever-living God, whom, taught by the Holy Spirit, we dare to call our Father, bring, we pray, to perfection in our hearts the spirit of adoption as your sons and daughters, that we may merit to enter into the inheritance which you have promised...

Readings: Wisdom 18:6-9. Psalm 32:1,12,18-20,22. Response: Happy the people the Lord has chosen as his own. Hebrews 11:1-2,8-19

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Stay awake, and stand ready, because you do not know the hour when the Son of Man is coming...

Gospel: Luke 12:32-45





25th August 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

No free-for-all

THE KINGDOM of heaven will be inhabited by all manner of folk, 'of all tribes and tongues'. But it won't be 'come one, come all'.

Today's Gospel relates how our Lord Jesus, as he resolutely made his way towards Jerusalem to his suffering and glory, told his hearers to set their eyes on future glory, putting aside worldly vanity and misdeeds. Otherwise they - and we, too! - might instead of glory encounter 'weeping and grinding of teeth'. Let us be attentive, then, to today's Prayer after Communion, offered in our name by the priest: '...graciously perfect and sustain us, so that in all things we may please you...'

Collect

O GOD, who cause the minds of the faithful to unite in a single purpose, grant your people to love what you command, and to desire what you promise, that, amid the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be fixed on that place where true gladness is found...

Readings: Isaiah 66:18-21. Psalm 116. Response: Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News. Hebrews 12: 5-7, 11-13

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him...

Gospel: Luke 13:22-30

Prayer over the Offerings

O GOD, who gained for yourself a people by adoption through the one sacrifice offered once for all, bestow graciously on us, we pray, the gifts of unity and peace in your Church...

Preface: the priest may choose any one of the eight Prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time.

Prayer after Communion

COMPLETE within us, O Lord, we pray, the healing work of your mercy, and graciously perfect and sustain us, so that in all things we may please you...



1st September

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fellow citizens with the saints?

OUR first reading, from Ecclesiasticus (also known as Sirach) reminds us that we should behave gently and not put ourselves before others: God loves the humble. This is reinforced by Jesus in the Gospel: 'Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.'

In between the first reading and the Gospel comes a further reading from Hebrews. It's a passage of great power and beauty: a vision of the 'heavenly Jerusalem'. If we make this vision our own, how empty and short-sighted are our petty pretensions in this life. Instead of putting on airs, being envious of others, seeking to be 'number one', let us seek to become fellow-citizens with the saints in the city of the living God, the new Jerusalem.

Collect

GOD of might, giver of every good gift, out into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, you may nurture in us what is good, and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured...

Readings: Sirach 3:19-21, 30-31, Psalm 67:4-7, 10-11. Response: In your goodness, O God, you prepared a home for the poor. Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him...

Gospel: Luke 14:1, 7-14

Prayer over the Offerings

MAY this sacred offering, O Lord, confer on us always the blessing of salvation, that what it celebrates in mystery it may accomplish in power...

Preface: the priest may choose any one of the eight Prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time.

Prayer after Communion

RENEWED by this bread from the heavenly table, we beseech you, Lord, that being the bread of charity, it may confirm our hearts and stir us to serve you in our neighbour...



Congratulations and Prayerful Best Wishes
to The Right Reverend Michael Cleary CSSp
Bishop Emeritus of Banjul

on the occasion of his 94th Birthday; Sunday 1st September 2019



8th September 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Carrying the cross

JESUS welcomes everyone; but as in today's Gospel reading, he makes it plain that if we want to enjoy his friendship and participate in his kingdom we must, like him, serve God and our neighbour wholeheartedly.

In other words, 'Anyone who does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.'

We do well to honour our father and mother, as the Commandments teach us. But ultimately, what comes first is honouring God: everything else, even our present life, is secondary. That's what the martyrs show us.

We may be active in the Church, assisting at the Liturgy, belonging to this or that Church society, organising all kinds of Church activities. Admirable! But are we giving our all to Christ: taking up our cross? It's a tough assignment. Accepting Christ in toto calls for courage, prayer and persistence. We may feel we're not up to it. Instead, we cling to safety, to respectability, to more mundane goals.

The Church needs more saints, whole-hearted followers of Christ. Do we have the faith and courage to take up his challenge?

Collect

O GOD, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously on your beloved sons and daughters, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance...

Readings: Wisdom 9:13-18. Psalm 89:3-6,12-14,17. Response: O Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to the next. Philemon 9-10,12-17

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father...

Gospel: Luke 14:25-33

Prayer over the Offerings

O GOD, who give us the gift of true prayer and of peace, graciously grant that, through this offering, we may do fitting homage to your divine majesty, and, by partaking of the sacred mystery, we may be faithfully united in mind and heart.

Preface: *the priest may choose any one of the eight Prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

GRANT that your faithful, O Lord, whom you nourish and endow with life through the food of your Word and heavenly Sacrament, may so benefit from your Son's great gifts that we may merit an eternal share in his life...

Blessed be God
in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar

15th September 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lost and found

ONLY in Luke do we find the three parables that make up today's Gospel reading.

Jesus was speaking in particular to those who queried why he, a moral teacher, was associating with sinners.

Jesus did so because God loves every repentant sinner, and offers forgiveness to everybody. That's the message of the first two parables. And the lesson of the third parable - the 'prodigal son' - is that no matter how far we stray, if we return to the Father and ask his forgiveness, he will welcome us with open arms. As Paul wrote to Timothy in today's second reading, 'The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...'

See Gospel and illustration on the back page.

Collect

LOOK upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and, that we may feel the working of your mercy, grant that we may serve you with all our heart...

Readings: Exodus 32:7-11,13-14. Psalm 50:3-4, 12-14,17,19. Response: I will leave this place and go to my father. 1 Timothy 1:12-17

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia... May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of your mind, so that we can see what hope his call holds for us...

Gospel: Luke 15:1-32

Prayer over the Offerings

LOOK with favour on our supplications, O Lord, and in your kindness accept these, your servants' offerings, that what each has offered to the honour of your name may serve the salvation of all...

Preface: *the priest may choose any one of the eight Prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

MAY the working of this heavenly gift, O Lord, we pray, take possession of our minds and bodies, so that its effects, and not our own desires, may always prevail in us...

22nd September 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Innocent, but worldly-wise

THE MESSAGE of the prophet Amos, in today's first reading, is a warning for all times, all cultures, and all people. Don't cheat. Don't trample on the poor. Yet, to this day, this solemn warning is ignored or spurned by the greedy and dishonest.

Corruption is endemic. It seems never-ending. So it's our Christian duty to denounce all forms of corruption, large or small, and never look the other way.

Jesus' parable in the Gospel may seem off-beat. The steward he spoke of, although dishonest, was astute. Jesus was not advising his hearers to be dishonest; he was advising them to be honest but shrewd. Elsewhere, he advised: 'Be wise as serpents, as innocent as doves' (Matthew 10:16). We should be scrupulously honest in matters large and small, but also be aware of the need for practical common-sense.

Let's also take care of Paul's advice to Timothy, in today's second reading. We should pray for those in authority in this country and elsewhere, and lift up our hands in prayer reverently, 'without anger or argument'. Good advice to politicians, everywhere?

Collect

O GOD, who founded all the commands of your sacred Law upon love of you and of our neighbour, grant that, by keeping your precepts, we may merit to obtain eternal life...

Readings: Amos 8:4-7. Psalm 112:1-2,4-8. Response: Praise the Lord, who raises the poor. 1 Timothy 2:1-8.

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Open our heart, O Lord, to accept the words of your Son...

Gospel: Luke 16:1-13

Prayer over the Offerings

RECEIVE with favour, O Lord, we pray, the offerings of your people, that what they profess with devotion and faith may be theirs through these heavenly mysteries...

Preface: *the priest may choose any one of the eight Prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

GRACIOUSLY raise up, O Lord, those you renew through this Sacrament, that we may come to possess your redemption both in mystery and the manner of our life...

Congratulations



Congratulations to Priests
who during August celebrate
the anniversary of their Ordination

Wednesday 7th August

Fr Magashi Aerman Terungwa Samuel CSSp
(2017)

Saturday 17th August

Fr Joseph Kojo Fynn CSSp (2013)



29th September

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Do you want to get to heaven?

THE PHARISEES, in Jesus' day, were members of an ancient and highly-respected Jewish sect who rigorously observed the traditional and written Law, and looked down on others. So today the term 'pharisee' is often applied to people who are complacent and self-righteous.

In his parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus had a warning to people like the Pharisees. In effect, he said, don't think you can rely on pious practices and outward observances to get to heaven. The way to heaven is the way of service to others.

The rich man lived for the day, in luxury and at ease. There was no spiritual dimension to his life. What a shock, to find himself in Hades, cut off from all that he had held dear, and in torment!

Look at today's Collect below, and remember Christ's warning, 'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven.' (Matthew 7:21)

We are privileged to be members of Christ's Body, to receive his Word and have access to his Sacraments. If we want to become 'heirs to the treasures of heaven', let us generously offer Christ's love to others.

Collect

O GOD, who manifest your almighty power above all by pardoning and showing mercy, bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly on us, and make those hastening to obey your promises heirs to the treasures of heaven...

Readings: Amos 6:1,4-7. Psalm 145:6-10. Response: My soul, give praise to the Lord. 1 Timothy 6:11-16

Gospel acclamation: Alleluia...Jesus Christ was rich, but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty...

Gospel: Luke 16:19-31

Prayer over the Offerings

GRANT us, O merciful God, that this our offering may find acceptance with you, and that through it the well-spring of all blessing may be laid open before us...

Preface: *the priest may choose any one of the eight Prefaces for Sundays in Ordinary Time.*

Prayer after Communion

MAY this heavenly mystery, O Lord, restore us in mind and body, that we may be co-heirs in glory with Christ, by whose sufferings we are united whenever we proclaim his Death...



Fee moi Gambia

Leading the world

‘AFRICA leading the world’, proclaims one news item. ‘In what regard?’ you may ask.

Apparently, Africa is leading the world in reducing the use of plastic. In sub-Saharan Africa, the world’s poorest region, 31 countries have banned plastic bags.

Since 1st June, travellers to Tanzania are being advised not to pack plastic bags, as they’ll have to leave them at the airport.

In 2014 the government of Côte d’Ivoire introduced a ban on plastic bags used for packaging water. In 2017 Kenya went further, and banned outright the manufacture, sale and use of plastic bags.

In places without any such prohibitions, waste is a major problem. Ghana is the world’s fastest-growing economy, for example, but efforts to attract investment and tourism are thwarted by waste management issues that leave cities like Accra struggling with unsightly and unhealthy heaps of rubbish. Accra’s gutters are persistently clogged. A common complaint is that when people clean out the gutters waste sits in a pile nearby and eventually find its way back.

What about plastic bag pollution in The Gambia, despite the ban on their use?

I’ll leave you to answer that question...

Top fashion

ZIMBABWE is to impose a 10 per-cent tax on locally-made wigs, and a 25 per-cent tax on wigs that are imported. I don’t know if this is to discourage women from wearing wigs, or to raise revenue. Perhaps both...

Here, women of all ages are increasingly taking to wigs, many of them bizarre in shape and colour. How those who wear them cope in hot weather, I can’t imagine.

Men, too - young ones, at any rate – are not being left behind. Many young men nowadays display sculptured and bleached hair styles that a few years would have aroused widespread disapproval. But now, in the urban area at least, such displays seem to be accepted as part of the youth scene.

I can’t say I like this youthful showing off. But it’s not as disfiguring as the tattoos that some Europeans seem to like.

‘Culture of insults’

POPE Francis, preaching in Rome at Pentecost, declared: ‘The more we use social media, the less social we are becoming... Nowadays it is fashionable to hurl adjectives and, sadly, even insults.’

Do some of us in The Gambia use - or misuse - social media in this way?

The Pope says that social media fosters a ‘culture of insults’. So he’s asking people to respond to malice with goodness, stressing that the world’s rifts and inequalities need healing through a spirit of brotherliness.... ‘We will not come to a state of calm if we distance ourselves from those who do not think as we do.’

Elsewhere, they do things differently...

THE PASTOR of a North Virginia church in the United States where President Donald Trump stopped one weekend has apologised to his congregation for praying for the President.

Mr Trump’s motorcade had made an unannounced detour to the church while returning to the White House from a nearby golf club.

Pastor Platt explained to his congregation that he had been caught off-guard. ‘At the end of my sermon.... I was immediately called backstage and told that the President of the United States was on his way to the church, would be there in a matter of minutes, and would like for us to pray for him.’

Mr Platt said he’d prayed for the President because 1 Timothy 2:1-6 urges that Christians pray ‘for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way’.

But he went on to say he had no intention of endorsing the President. ‘This weighs heavy on my heart... I love every member of this church, and I only want to lead us with God’s Word in a way that transcends political party and position, heals the hurts of racial division and injustice, and honours every man and woman made in the image of God.’

Can you imagine a pastor or imam in this country apologising for praying for the President and the government?

Every day there’s news from somewhere that makes me think there’s more sanity and common sense in this country than elsewhere. In Britain, for example, a schoolboy has been put out of class for telling his teacher that there are only two genders – male and female.

‘You can’t say that,’ he was told, ‘it’s against school policy.’

And a Christian student was ejected from a post-graduate sociology course at Sheffield University after he was anonymously reported as saying on Facebook that a certain sexual activity is a sin. (Not in the eyes of the British government, it isn’t!)

And apparently teachers in some British schools don’t like to address pupils as ‘boys and girls’ for fear of being ‘sexist’! In other schools, uniform is being introduced that is ‘gender-neutral’ - meaning that there’s no difference between the uniform worn by girls and that of boys.

May heaven preserve us!

‘We don’t know’


THE OTHER day, near a market, three polite and well-dressed girls asked me for a lift. I asked them the simplest of questions about the saint whose name is given to the school they attend.

But they could tell me nothing – just nothing.

I wonder: how does their school inspire pride in belonging to their particular school family?

Don’t miss **Kaadu Dunda Gi**

The Living Word
Every Sunday at 1pm GRTS



from beyond the diocese

Iraq's Christians 'close to extinction'



IN an impassioned speech in London, the Archbishop of Erbil, the Rt Revd Bashar Warda (*left*), declared that Iraq's Christians are facing extinction.

Since the US-led invasion toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein in 2003, the Christian community has dwindled by 83 per cent, from around 1.5 million to just 250,000.

'Christianity in Iraq,' the archbishop said, 'one of the oldest churches, if not the oldest church in the world, is perilously close to extinction. Those of us who remain must be ready to face martyrdom.'

He referred to the current threat from 'Islamic State' as a final struggle, following the group's assault in 2014 that displaced more than 125,000 Christians from their historic homelands.

'Our tormentors confiscated our present,' he said, 'while seeking to wipe out our history and destroy our future. In Iraq there is no redress for those who have lost properties, homes and businesses. Tens of thousands of Christians have nothing to show for their life's work, for generations of work, in places where their families have lived, maybe, for thousands of years.'

'Islamic State', known in the Arab world as *Daesh*, was driven from its last stronghold at Baghuz in Syria in March after a multi-national military campaign, spelling the end of its self-declared 'caliphate'. Before that, it had already been expelled from Iraq's second city of Mosul in July 2017.

But Christian churches, monasteries and homes have been decimated, and thousands of families have not returned. The archbishop warned of what he said were a growing number of extremist groups that seek to kill Christians and Yazidis.

Archbishop Warda accused Britain's Christian leaders of 'political correctness' over the issue, saying they were not speaking out loudly enough for fear of being accused of Islamophobia.

'Will you continue to condone this never-ending, organised persecution against us?'

The Anglican Bishop of Truro, the Rt Revd Philip Mounstephen, who chairs the Independent Review into the



British Foreign Office's response to the persecution of Christians world-wide, commented, 'I think the archbishop is right that a culture of "political correctness" has prevented Western voices from speaking out about the persecution of Christians... this is mainly to do with a reluctance borne of post-colonial guilt.'

Happier days

The Archbishop of Erbil pointed out that in past centuries there was fruitful co-operation between Christians and Muslims in Iraq, a time that historians have referred to as the Islamic Golden Age. 'Our Christian ancestors shared with Muslim Arabs a deep tradition of thought and philosophy. They engaged with them in respectful dialogue from the 8th century. A style of scholastic dialogue had developed, because a succession of caliphs [Islamic political and religious leaders] tolerated minorities. As toleration ended, so did the culture and wealth which flowed from it.'

Today's mixed picture

Elsewhere in the Middle East in 2019 there is a mixed picture for Christians.

Egypt's Copts, who constitute at least 10 per cent of the country's 100 million-plus population, have come under sustained attacks from extremists who have bombed churches and attempted to drive them out of northern Sinai.

In February Pope Francis visited the United Arab Emirates - the first-ever by a pontiff to the Arabian Peninsula - and celebrated Mass attended by 135,000, mostly migrant Catholics. And last December in Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, the first Coptic Christian Mass was allowed.

In Syria, the Christian minority felt deeply threatened by rebel groups. With President Assad's forces now in the ascendant, as a result of sometimes brutal tactics, Syria's Christians may be breathing a small sigh of relief.

In Iraq though, the outlook for Christians remains bleak. Sectarian tensions between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims persist, and unknown numbers of 'Islamic State' fighters are hiding in the north and west of the country.

Archbishop Warda has reached a bitter conclusion: 'Friends, we may be facing our end in the land of our ancestors. Will a peaceful and innocent people be allowed to be persecuted and eliminated because of their faith? And, for the sake of not wanting to speak the truth to the persecutors, will the world be complicit in our elimination?'

Francis approves changes to Italian missal

POPE Francis has approved a revision to the third edition of the Italian Missal. The Lord's Prayer will change from 'and lead us not into temptation' to 'do not let us fall into temptation'.

The *Gloria in Excelsis* will change from 'Peace on earth to people of good will' to 'Peace on earth to people beloved by God'. French bishops altered the wording of the Lord's Prayer in 2017, and the standard Spanish and Portuguese translations already have 'Do not let us fall into temptation'.

The Catholic Church in England and Wales says it has no plans to change the wording of the Lord's Prayer.

Anglican worshippers can choose between traditional and contemporary versions of the prayer, but both include the words 'lead us not into temptation'.

English Cardinal to be declared a saint



ONE of the most significant figures in 19th-century Britain is to be declared a saint by Pope Francis.

Cardinal John Henry Newman will be canonised in a ceremony in St Peter's Square in Rome on Sunday 13th October, almost 130 years after he died. He will

be the first English person born since the 17th century to be declared a saint by the Catholic Church.

Newman was ordained as a priest in the Church of England and became a leading figure in the Oxford Movement, which stressed the Catholic elements in Anglicanism.

In 1845 he converted to Roman Catholicism. He is regarded as one of the most influential figures from his era for both Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism, revered for his hymns and poetry and his devotion to the people of Birmingham.

Newman was a powerful preacher, and founded the Birmingham Oratory. When he died in 1890 more than 15,000 people lined the city's streets for his funeral procession.

Pope John Paul II declared Newman 'Venerable' in 1991, recognising his life of 'heroic virtue'.

In 2010, on a visit to Britain, Pope Benedict XVI declared him 'Blessed', saying that Newman applied 'his keen intellect and his prolific pen to many of the most pressing subjects of the day', and that Newman continued 'to inspire and enlighten many all over the world'.

A second miracle attributed to Newman – the healing in 2013 of a woman with life-threatening complications in her pregnancy - was approved by Pope Francis this year, paving the way to his canonisation.

'Great pride'

When the date of Newman's canonisation was announced, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, said 'This is a moment of great pride ... John Henry Newman is known for many great qualities, but we remember him particularly for the kindness and compassion of his ministry to the people of Birmingham.'

The Rt Revd Christopher Foster, Anglican Bishop of Portsmouth and co-chair of the English and Welsh Anglican-Roman Catholic Committee, commented: 'The canonisation of Blessed John Henry Newman is very good news for the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, and we give thanks with them for this recognition of a holy life formed in both our communions that continues to be an inspiration for us all.'

Sally Axworthy, British Ambassador to the Holy See, said: 'Cardinal Newman had a major impact on Catholic theology and on education world-wide, making him a truly global Briton. He brought his experience from the Anglican church to his work as a Catholic, bridging the two traditions.'

Church of England appoints first black female bishop

THE CHURCH of England has appointed its first black female bishop.

The Revd Dr Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons, has been named as the new Bishop of Dover.



Dr Hudson-Wilkin, who is also a Chaplain to the Queen, led prayers at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle - the Duke and Duchess of Essex - in May last year.

Her appointment is being hailed as a break-through for black female clergy in the Church of England. She will be consecrated in November.

The Bishop of Dover is a title used by a suffragan (assistant) bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Canterbury. The bishop holds the additional title of 'Bishop in Canterbury' and is empowered to act almost as if she were the diocesan bishop of Canterbury, since the Archbishop of Canterbury is based in London, and is frequently away from his diocese, fulfilling national and international duties. The role of the Bishop of Dover is comparable to that of the Cardinal Vicar in the Catholic Diocese of Rome, who exercises most functions that the Pope, as Bishop of Rome, formally has in his own diocese.

The Church of England approved the ordination of women as priests in 1992, and as bishops in 2014. Some parishes 'opt out', and have their own bishops.

The Anglican Province of West Africa approved the ordination of women in 2000, although so far only The Gambia and Liberia have done so.

Catechists' key role

CARDINAL Fernando Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, has spoken of the role of catechists in the young churches of mission territories. Speaking at the annual general assembly of the Supreme Committee of the Pontifical Mission Societies, the cardinal described catechists as key figures in evangelisation, especially in rural environments.

Cardinal Filoni pointed out that catechists minister the Sunday liturgy of the Word, the distribution of Communion, and are responsible for prayer and charity, as well as preparing children and adults for the sacraments. Catechists live with their families, with Christians and non-Christians, and members of the same village and local community.

The cardinal declared: 'When catechists are committed, valued and well-trained, they are true animators of the entire Christian community together with bishops, presbyters and permanent deacons.'

He added that it is always necessary to discover new ways of being a catechist. 'The local bishops with presbyters and religious must seriously take care of these important and fundamental collaborators in the work of the mission of the Church in the territories entrusted to them.'

OBITUARY

A lifetime of Christian devotion

THE REVD Priscilla Johnson, a life-long activist in the Methodist, and then the Anglican community, died on Monday 13th May.

Priscilla Modupeh Gladys Johnson (née Cole) was born in Banjul in February 1953. Her parents were Joseph Francis and Cecilia Cole, both public-spirited, staunch Methodists. She attended the Methodist Preparatory School and Gambia High School, then taught for a year at Marina International School before going to York University in Toronto, Canada, where she took a BA in 1977. In 1985 she took an MA at Durham University in England.

As a young woman, Priscilla Cole was a keen member of several Methodist groups, including the Methodist District Synod, and a Local Preacher.

In 1981 she married the Revd Solomon Tilewa Johnson of the Anglican Church, who in 1990 became Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Banjul and in 2012 Archbishop of the Church of the Province of West Africa. His sudden death occurred in January 2014.

From 1977 Priscilla taught, first at Gambia High School, then at St Augustine's High School, where she became Senior Mistress. In 1998 she was appointed Headmistress of the Revd J.C. Faye Memorial School, establishing upper basic and senior divisions, and retiring in 2016.

In the Anglican Church she undertook many responsibilities

including Sunday School Superintendent, lay reader, member of the Diocesan Board of Education and the Bishop's Advisory Council. She was Secretary, then President, of the Mothers' Union, and Second Vice President of the Mother's Union in the Province of West Africa.



In 2000 the Anglican Province of West Africa agreed to ordain women as priests – although so far only Liberia and The Gambia have done so. After extensive training, Priscilla Johnson was ordained deacon in November 1999 and priest in January 2002. She was Priest-in-Charge of St Paul's Church Fajara, and became Archdeacon.

She served on the Women's Affairs & Family Life Committee of the Gambia Christian Council, and was President of the Pan-African Women's Alliance. In 2013 she represented the Gambia Christian Council at the Golden Jubilee celebrations in Kampala, Uganda, of the All-Africa Conference of Churches.

In her family and in all her undertakings Priscilla Johnson was greatly respected as a convinced and devoted Christian, of strong principles, but loving. She is survived by three children, sisters, grandchildren and other family members, and many friends in and beyond The Gambia.

Her funeral was held at St Mary's Anglican Cathedral on Tuesday 21st May, prior to interment at Banjul Cemetery.

Life-long teacher and pioneer school proprietor



A LIFE-LONG teacher and school proprietor, Dr Harriet Ndow – better-known simply as 'Mrs Ndow' – died on 18th June.

Harriet Martha Ndow was born on 28th October 1926 at Dobson Street Banjul, the first of three children of William and Sagarr Njie (née Jagne).

Her siblings were Emma, who married Martin Sowe of Churchill's Town, and William, whose widow is Caroline (née Mboge). On her maternal side, Harriet was a great grand-daughter of a master-mason, Francis Gorée-Njie, builder of Wesley Methodist Church and an evangelist among the Wolof.

Born in a Catholic family, Harriet went to Mass at Hagan Street Church (now the Cathedral). She attended St Joseph's infants and primary schools, then St Joseph's High School, which she represented at field and track inter-school athletic events. Harriet was one of the first Gambian women to ride a bicycle, and was an adept tennis player – a game she played until middle-age. As a dedicated girl guide, she rose to become Guide Commissioner in the 1970s.

After her schooling Harriet was awarded a scholarship in the late 1940s to train as a primary-school teacher at Achimota College, Ghana. On her return she taught at St Joseph's

Primary School until the mid-1950s, when she went to Portsmouth College in England for further training. Many years later, in 1972, she was awarded a nine-month scholarship to study educational administration in Oxford. On her return she became head of the newly-established Campama Primary School, and later succeeded her husband, Benedict John Ndow, who had retired, as head of Serrekunda Primary School. She held the post until her own retirement.

Harriet Njie married Benedict John Ndow in 1951. They had four children - Catherine, William, Anna and Victoria - and lived initially at Cotton Street Banjul before moving in the early 70s to Kairaba Avenue, opposite GPI.

She became President of the Marie Rivier Society (associated with the Presentation of Mary) and Secretary of the Legion of Mary.

Early in her teaching career Mrs Ndow began a business venture, selling household and personal items from her house for Christmas and Easter festivities to Aku families in Banjul. Then she opened a shop supplying women's and children's clothing and bed-linen. She and her husband ran a piggery, a poultry farm and a vegetable garden. She also managed an estate agency, constructing and letting apartments and offices.

But Harriet Ndow is mainly remembered as a trail-blazer in private education, founding and running several institutions, known collectively as 'Mrs Ndow's schools'.

Her first venture was St Joseph's Nursery School near Serrekunda Market, close to the Anglican Christchurch. As it expanded, the school moved to its present site near Serrekunda Post Office with the help of the Lions Club

of Denmark and many fund-raising initiatives, and was renamed St Joseph's Ex-Pupils' Primary School.

Parents asked Mrs Ndow to establish a middle or junior secondary school for those leaving her primary school. With the encouragement of the Department of Education and President Sir Dawda Jawara (who, like her, had attended Achimota College), she was granted land opposite the Management Development Institute (MDI), and in 1992 opened Ndow's Comprehensive Primary and Middle Schools. In 1995 she established Ndow's Comprehensive Senior Secondary School at Fajara, not far from the Independence Stadium.

Today, Ndow's group of schools comprises a nursery school, her primary, junior and senior secondary schools, with a combined enrolment of close to 4,000 pupils.

President Jawara made Mrs Ndow an Officer of the Order

of the Republic of The Gambia (ORG), and President Yahya Jammeh advanced her to the rank of Commander of the Order (CRG). The University of Ile-Ife in Nigeria awarded her a doctorate.

The World Bank invited Mrs Ndow to Washington DC as a recipient of a development loan for the consolidation of her schools. She shared her educational experiences at a forum for African women engaged in the provision of private schooling.

Harriet Ndow was widely respected as family matriarch and for her hospitality, sense of humour, outspokenness and energy. As a pioneer she was an inspiration to many.

Prior to interment at Banjul Cemetery, Harriet Ndow's Funeral Mass was celebrated on Friday 28th June at St Therese's Church Kanifing, where she had attended Sunday Mass for many years.



Question Box

A friend asks me, 'Why do you Catholics worship the Virgin Mary? What should I reply?'

MAKE it absolutely clear to all your non-Catholic Christian friends - and to Muslims - that Catholics do NOT worship the Virgin Mary. Worship is due to Almighty God alone.

But along with other Christians, Catholics do reverence Mary. In Scripture, Mary herself declares: '...all generations shall call me blessed' (Luke 1:48).

Faithful to Scripture, the Nicene Creed declares that Jesus Christ 'came down from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit, and became incarnate by the Virgin Mary, and was made man.' The creed is assented to by Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and the great majority of Protestant Christians. So Catholics hold these beliefs about Mary in common with most other Christians.

At the Council of Ephesus in 431 Mary was given the title 'Mother of God' (in Latin, *Mater Dei*; in Greek, *Theotokos*. This title, 'Mother of God', makes some Protestants uneasy. The title honours Mary: but its essential significance is that it makes clear the divinity of Christ, who is true God and true man. Mary is thus the mother of the man who is God.

It has been suggested that the title could be rendered, 'Mother of God Incarnate'.

Distinctly Roman Catholic doctrines about Mary include three assertions:

- * that she possessed the Divine Life from the moment of her conception (the Immaculate Conception)
- * that she was sinless throughout her earthly life
- * that at the end of her earthly life she was assumed, body and soul, into heaven (the Assumption)

Catholics and other Christians invoke Mary and the saints, asking them to pray for them. Since Mary is eternally close to her Son, her prayers are particularly precious.

The most frequent invocation of Mary is contained in the devotion known as the Angelus: '*Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.*'

Pope St Paul VI wrote: 'We believe that the Holy Mother of God, the new Eve, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven to exercise her maternal role on behalf of the members of Christ' (*Credo of the People of God*, section 15)

This is the briefest summary of Catholic belief and practice about Mary. If you have *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, study sections 963-972, and you will be well-primed to answer questions about Mary from other Christians (including some Catholics!) as well as from Muslims.

Note that the Qur'an contains most respectful references to Mary; in fact, she is mentioned more often in the Qur'an than in the Gospels.

Congratulations & Best Wishes
to the Muslim Community of The Gambia
on the occasion of Tobaski
- *Eid el Adha* -

Gambian Christian Anniversaries

August & September

10 YEARS AGO: On 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. From 1977 to 1979 he served in Nigeria, his place at the Junior Seminary being taken by Fr Casimir Eke.

At the time of his departure on 31st October 1981 owing to ill health, Fr Murray was Parish Priest at St Therese's, Kanifing.

Fr Murray is widely remembered as big, jolly and out-going, and was held in affectionate esteem. He was proficient in Wolof and Karoninka, and could say Mass in both languages.

Back In Ireland, Fr Murray worked among drug addicts and refugees.



From 25th to 28th August 2009 about 60 young people took part in a youth camp at Basse. Some 15 travelled from the Kombos in the bus of St John's School for the Deaf. They stayed in the Safra Hotel at the invitation of the proprietor, Furmose Gomez.

On Tuesday 26th a talk on the role of youth in the Church was given by the President of the Diocesan Youth Committee, Gladys Bojang, followed the next day by an address on the dangers of drugs and alcoholism by the committee's Religious Secretary, Joseph Gomez. Over two days, campers helped clean the church compound and the surroundings of the market and the hospital.

9th September 1934 (85 years ago): Death at sea of Fr O'Sullivan, who had arrived the previous April and was being repatriated due to ill health.

3rd September 1949 (70 years ago): Opening of St Joseph's Infants' School Banjul.

15th September 1954 (65 years ago): Death of Fr John Meehan CSSp, who had served the Mission for 50 years - 38 of them, from 1908 to 1946 - as Superior.

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 (45 years ago): 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 Fr Michael Cleary (now 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 later became Bishop of St Louis du Sénégal, and Fr Gough became Principal of St Augustine's High School.

19th August 1979 (40 years ago): Fr John Hogan was appointed District Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans) and Parish Priest at Bakau.

15th September 1979 (40 years ago): Sr Madeleine Mendi, 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.

7th August 1988: Brothers Henry, Milton and Senan of the Indian Province of the Christian Brothers took up residence at the house in Sam Jack Terrace Banjul bequeathed to the diocese by Dr Felix Blain.

5th August 1999 (20 years ago): Opening of St Andrew's Berending.

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

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: an accident during tree-felling at St Francis' Nursery School Tranquil brought down the D20,000 new roof and smashed newly-acquired furniture.

9th-17th August 2009 (10 years ago): A Sisters' retreat was conducted by Mgr Daniel Camara of Makenni Diocese, Sierra Leone.

8th September 2009: (10 years ago): Fr Joseph Karbo blessed 'Nazareth', a grotto at the Presentation Sisters' compound in Brikama.

21st September 2009 (10 years ago): 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 Bulock (*pictured right*) 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 a 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 Addai Jobe CSSp and Fr Frederick Agama CSSp.

10th August 2013 (5 years ago): St Martha's Society celebrated its fortieth anniversary.

17th August 2013 (5 years ago): Bishop Robert Ellison, Fr Jean-Noël Faye and Fr Yenes Manneh took part in *Sang Marie* celebrations at Atlanta, USA.

10th September 2013 (5 years ago): Death of the long-serving catechist, 'OJ' – Matthew Jarjou.

21st-28th September 2013 (5 years ago): 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,



The Pope's Intentions

August

That families, through their life of prayer and love, become ever more clearly 'schools of true human growth'.

September

That politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world's seas and oceans.

Answers to 'Do you know?' page 13

1 Samuel, son of Elkanah and Hannah, who as an infant was dedicated to the Lord by his mother. As a boy, in the shrine at Sillo, Samuel was the servant of Eli. He heard the voice of the Lord (1 Samuel 3:1-19). Samuel was to become known as the last of the Judges and the first of the prophets. He anointed Saul as King of Israel; and later, because of Saul's disobedience, anointed David to replace him.

2 Joseph Caiaphas was the High Priest of the Temple in the Gospel account of the trial of Jesus. He was the son-in-law of Annas and succeeded him as High Priest, ruling from AD 18-36. (See Matthew 26:3,57; Luke 3:2; John 11:49,18:13-14,24,28; Acts 4:6-7)

3 Indonesia, where there are approximately 225 million Muslims - 87 per cent of the population.

4 The entrance chant at the beginning of Mass (Latin, *Introitus*).

5 Ruth and Judith

6 A diocesan priest ministers in the diocese for which he was ordained (eg, Fr Anthony Gabisi and Fr Matthew Mendy). A missionary priest belongs to a missionary order, and serves where he is sent (eg, Fr Godwin Nnadozie MSP and Fr Pius Gidi CSSp)

7 The 'Glorious Mysteries: 1 The Resurrection; 2 The Ascension; 3 The Descent of the Holy Spirit; 4 The Assumption of Mary;

5 The Coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven.

8 St Joseph

9 Argentinian

Let's keep our environment clean and healthy

Don't drop litter!



End-
piece

Our Eucharistic Lord: faith, adoration and love

A homily given by **FRANCIS CARDINAL ARINZE**
on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, 20th June 2019, at the Corpus Christi Shrine in London

ON this great feast of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, we gather at this shrine to demonstrate our faith in our Eucharistic Lord, to adore him and to show him our love.

The Holy Eucharist is sacrifice and sacrament. Every day, but especially on Sundays, we gather to celebrate this mystery of faith. Our faith in this ineffable mystery has to manifest itself in our actions.

Holy Eucharist: Sacrifice and Sacrament

The night before he suffered, the Lord Jesus at the Last Supper took bread, said the blessing, and gave it to his Apostles saying, 'Take, eat; this is my body.'

And he took a chalice, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins' (Matthew 26:26-28).

And the Lord added: 'Do this in remembrance of me' (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24).

St Paul reminds people of Corinth: 'For as often as you eat this bread and drink the chalice, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (1 Corinthians 11:26).

The Lord Jesus, therefore, not only made bread to become his body and wine to become his blood, but he also gave to his Apostles the power to offer this sacrifice which he was about to offer on Mount Calvary on the following day.

The Mass is a sacramental offering of the Sacrifice of the Cross. They are one single sacrifice because, as the Council of Trent teaches us: 'The victim is one and the same: the same no offers through the ministry of priests who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.' (*Council of Trent*, 1562: DS 1740; see also *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1367).

On the Cross, Christ shed blood; on the altar he does not shed blood. The Eucharistic Sacrifice is an offering in the form of a sacrament of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

As sacrifice, the Holy Eucharist is the offering of the Body and Blood of Christ to the Eternal Father by the whole Church. It is the supreme act of the Christian religion and is called 'the fount and apex of the whole Christian life' by the Second Vatican Council (*Lumen Gentium* 11). The only act the Church has that is as great as a Mass is another Mass!

As a sacrament, the Holy Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ given to his faithful people during their earthly pilgrimage to unite them more closely to Christ, to increase grace in them and to give them a pledge or ticket for eternal

glory. It is the greatest of the seven sacraments and towards it all the other sacraments are directed.

The Sunday Eucharist

The Church celebrates the Holy Eucharist every day. Sunday, however, is a special day. It is the day of rest and of special worship of God. The Eucharist is a 'sacrament of unity which profoundly marks the Church as a people gathered 'by' and 'in' the unity of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (John Paul II: *Dies Domini* 36; St Cyprian: *De Orat. Dom.* 23: PL 4, 553).

From the earliest centuries, therefore, Sunday has been a special day in which the Church celebrates the Eucharistic Sacrifice. In a parish, the most important event in the week is the Sunday Eucharist. The local Catholic community gathers together so that, in union with the universal Church, it may celebrate the greatest act of Christian worship.

The Sunday Eucharist is the believing community gathered together to adore God, to thank him, to ask pardon for sins and to make petition of spiritual and temporal needs. That is why participation at Sunday Mass is obligatory for every Catholic. The most important event on a Sunday is not a football match; it is not a seven-course luncheon (though you may need to visit a doctor!); it is not a drive to the seaside; it is not a visit to the supermarket. It is participation at Sunday Mass. A Sunday without the Mass is empty, because it is lacking its major event.

St John Paul II emphasises the importance of the Sunday Mass and of its link with the universal Church: 'Because of its special solemnity and the obligatory presence of the community, and because it is celebrated 'on the day when Christ conquered death and gave us a share in his immortal life', the Sunday Eucharist expresses with greater emphasis its inherent ecclesial dimension' (*Dies Domini* 34).

Reception of Holy Communion.

At the consecration during the Eucharistic Prayer, the miracle of transubstantiation takes place. Bread is no longer bread; it becomes the Body of Christ. Wine is no longer wine; it becomes the Blood of Christ. In the Most Blessed Sacrament, as the Council of Trent teaches, 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and therefore the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained' (DS 1651).

Jesus invites us to his banquet: 'I am the bread of life... I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any



The only act
the Church
has that is as
great as a
Mass is
another Mass!

one eats of this bread, he will live for ever' (John 6:48,51). For people who prepare their souls well and receive the Eucharistic Jesus, the graces poured into them are greater union with Christ, an increase of the life of God in the soul, a strengthening against temptation and a pledge of eternal life in heaven.

The Eucharist is symbolised by that baked cake which the prophet Elijah ate and in the strength of which he walked for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mount of God (1 Kings 19:8). The Holy Eucharist gives us strength to serve God with constancy for all the years of our earthly pilgrimage.

Paul's warning

These wonderful graces of the Holy Eucharist, however, do not come to us automatically. The person who receives Holy Communion has to be in the state of grace.

To receive Jesus while one is in mortal sin is to commit a sacrilege. St Paul warns the Corinthians:

'Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord... For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself' (1 Corinthians 11:27,29).

That is why St Thomas Aquinas writes in the magnificent hymn *Lauda Sion*, which we sang in the Eucharistic procession on this feast:

Death to the guilty; to the good, immortal life.

See how one food man's joy or woe accomplishes.

In practice, it means that any one conscious of being in a state of mortal sin should first go to the Sacrament of Penance, the Sacrament of God's mercy, and receive pardon and grace, before approaching the Eucharistic table.

Eucharistic veneration outside Holy Mass

After the Eucharistic celebration, the consecrated Hosts that were not received by the people are kept in the tabernacle, because the real presence of Christ remains and does not cease.

The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist remains for many reasons. The reservation of the Most Blessed Sacrament thus provides that the Eucharistic Jesus can be brought to the sick, the elderly and the dying who could not be at Mass.

Jesus remains in the tabernacle so that we can visit him to show our love and our gratitude, to adore him, to praise him, or simply to remain lovingly in his presence. Thus Eucharistic adoration can be by one person, or by a group, for one hour or for forty hours, as Church devotion and tradition have shown.

The reservation of the Blessed Sacrament also makes possible Eucharistic Benediction, a Eucharistic Procession, or a Eucharistic Congress which can be at the level of a diocese, a nation or of the universal Church.

We adore you, O Jesus, for your love of your Church in giving her this inestimable gift of yourself in the Holy Eucharist. We thank you. We love you.

By the intercession of your Blessed Mother who carried you in her virginal womb for nine months, may we be filled with faith, love, thanksgiving, joy and peace. May we live lives in accordance with this mystery of faith.



About Francis, Cardinal Arinze

FRANCIS Arinze is Nigerian. When he was 15 he entered the seminary and earned a philosophy degree in 1950. In 1955 he went to Rome, earning a doctorate in theology. He was ordained in 1958, and remained in Rome, gaining a master's in theology in 1959 and another doctorate in 1960. From 1961 to 1962 he taught at a seminary, then was appointed Regional Secretary for Catholic Education in eastern Nigeria. Thereafter he studied at the London Institute of Education.

In 1965, at the age of 32, Fr Arinze became the world's youngest Catholic bishop as Coadjutor to the Archbishop of Onitsha. He became the first African to head the archdiocese.

Archbishop Arinze attended the final session of the Second Vatican Council, but had no time to settle into his archdiocese before the Nigeria-Biafra War broke out. He lived as a refugee for three years, working for refugees, the sick, the hungry, and priests and religious. He took care to keep the Church separate from the political conflict, gaining the respect of all factions in the country. When the war ended in 1970, the Nigerian government deported all foreign missionaries in the archdiocese (including some who came to serve in The Gambia) and confiscated Catholic schools.

In 1979 Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Arinze Pro-President of the Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue. He continued as the Ordinary of his archdiocese, and in 1984 was elected President of the Nigerian Bishops' Conference.

In 1985 John Paul named him Cardinal-Deacon, then Cardinal-Priest in 1996, appointing him President of the Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue. In 2002 the Pope named him Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments.

When John Paul died in April 2005, Cardinal Arinze was considered *papabile* - that is, a candidate for election to the papacy. He resumed his post as Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship when confirmed by the newly-elected Pope, Benedict XVI.

In December 2008 Benedict accepted Arinze's resignation, and on his 80th birthday in November 2012 he lost his eligibility to vote in any future conclaves to elect a new Pope. He remains active.

O GOD, who in the most wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion,
grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood
that we may always experience within ourselves the fruits of your redemption...



Daily Mass Readings

Sunday readings Year C Weekday readings Year 1



August & September

Memorials in brackets are optional

Thu 1 Aug Exodus 40:16-21,34-38. Psalm 83:3-6,8,11. Matthew 13:47-53 St Alphonsus Liguori
 Fri 2 Leviticus 23:1,4-11,15-16,27,34-37. Psalm 80:3-6,10-11. Matthew 13:54-58 (St Eusebius of Vercelli *or* St Peter Julian Eymard)
 Sat 3rd Leviticus 25:1,18-17. Psalm 66:2-3,5,7-8. Matthew 14:1-12 (of the BVM)

Sun 4 Sirach 1:2,21-23. Psalm 89:3-6,12-14,17. Colossians 3:1-5,9-11. Luke 12:13-21. **18th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 5 Numbers 11:4-15. Psalm 80:12-17. Matthew 14:13-21 Dedication of St Mary Major
 Tue 6 Daniel 7:9-10,13-14. Psalm 96:1-2,5-6,9. 2 Peter 1:16-19. Luke 9:28-36 TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD
 Wed 7 Numbers 13:1-2,25 – 14:1,26-29,34-35, Psalm 105:6-7,13-14,21-23, Matthew 15:21-28 (St Xystus II *or* St Cajetan)
 Thu 8 Numbers 20:1-13. Psalm 94:1-2,6-9. Matthew 16:13-23 St Dominic
 Fri 9 Deuteronomy 4:32-40. Psalm 76:12-16,21. Matthew 16:24-28 *abstinence*
 Sat 10 2 Corinthians 9:6-10. Psalm 111:1-2,5-9. John 12:24-26. St LAWRENCE

Sun 11 Wisdom 18:6-9. Psalm 32:1,12,18-20,22. Hebrews 11:1-2,8-19. Luke 12:32-48. **19th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 12 Deuteronomy 10:12-22. Psalm 147:12-15,19-20. Matthew 17:22-27 (St Jane Frances de Chantal)
 Tue 13 Deuteronomy 31:1-8. Psalm 32:3-4,7-9. Matthew 18:1-5,10,12-14 (St Pontian & St Hippolytus)
 Wed 14 Deuteronomy 34:1-12. Psalm 65:1-3,5,16-17. Matthew 18:15-20 St Maximilian Kolbe
Evening Mass of the Assumption: 1 Chronicles 15:3-4,15-16 & 16:1-2. Psalm 131:6-7,9-10,13-14. 1 Corinthians 15:4-57. Luke 11:27-28.
Thu 15 Revelation 11:19 & 12:1-6,10. Psalm 44:10-12,16. 1 Corinthians 15:20-27. Luke 1:39-56 **The ASSUMPTION of the BVM**
 Fri 16 Joshua 24:1-13. Psalm 135:1-3,16-18,21-22,24. Matthew 19:3-12 (St Stephen of Hungary) *abstinence*
 Sat 17 Joshua 24:14-29. Psalm 15:1-2,5,7-8,11. Matthew 19:13-15 (of the BVM)

Sun 18 Jeremiah 38:4-6,8-10. Psalm 39:2-4,18. Hebrews 12:1-4. Luke 12:49-53 **20th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 19 Judges 2:11-19. Psalm 105:34-37,39-40,43-44. Matthew 19:16-22 (St John Eudes)
 Tue 20 Judges 6:11-24. Psalm 84:9,11-14. Matthew 19:23-30. St Bernard
 Wed 21 Judges 9:6-15. Psalm 20:2-7. Matthew 20:1-16. St Pius X
 Thu 22 Isaiah 9:1-6. Psalm 112:1-8. Luke 1:26-38 Queenship of BVM
 Fri 23 Ruth 1:1,3-6,14-16,22. Psalm 145:5-10. Matthew 22:34-40 (St Rose of Lima) *abstinence*
 Sat 24 Revelation 21:9-14. Psalm 144:10-13,17-18. John 1:45-51 St BARTHOLOMEW

Sun 25 Isaiah 66:18-21. Psalm 116. Hebrews 12:5-7,11-13. Luke 13:22-30 **21st SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 26 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5,8-10. Psalm 149:1-6,9. Matthew 23:13-22 St Monica
 Tue 27 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8. Psalm 138:1-6. Matthew 23:23-26 St Augustine of Hippo
 Wed 28 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13. Psalm 138:7-12. Matthew 23:27-32 Passion of St John the Baptist
 Thu 29 Jeremiah 1:17-19. Psalm 70:1-6,15,17. Mark 6:17-29 *abstinence*
 Fri 30 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. Psalm 96:1-2,5-6,10-12. Matthew 25:1-13 (of the BVM)
 Sat 31 1 Thessalonians 4:9-11. Psalm 97:1,7-9. Matthew 25:14-30

Sun 1 Sep Ecclesiasticus 3:17-20,28-29. Psalm 67:4-7,10-11. Hebrews 12:14-19,22-24. Luke 14:1,7-14 **22nd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 2 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Psalm 95:1,3-5,11-13. Luke 4:16-30 St Gregory the Great
 Tue 3 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6,9-11. Psalm 26:1-4,13-14. Luke 4:31-37 (St Teresa of Calcutta)
 Wed 4 Colossians 1:1-8. Psalm 51:10-11. Luke 4:38-44 *abstinence*
 Thu 5 Colossians 1:9-14. Psalm 97:2-6. Luke 5:1-11 (of the BVM)
 Fri 6 Colossians 1:15-20. Psalm 99:2-5. Luke 5:33-39
 Sat 7 Colossians 1:21-23. Psalm 53:3-4,6,8. Luke 6:1-5

Sun 8 Wisdom 9:13-18. Psalm 89:3-6,12-14. Philemon 9-10,12-17. Luke 14:25-33. **23rd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 9 Colossians 1:24 – 2:3. Psalm 61:6-7,9. Luke 6:6-11? (St Peter Clavier)
 Tue 10 Colossians 2:6-15. Psalm 144:1-2,8-11. Luke 6:12-19
 Wed 11 1 Corinthians 3:1-11. Psalm 144:2-3,10-13. Luke 6:20-26
 Thu 12 Colossians 3:12-17. Psalm 150:1-6. Luke 6:27-38
or for Mary: Galatians 4:4-7 *or* Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12. Psalm Luke 1:46-55, Luke 1:49-57 (Name of Mary)
 Fri 13 1 Timothy 1:1-2,12-14. Psalm 15:1-2,5-8. Luke 6:39-42 St John Chrysostom *abstinence*
 Sat 14 Numbers 21:4-9 *or* Philippians 2:6-11. Psalm 77:1-2,34-38. John 3:13-17 The EXALTATION of the CROSS

Sun 15 Exodus 32:7-11,13-14. Psalm 50:3-4,12-13,17,19. 1 Timothy 1:12-17. Luke 15:1-32 **24th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME**
 Mon 16 1 Timothy 2:1-8. Psalm 37:2,7-9. Luke 7:1-10. (St Cornelius & St Cyprian)
 Tue 17 1 Timothy 3:1-13. Psalm 100:1-3,5-6. Luke 7:11-17 (St Robert Ballarmin)
 Wed 18 1 Timothy 3:14-16. Psalm 110:1-6. Luke 7:31-33
 Thu 19 1 Timothy 4:12-16. Psalm 110:7-10. Luke 7:36-50 (St Janarius)
 Fri 20 1 Timothy 6:2-12. Psalm 48:6-10,17-20. Luke 8:1-3. St Andrew Kim Tae-gon *abstinence*
 Sat 21 Ephesians 4:1-7,11-13. Psalm 18:2-5. Matthew 9:9-13 St MATTHEW



Sun 22 Amos 8:4-7 Psalm 112:1-2,4-8. 1 Timothy 2:1-8. Luke 16:1-13
Mon 23 Ezra 1:1-6. Psalm 125. Luke 8:16-18
Tue 24 Ezra 6:7-8,12,14-20. Psalm 121:1-5. Luke 8:19-21
Wed 25 Ezra 9:5-9. Psalm Tobias 13:2,4,6-8. Luke 9:1-6
Thu 26 Haggai 1:1-8. Psalm 149:1-6,9. Luke 9:7-9
Fri 27 Haggai 1:15 – 2:9. Psalm 42:1-4. Luke 9:18-22
Sat 28 Zechariah 2:5-9,14-15. Psalm Jeremiah 31:10-31. Luke 9:43-45

25th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
 (St Pius of Pietrelcina - 'Padre Pio')

(St Cosmas & St Damian)
 St Vincent de Paul *abstinence*
 (St Wenceslaus *or* St Lawrence Ruiz *or* of the BVM)

Sun 29 Amos 6:4-7. Psalm 145:6-10. 1 Timothy 6:11-16. Luke 16:19-31
Mon 30 Zechariah 8:1-8. Psalm 101:16-21,22-23,29? Luke 9:46-50

26th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME
 St Jerome



Giving Hope to a World in Need

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Health, Nutrition, Agro-enterprise, Food Security
40 Atlantic Road, Fajara. Telephone 4498000

Seasonal Malaria Chemoprevention (SMC) Campaign in CRR & URR in 2017

CRS, in partnership with the National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) of the Ministry of Health, have been implementing SMC strategy targeting children (3 to 59 months) in Upper and Central River regions from 2014 to 2016, supported by UNITAID ACCESS-SMC project. In 2017, with the support of the Global Fund, this high-impact intervention is being implemented again in the two regions to prevent children from getting malaria. The two regions have been identified due to their relatively high malaria transmission.

SMC is achieved by administering anti-malarial medicines (*sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine* (SP) and *amodiaquine* (AQ)) up to four monthly doses to children. It is administered during the peak of the rainy season (August to December) when the incidence of malaria is high. In total, an estimated 90,925 children are targeted through door-to-door strategy to administer the anti-malarial medicine.

Information Communication for Development (ICT4D) uses android devices to enhance data collection, management and rapid analysis for effective decision-making. Despite challenging conditions in accessing communities during the rains, The Gambia has consistently been able to reach over 80 per cent of the children targeted since the inception of the project. This is largely due to the commitment, perseverance and hard work of the health staff and volunteers and strong collaboration between the NMCP with CRS.

