

The Diocese of Banjul NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

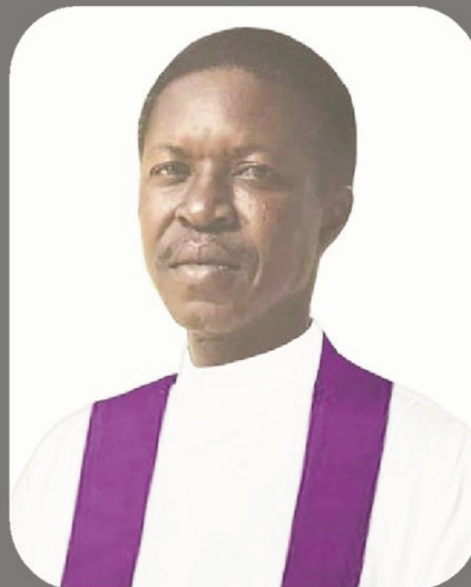
Feast of the Assumption Of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Sang Marie)
Message On Solemnity Of Our Lady's Assumption



Catholic Diocese of Banjul Mourns



Late Rev. Fr. Louis Thomas Mendy



Late Rev. Fr. Peter Solomon Gomez

**December Presidential Elections Votes
For Cash and the Merchants**

Gambian Politicians Buying and Voters Selling
Votes against December 2021 Elections to be Sent
to Mile 2 Prisons

Gambian Youths Must Vote



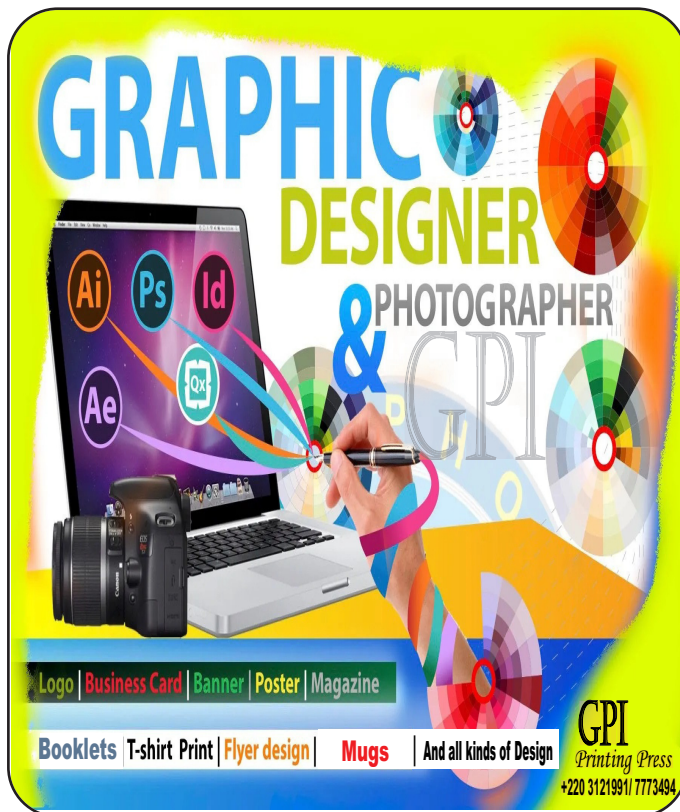
DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

Our Mission and Vision

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

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

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



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NEWS CREW: EDITOR: Fr Peter S. Lopez. EDITORIAL CONSULTANT: Mr Joseph Akagha

LAYOUT: Betty Quacco.

GRAPHICS & PRODUCTION: John Sanyang, Henry Gomez



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**Editorial
Hint**

December Presidential Elections Votes For Cash and the Merchants

Gambian Politicians Buying and Voters Selling Votes against December 2021 Elections to be sent to Mile 2 Prisons

Gambian politicians/voters who are plotting to buy or sell or are in the act of buying votes with cash and voters who are contemplating selling their votes against December 2021 Elections should be in Mile 2 Prisons. This trend is no longer a conspiracy theory. It is a fact. A lot of our politicians are gearing up to this unholy act as was evidenced by the myriad of ills that were reported during the last parliamentary by-elections held in Niamina West Constituency in November 2020. Thus, the National Assembly of The Gambia should wake up to its responsibility and pass a bill to criminalize the act of merchandizing votes by our politicians. Offering individual voters in political elections money for their votes is wrong and illegal; offering groups of voters particular benefits in exchange for their votes is constitutionally prohibited.

When our elections and their results are determined by whoever hands out the most cash, we become doomed. Elections are central features of democracy, which enable the electorate to exercise their civic rights in a free and fair manner. Democracy proponents believe that if an election is "free," it means that all those entitled to vote and be voted for are rightly registered and are totally free to make their choice of candidate without imposition or inducement. Unfortunately, this may not be very true of the forthcoming December elections in this country, where the political parties and politicians are plotting inducement of voters. Recently, there have been cases of enticing voters with money and allied inducements by our politicians wanting to win the forthcoming elections by any means. With our peculiar system of voting using marbles and in the recent times, with the advancement and inclusion of technology

in the electoral process, it is becoming increasingly difficult for politicians to manipulate the process and, therefore, seeking alternative means of influencing the outcome, they resort to vote buying and selling.

This practice took place during the November 2020 parliamentary by-election held in Niamina West Constituency where it was alleged that the election involved huge moral and financial costs; some voters were bribed with between D3,000 and D5,000 to vote for the candidate of the vote buyer. While vote-buying and selling may not be a new phenomenon in The Gambia, the current hyper-dimension is a sign of the desperation of politicians to continuously find ways of manipulating the system. It is a high-level form of corruption, which dehumanizes our electoral credibility, as it robs the people of their civic rights. This menace is no less an abuse of the fundamental human rights as it cages the conscience of the electorate, with undue pressure to be submissive.

Vote-buying is electoral slavery, a tool by the powerful to sustain and get more powers, to inflict unquestionable sufferings on the poor and to create safe spaces for themselves and their cronies. It is interesting and even shocking to note that in spite of the sanctions placed on the violators of electoral processes in any form by our diverse Electoral Acts, vote-buying and selling in The Gambia is gradually becoming a regular phenomenon.

What we do know is that voter education can work, and can be employed to combat electoral malfeasance. Moreover, a specified jail term for the culprits can foster some degree of electoral sanity and deterrence from the reprehensible act. On this, the National Assembly should intervene with immediacy and not later.

The Diocese of Banjul
NEWSLETTER

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Thank you for reading The Diocese of Banjul Newsletter. The Catholic Diocese of Banjul Newsletter team is committed to reporting the truth with courage, integrity, and fidelity to our faith. We provide news about the Church and the world, as seen through the teachings of the Catholic Church. When you subscribe to The Diocese of Banjul Newsletter, we will send you a periodic email with links to the news you need and, occasionally, Breaking News. We will bring all news sources to you, especially those often ignored by "mainstream" media. We will let you see all the stories and let you discover the truth yourself. We will deliver the truth through unbiased news.

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MESSAGE ON SOLEMNITY OF OUR LADY'S ASSUMPTION 2020

Theme: The Power Of God's Right Hand In Mary's Assumption Into Glory

On this day, we celebrate in a very somber and peculiar way the Solemnity of Mary's Assumption into heaven because of the Covid – 19 pandemic, I would like to deliver my message on the power of God's right hand in Mary's Assumption into glory. For obvious reasons, as the Virgin Mother of our saviour, our focus and attention tend to center more on Mary whenever we celebrate her feasts, even her assumption into heaven. But the proper and right orientation and spirit of devotion that the Church promotes and demands from us is to first of all acknowledge and celebrate God's special act of grace, favor, exaltation, and coronation of Mary in all her feasts and solemnities. Our attention today should, therefore, focus not only on Mary and her assumption into heaven. We should also consider and cherish what God in his power, greatness, and love has done for Mary in assuming or raising her body and soul and reuniting her with her Son Jesus in heaven. During this dangerous and deadly period of the pandemic that has tested and sometimes weakened our faith in God's power to deliver and save us from its devastating effects, it is necessary for us to also recall, remember, and rely on the victory and wonders of God's right hand over the forces of sin, evil, and death, especially in the life of Mary and his chosen people.

The idea and image of God's right hand in Scripture represents the manifestation of God's strength, power, might, and victory as the creator and redeemer of his people. In both the Old and New Testaments, God is revealed as the source of all power, authority, and might in heaven and on earth, so there is no other spiritual being or force that is more powerful, greater, and stronger than God. For God is the one who commands and orders all things in creation according to his purpose, as well as the one who conquers and destroys the enemies of his people and the forces of sin and evil. These actions and manifestations of God's power are attributed to God's right hand in an analogical or figurative sense to prove his supreme nature and authority over all other spiritual forces. In Ps. 118:16-17, the psalmist acknowledged and trusted in God's power to save him from evil and death. He testified that "the Lord's right hand has triumphed; his right hand raised me up. The Lord's right hand has triumphed; I shall not die, I shall live and recount the Lord's deeds. That I was punished and punished by the Lord but not doomed to die." The psalmist did not discount God's powerful and triumphant intervention in his life that saved him from death. He fully acknowledged God's power and might. Mary also

recognized the impact and effects of God's hand in Lk. 1:51. She said "he put forth his arm in strength and scattered the proud-hearted. He casts the mighty from their thrones and raised up the lowly."

The mighty hand and power of God was fully and actively responsible for the assumption of Mary, body and soul into heaven. God already decided from all ages to preserve her from the stain of sin and the corruption of death so at the proper time he fulfilled and accomplished his plan for her without fail. We must, therefore, recognize and appreciate God's power and active role in Mary's assumption as the reason and basis for our celebration of this feast in the Catholic Church. When her earthly life came to an end, God accomplished at least two great and marvelous things for Mary through the power of his right hand. Mary was first of all assumed or raised body and soul into glory by God. She was assumed through the power of God's right hand and not through her own strength or will because it was God's plan and action; not her own personal choice. A place of safety was also prepared for her by God, as stated in Rev. 12:6, when the dragon, representing Satan, attempted to endanger her life with her Son. Her assumption into glory in heaven would not, therefore, have taken place without God's mighty and active involvement. We are required then, according to Pope Pius XII in his prayer to Our Lady of the Assumption, "to praise and bless God who exalted Mary above all other pure creatures."

Mary's magnificent appearance in heaven was also God's own design and special provision for her. When Mary appeared in heaven, we are told in Rev. 12:1, that "she was clothed or adorned with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head." The sun, moon, and crown of twelve stars were beautifully conferred on Mary by no one else but God. She was not, therefore, the one who decorated herself with these celestial and heavenly lights because the sun, moon, and stars were bestowed on her by God. Mary was clothed in the radiant lights of heaven when she was assumed body and soul into heaven. But God was really the source of her splendour, beauty, and honour at her assumption because of his nature and position as the creator of the sun, moon, and the stars of heaven. Otherwise, she would not have experienced and enjoyed this singular privilege of bearing the radiant light of the sun, the moon, and the stars. God is, therefore, capable of drawing and bringing us into the radiant light of his presence and transform our lives from the dark shadows of this world to the glory of heaven, from sorrow to everlasting joy, and from time to eternity. We



have, on our part, to be well disposed at heart for us to be raised and glorified by God, like Mary.

God fully revealed and proved his power and might in both the assumption and glorification of Mary. His right hand raised her body and soul into heaven and also adorned and clothed her with the sun, moon, and stars. So God's power clearly prevailed over sin, death, darkness, and corruption and all other forces of evil that tend to threaten and weaken our trust in his ability to save us. If God assumed Mary into heaven, offered her a place of safety, and filled her with the radiance of his glory, we should not, on our part, have any doubts of what God is capable of doing for us, even in these dangerous times of Covid – 19. As Mary testified in Lk. 1:51-54, the power of God's arm scatters the proud of heart, pulls down the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly, fills the hungry with good things, sends the rich away empty, and protects Israel his servant on account of his mercy. This rightly proves that there is no situation, problem, or need that God in his greatness cannot change and reverse for the glory of his name and the good of his chosen people. Our current concerns, pain, suffering, and agony that the Covid – 19 pandemic has inflicted on us is not, therefore, impossible for God to contain and eradicate forever from our midst.

Mary was well known for her humility, obedience to God's will, trust, purity, and holiness of life. She was perfectly described by Elizabeth in Lk. 1:45 as one who believed that the promises made her by the Lord would be fulfilled. Her faith and trust in God was, therefore, very firm and

unshakable while God was accomplishing his plans and purposes for her. Instead of doubting God's promises or even anticipating what God was going to do in her life, she presented herself in her life story in the Gospels as one who just believed and trusted in God's power to act at the appointed time and fulfill his word. So on this day that we celebrate what God has done for Mary in her assumption and glorification, we should imitate and exhibit in our lives her disposition of heart, obedience, and steadfast faith and trust in God's power over the forces of sin and death and God's promise to save and raise us up to new life in him. Like Mary, we too should dispose ourselves to be formed, guided, ruled, raised, and delivered from all evil by the mighty power of God's right hand. Since God is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even imagine, by means of his power working in us, as St. Paul noted in Eph. 3:20-21, let us give him the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus for all time, forever and ever! Amen. On that note, I wish all the priests, religious, seminarians, all the members of Christ's Body, the Church, our Muslim brothers and sisters, Gambians at home and abroad, and people of other faiths a very inspiring, meaningful, and peaceful celebration of the Solemnity of Our Lady's Assumption into heaven.

Your Servant in Christ,

*+Most Rev. Dr. Gabriel Mendy C.S.Sp.
Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Banjul, The Gambia.*

The Pope's Prayer Intentions

AUGUST: The Church

Let us pray for the Church, that she may receive from the Holy Spirit the grace and strength to reform herself in the light of the Gospel.

SEPTEMBER: An Environmentally Sustainable Lifestyle

We pray that we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people who are resolutely committed to this.

COVER STORY

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BANJUL MOURNS

By Philip Saine



The late Fr. Louis Thomas Mendy CSSp

The recent funerals of Rev. Fr. Louis Thomas Mendy and Rev. Peter Solomon Gomez have been described as ‘double tragedies’ in the Diocese of Banjul. However, soon after the expression of deep sorrow, it became apparent that these were rather ‘double triumphs’ for the Diocese of Banjul. History reveals that following the introduction of the Catholic faith in The Gambia these Gambian priests were ordained; FR. GABRIEL SAMBA in 1869; FR. JOSEPH CHARLES MENDY in 1924 and FR. THOMAS GREGORY JOBE in October 1933 except for Fr. Joseph Mendy, who was the first locally trained and ordained Gambian priest, all others took place outside the shores of The Gambia.

Fr. Louis Thomas Mendy C.S.Sp was born on 5th March 1966 in Falla, a small village near Kunkujang in The Gambia. He died in Scotland on 19th June 2021 where he was also buried. He made history being the first Gambian Priest to die and be buried in the United Kingdom. This was the beginning of a reverse situation when Irish missionaries laid their lives in The Gambia; now Gambian missionaries die for the British

and buried in a Scottish cemetery. He demonstrated the active global evangelization that The Gambia embarked upon. Within a relatively short period the diocese witnessed yet another funeral, that of Rev. Fr. Peter Solomon Gomez, one of the first Gambian Priests ordained in The Gambia and buried in the Banjul Christian Cemetery at the Crucifix where Irish forefather missionaries who died in The Gambia were buried.



The author

Rev. Fr. Peter Gomez was a son of Dingo Gomez and Harriet Sambou and was born at 24 Hagan Street in Bathurst/Banjul on the 21st July 1955. Together with Fr. Anthony Gabisi he was ordained on 13th April 1985 by the late Bishop Emeritus Michael Cleary. This occasion opened an exciting new chapter (building a self-reliant church) in the history of the Diocese of Banjul. He served as Vicar General, became the first Gambian Administrator at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption. He carried out his missionary work in several parishes including St Francis parish in 2008 where he replaced Fr. Jackie Sharpe CSSp, the priest who inspired him into the priesthood. Fr. Peter would be



The late Fr. Peter Gomez

remembered for his gentle footsteps, soft and calm voice, short but very effective sermons and eloquence in the Wolof language. He was naturally quiet with a wonderful sense of humour. On Wednesday, 1st July 2021, Fr. Peter Gomez was called to the Lord for eternity after serving the Catholic Diocese of Banjul for 37 years. It was a big loss to the diocese; not an end of his life but a transition into glory.

The Vigil Service was held on Thursday 15th July at the St. Kizito's Church in Bakoteh. During the Prayers of Intercession symbolic articles were presented and these included a Bible, Chalice, Stole and Candlelight.

The Funeral held at the St. Therese's Church in Kanifing started with reception of the corpse at the entrance of the church. Bishop Gabriel Mendy CSSp (the first Gambian Catholic Bishop of Banjul) led the prayers in front of the priests, religious and lay faithful. The huge crowd that participated in this funeral was unprecedented in recent Gambian history. The church was full to capacity. Mourners overflowed the church and were seated under tents around the perimeter of the church and into the parish compound. In attendance were the Catholic clergy led by Bishop Gabriel, heads of the other churches, church representations from Senegal and Guinea Bissau. Also present were the Gambian First Lady, Cabinet Ministers and political party representations, Gambian Christians and non-Christians. The church seats were rearranged and decorated to accommodate the religious groups, government delegation and foreign dignitaries.

The St. Pope John Paul 2nd Choral Group sang a combination of Gregorian, English and Local hymns reflecting a spiritual, sorrowful and celebrated event. The hymns 'Libera Me' and 'Agalil Fi Yov Ka Nyu Sopa' were appropriately selected.

The Sermon - Fr. Edu Gomez was asked by Bishop Gabriel to give the Homily for the occasion. Fr. Edu greeted all and thanked God and the Bishop for everything, He reminded the mourners that there was time for everything. He recounted the 37 years Fr. Peter had served the church. Both of them had joint experience working for more than 10 years at St. Therese Parish where the funeral took place. The posture of Fr. Edu, his tone of voice and message content reminded all that he

was still the 'Voice of the Voiceless, the Poor and the Underprivileged'. He addressed both Church and State, including the Bishop and politicians. He reminded state authorities that they were mere leaders owning nothing; and as such should care for the people. He further observed that the poor were found along streets having nobody to care for them. Fr. Edu recounted the active participation of charitable organizations namely St Vincent de Paul that had the reputation of alleviating poverty by providing food and shelter to the needy. Such organizations, he said, should continue to complement government's effort to improve the socio-economic status of people. At the end of the funeral mass, the priests mournfully carried the coffin on their shoulders from the church to the funeral van and later into the grave.

The burial and condolences – The remains of Fr. Peter was finally laid to rest at the Banjul Christian Cemetery at the Crucifix where Irish Forefather missionaries who died in The Gambia were buried. History was still being made by Fr. Peter. He became the first Gambian Priest since 1932, to be buried in that enclave of the Christian cemetery. The First Lady, Mrs. Fatoumata Bah Barrow, was conspicuously in deep mourning; she was at the vigil service, funeral and burial. She showed gratitude and honour to the priest that adopted and sponsored her while she lived in the Upper River Division (URD).

Condolences were received at Bishop Michael Cleary Hall at St. Augustine's School Grounds. Bishop Gabriel, the chief mourner, received all the mourners who gathered, in conformity with Gambian culture, expressing their sorrow.

Fr. Peter Gomez was a devoted priest who attended to all parishioners despite their occupation and social status. He made himself available for the sacrament of reconciliation whenever needed. He gave generously to the needy and was often regarded as 'the bank that makes payments but receives no deposits'. We will forever remember Revd. Fr. Peter Gomez nicknamed PP The Manager. Witnesses at Fr. Peter's ordination and funeral had this to say - "We cried with joy on your ordination and cried with great sadness on your departure because it was too soon. Start your journey to be with your Lord and Master then Rest in Perfect Eternal Peace".

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5026644
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ADDRESS: Farato Brikama High Way
E-mail: Tezaprovision@gmail.com

Youth's
Corner

Gambian Youths Must Vote

By Zindi Anthony Levi
Dip law, B.sc Political Science (Hons)



The author



The reality of our new political dispensation is that we are democratic to a certain extent. But there are other key factors that affect political participation. These include religion, age, ethnicity, education, etc. Political engagement is very pivotal for political stability and vitality of societies, corresponding with the quest and surge for democratization and economic liberalization efforts since independence. A remarkable growth attained by Christian schools in The Gambia which is viewed together with national development may be hindered with obstacles if the youth do not participate in the political discourse of the country.

Political engagement coupled with other pressing social issues have been the concern of the Gambian Church from the beginning of this political dispensation and this has prompted Caritas office to formulate programs to resolve them. The magnitude of the social problems confronting the county is the compelling factor that should encourage the youth to be fully involved in the political discourse for the socio-economic development of the country. Looking at certain setbacks, such as corruption, dictatorship and oppressive regimes, the perceived marginalization of certain ethnic groups, bad governance, etc. that have engulfed the country for several years, there are some who question whether we can still classify our beloved country, The Gambia, as a democratic state.

Democracy guarantees freedom of speech, of religion, of association etc. These freedoms are to encourage and propel the youth to engage themselves politically for the development of the country. But the question is: how prepared are the youth to engage themselves politically and run for political positions? Since they are the future leaders, how can they contribute to make sure there is justice in the electoral process? And how can they ensure that elections are free and

fair and without violence?

Marginalization of Christians in politics, abuse of fundamental human rights and corruption that have saddled our country have hindered our progress towards the Promised Land as promised by former President Yahya Jammeh in his Vision 2020.

Coalition 2016 saved us from the broad day robbery and slumber of a nightmare to the reality of having to decide our fate through the ballot box. However, the struggle continues to uphold the predication of the developmental agenda that writing cannot finish.

To begin with, let's ask ourselves, after five years of democracy, have the hopes and aspirations of democracy been realized or lost among the youthful population? Have we aligned ourselves to a political system that will save the next generation? Is the gap between the majority poor rural folks and the minority ruling and powerful class reducing or increasing? These rhetorical questions will always raise the eyebrows of the youth when they reflect and compare our dear country to other African countries like Rwanda that suffered a terrible civil war in the early 90s, but in their recovery process formulated innovative, progressive educational programs that have either reduced or eliminated poverty.

This explains why the Gambian youth are not motivated to engage themselves in politics, a situation that has turned The Gambia to oligarchical state (a small group of people), bad governance, leading to youth unemployment, poor educational system, and youth migration. Migration experts assert that African countries, especially the Gambia, are suffering from brain drainage as their educated, experienced and talented people migrate abroad for greener pastures. African youth are marginalized politically, economically, and socially. Scholars use terms like a 'lost generation' or 'a generation that is finding the transition from youth to

adulthood' to describe them, a challenge owed to the absence of educational and economic prospects. The youth should be given a chance to take an active part in the decision-making at local, national and global levels.

The Gambian 2021 Presidential Election is a crucial one for a lot of reasons, but the most significant is the participation of the Gambia youths. The ballot box remains the fundamental road map to choose our leaders who will effect system change and ensure economic advancement and opportunities for this country. We must fight against the attitude of staying at home on Election Day firmly believing that political parties and their leaders are more or less a carbon copy. So it is either you

choose to participate or sit and see the decisions political leaders take affect you in one way or the other.

I will, therefore, propose that we initiate youth voters' engagement through digital means and social media that will educate young people to participate in the electoral process.

Let us all join the crusade, united in our voices, and make a symbolic difference in the country by voting in large numbers for leaders who will set our country on the path of progress and prosperity for al.

#youthsmustvote

Emailtoni.levi37@gmail.com



As part of the Diocese of Banjul, GPI works for the Human, Pastoral and Spiritual growth of the local Church. We offer hospitality and on-going formation to Catechists, RE Teachers, Leaders and others involved in Evangelisation. Through our radio and television programmes and the Newsletter, we communicate information and instruction. Our out-reach programmes cover all the parishes and outstations of the Diocese. The centre facilitates a growth in awareness of our calling as Church to reach beyond ourselves to ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue, while always remaining open to where the Holy Spirit is leading us.

Welcome and hospitality

In the Book of Genesis, Chapter 18, verses 3-5 we read 'Sirs, please do not pass by my home without stopping. I am here to serve you. Let me bring some water for you to wash your feet; you can rest here beneath this tree. I will also bring a bit of food it will give you strength to continue your journey. You have honoured me by coming to my home, so let me serve you.'

Rooms

GPI has rooms at the service of anyone who wants to spend some time at a quiet place. The rooms are neat and tidy with

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TV and radio programmes are produced on site, recordings - video and audio for weddings, funerals, all church programmes; filming and editing - sounds, adverts and major events.

Prices range from equipment renting to actual editing, copying, & coverage etc. Visit the communications department and Radio Veritas for further information

We also sell Religious Articles, G.P.I. Publications, Rosaries crosses, etc

COME TO GPI - IT IS YOUR HOME

Some Weekday Celebrations - August & September

Sunday, 8th August: St Dominic

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

Monday, 9th August: St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

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

Saturday, 14th August: St Maximilian Kolbe martyr

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

Saturday, 21st August: St Pius X Pope

POPE Pius X was born Guiseppe Sarto in Lombardy, Italy, the second of 10 children of a postman. After a poverty-stricken childhood, he was granted a seminary scholarship and was ordained in 1858. He helped the sick in the cholera plague that swept northern Italy in the early 1870s and struggled to bring religious instruction to young people who did not have the opportunity to attend Catholic schools. In 1884, Pope Leo XIII appointed him Bishop of Mantua, and in 1893, Cardinal Patriarch of Venice. Patriarch Sarto avoided political involvement and devoted himself to social work. After Leo's death in 1903, he was elected Pope, taking the name Pius X. His pontificate was notable for his implacable opposition to 'modernism'. But in other ways, Pius was a reformer. He restructured the Roman Curia and established seminaries. Pius died in August 1911. He was beatified by Pius XII in 1952 and canonised in 1954.

Friday, 27th August: St Monica matron & Saturday, 28th August: St Augustine of Hippo doctor

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

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

Friday, 3rd September: St Gregory the Great pope & doctor

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

Saturday, 5th September: St Teresa of Calcutta religious

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

Monday, 13th September: St John Chrysostom doctor

JOHN was born in 347 at Antioch, Syria. After brilliant studies, he became a hermit. When his health gave way, he returned to Antioch, was ordained, and as a preacher, won many converts: 'Chrysostom' means 'golden mouthed'. He angered the rich by his concern for the poor, and was banished to Armenia. He later died on the way to a more distant exile on the Black Sea.

Monday, 20th September: St Andrew Kim Tae-gon & the martyrs of Korea

CATHOLICISM took root in Korea in the late 18th century. When French missionaries arrived in 1830 they found that

Catholicism was already being practised. Kim Tae-gon's father was martyred for being a Catholic. Kim - or Andrew - was baptised when he was 15, and ordained nine years later in Shanghai, China. He returned to Korea as the first Korean priest at a time when thousands of Christians were being persecuted. In 1846, aged 25, Fr Tae-gon was beheaded near Seoul. His last words were, 'Become Christians if you want to be happy after death...'

In May 1994, during a visit to Korea, St John Paul II canonised Andrew Kim Tae-gon and 103 other Korean martyrs.

Thursday, 23rd September: St Pius of Pietrelcina
(*'Padre Pio'*) *priest*

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

Monday 27th September: St Vincent de Paul *priest*

VINCENT came of peasant stock. Captured by pirates, he

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

Thursday, 30th September: St Jerome *doctor*

JEROME was born around 341 in Venetia, Italy. He travelled throughout France and became a monk. After a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he retired to the Syrian desert, where he lived as a hermit. He returned to Rome in 382 as secretary to Pope Damasus, who ordered him to produce the standard Latin text of the Bible (the *Vulgate*, or 'People's Bible') from Hebrew and Greek sources. Jerome spent over 15 years on the task. He died in 420 and was buried in Jerusalem.

The Council of Trent (1545-63) revised the Vulgate and declared it the approved text for Catholic use. (The English translation most often used in our present-day Missal is the Jerusalem Bible, though other translations may be used.)

Omnes sancti et sanctae Domini,
intercedete pro nobis.

All holy men and women of God, intercede for us.

***Giving Hope
to a World in
Need***



**40 Atlantic
Road, Fajara.
Telephone:
4498000**

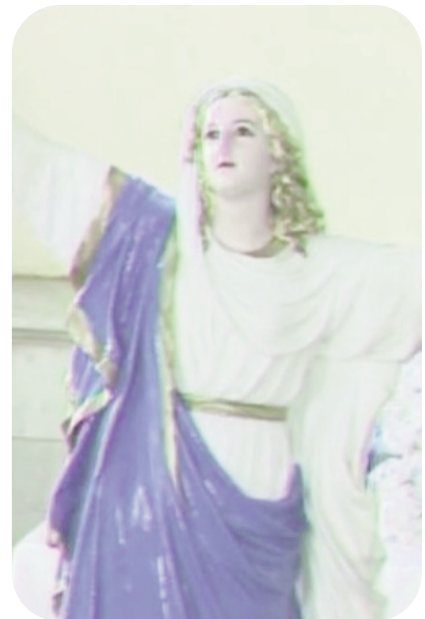
The Gambia Programme

- ▶ Health,
- ▶ Nutrition,
- ▶ Agro-enterprise,
- ▶ Food Security

**PARTNERING WITH THE GAMBIA
PASTORAL INSTITUTE ON MANY
PROJECTS - THUS ENHANCING
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

Church Doctrines

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



THE GREAT Catholic feast on Sunday, 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 in 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.

***Sunday, 15th August, Solemnity of the Assumption, is a HOLY DAY of OBLIGATION
when no Catholic should wilfully miss taking part in the Mass***

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.

UPDATE ABOUT RADIO VERITAS, THE WAY FORWARD AND CALL FOR SUPPORT

It is about six months now since the official launching of Radio Veritas and our commencement of operations. In summing up our activities report so far, one would rightly say; so far so good. Since the inception of our broadcasting service, we have used the Radio to reach most of the unreachable Catholics and Christians alike, which is in line with our mission and ultimate goal – the Planting of the Catholic Church in The Gambia and the strengthening of Christendom in our part of the world. Evidently, within the short duration of our activities, Radio Veritas has aided in integrating the efforts of Christians in The Gambia, thus fostering a holistic evangelism, and we have lots more to achieve.

Therefore, considering your enormous magnanimity which made the realization of our dream for Radio Veritas possible, the moral virtue of gratitude and obligations of appreciation commands us to thank all of you for your generous financial support during the tumultuous time of developing the Radio. We are thus thanking you for your amazing support. We are proud of you as we appreciate your very special personalities and determination to change lives, lifting God and His Church up, and building an enabling environment for the thriving of Christendom.

We shall continue to look up to your support and for your desire to help us succeed in the Radio Veritas venture. With each support we receive from you, we become all that much closer to our goal. Thank you for making a difference through your compassion and generosity.

We still have a lot of work ahead of us, and we believe that your characteristic support which made it that much easier to get things done in the past and thrusting us forward, especially in building Radio Veritas, will still be there for us.

While we have commenced operations at the radio, we are largely constrained by high operating costs and limited sources of revenue. As a non-profit organization, we are less advertisement focused, which leaves us to seek alternative avenues to take care of a huge proportion of our operating costs/bills. Our task is indeed huge.

As we all know, the environment in which the Church functions today is considerably more complex than in the days gone by. Not least, is the enormous challenge we face of a burgeoning non-Christian population of The Gambia. Our task is, in deed and in truth, a huge one.

On the strength of this, we are soliciting generous donations from all our friends. We chose to make the donation process a flexible one, considering the fact that times are tough for most people. We are, therefore, appealing for whatever is possible, as donations from you will be highly appreciated. We shall welcome one-off donations, as well as instalment-payment of pledged donations.

Our solicitation for donations is a short-term measure to enable us sustain our interim operations and avoid going off-air, completely.

Friends of Radio Veritas



We deeply cherish your selflessness and willingness to support Radio Veritas. From the depths of our hearts, we thank you so much for this exceptional support. The helping hand that you have held out today, in the form of your donation, will forever be remembered with deepest gratitude. I wish to say thank you over and over again.

Wisdom teaches us that; Real living is living for others; a kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal, and; Service to humanity is service to God. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 tells us; "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing". In Proverbs 11:25, we are also told; "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed".

We are happy to note that, Radio Veritas has developed distinctive access to a diverse group of people in our society; some of whom are alone and for whom our word comes as a consoling gift, some of whom are curious and are intrigued by what they hear; some of whom never attend church because they belong to different religions or to no religion at all, and others still who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ, yet through our Radio service, first come to hear the words of salvation. This is, indeed, the center-piece of our mission at Radio Veritas, and your donations go a long way to foster this agenda.

We are thankful, in advance, for your contributions. You have no idea how much it means to us at Radio Veritas to have your support.

You can make your donations directly to Radio Veritas in cash or cheque or pay directly to our Ecobank Account using the details below:

ECOBANK Gambia Limited
Account Name: Radio Veritas
Account No: 0040024910500901



Photo of opening ceremony



**Bishop's Office,
P. O. Box 165,
Banjul, 1
The Gambia,
West Africa**

4th August, 2021.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

URGENT REMINDER CONCERNING COVID – 19 THIRD WAVE

Once again, we are confronted with the deadly effects of the Covid – 19 pandemic with the increase of new cases of infection in The Gambia. According to reliable information, reports, and updates, the third wave of the Covid – 19 virus is rapidly spreading in our country. As a result, there are increasing cases of the Delta variant of the virus that is more deadly than the previous variants because it is easily and quickly transmitted and its symptoms are less detectable, noticeable, and enduring than the common symptoms of Covid – 19. For these reasons, I am urgently reminding all parishes, offices, and institutions of the Diocese of Banjul to immediately enforce ALL the Measures, Regulations, and Protocols of the Diocese, in order to, mitigate and prevent the spread of this new variant of the deadly virus.

As the Bishop of the Diocese, I also encourage and urge all the priests, religious, and lay faithful to be vaccinated against this virus in the hospitals and medical centers operated by the Government. If anyone has any reservations, he or she should seek medical advice from medical doctors and professionals before taking the vaccine.

In light of this situation, the following Measures and Regulations should be implemented and enforced with immediate effect:

1. The times for Sunday Masses in parishes should be scheduled in such a way that there is one (1) hour interval between the Masses so that the parish Church can properly be cleaned and arranged for the next Mass.
2. The duration of each Mass should NOT exceed one hour fifteen minutes (1.15hrs). So ONLY the basic and essential parts of the Mass should be sung by the Choir of NOT more than fifteen (15) members.
3. Social distance MUST be observed in the seating arrangements so the seating space on each pew should be clearly MARKED. The faithful should maintain social distance during Offertory Collection and Communion. There should be no shaking of hands during the sign of peace.
4. Holy Communion MUST be received on one's palms. The Eucharistic Ministers who assist the celebrant should ONLY receive the sacred Body of Christ instead of the Body and Blood of Christ.
5. The lectors and altar servers should be limited in number to minimize congestion and occupation of space and the use of the microphone should be handled with great care.
6. Once Mass begins, LATE COMERS should NOT be allowed to enter the Church at any time NOT even for Offertory or Holy Communion. The ushers should fully secure ALL entrances to the Church once Mass begins.
7. Our vulnerable elderly parishioners, the sick, and children below twelve years (12) old are exempted from attending Sunday and Weekday Masses. Instead, the Eucharistic Ministers will bring Holy Communion to you in your homes. The Masses will still be streamed and relayed by G.P.I on radio and TV for your spiritual benefit.
8. The regulations and measures outlined in nos. 1-6 equally applies in the celebration of funerals, weddings, other sacraments, and school Masses.
9. The Weekday celebration of Masses in the parishes continues but parishioners SHOULD observe the social distance and hygienic measures that are introduced in each parish during this third wave of Covid – 19 pandemic.
10. Confessions in the parishes will STRICTLY be by appointment so parishioners should CONSULT and CONTACT their parish priests.
11. Priests should administer the Sacrament of the Sick following proper procedure based on the Diocese's Guidelines it issued during this pandemic.

11. Priests should administer the Sacrament of the Sick following proper procedure based on the Diocese's Guidelines it issued during this pandemic.

REQUIRED PROVISIONS IN PARISH CELEBRATIONS

1. Containers of liquid detergent and sanitizers should be available at all times at different points of entry to the Church and there should be VISIBLE signs and posters to indicate their location.
2. Priests, Religious, and Parishioners attending Sunday, Weekday, and any other celebration in their parishes are REQUIRED to wear FACE MASKS and face covers during the celebration of the Sacraments.
3. They should ensure that they come in time, in order to, properly wash and sanitize their hands before going into the Church. Anyone who does not follow this procedure will NOT be allowed to enter the Church.

4. There should be ushers or personnel at each entrance of the Church to ensure that parishioners comply with these procedures.
5. Use of water fountains at the entrance to the Church should be SUSPENDED during this period and parishioners should avoid common sharing of objects and materials.
6. Each parish should have medical personnel and thermometers to check parishioners. If one has any signs and symptoms of Covid – 19 virus infection, he or she should not enter the Church.
7. A Covid – 19 Parish Sub-Committee or Team should be constituted to regularly monitor and assess the implementation of the above provisions in the parish.

MEETINGS OF PARISH GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

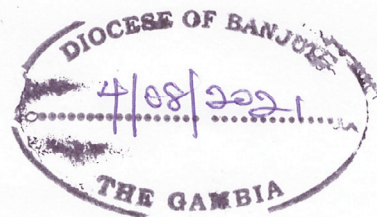
1. The organizations, pious groups, and associations in the parishes and outstations are encouraged to meet when necessary but members in attendance should observe social distance and they should NOT exceed thirty (30) in number.
2. There should be NO prayer vigils during this third wave of the pandemic until further notice. Funeral Vigils, Masses, and Services in the parish Church and outstations should observe Social Distance. These occasions and ceremonies should not be overcrowded.
3. The thanksgiving celebrations, parish feast days, and social programs of parish groups and organizations are still suspended during this period.
4. Any group meeting and prayers in the parish Church or outstation SHOULD not exceed one hour. The groups should ENSURE that they clean and rearrange the seats before they leave and NOT more than two (2) groups should meet at the same time on any day of the week.
5. ANYONE who exhibits signs and symptoms of illness should NOT be allowed to attend meetings and prayers. If one attends, he or she should be reported to the parish priest for proper documentation.

The Covid – 19 pandemic is NOT ONLY REAL, it is also HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS AND DEADLY. In The Gambia and around the world, it has inflicted unbearable loss and pain to families, communities, societies, and nations. Each and every concerned citizen and parishioner should, therefore, take extra steps and make extra efforts to ensure that the Measures, Regulations, and Covid – 19 Protocols are strictly implemented and enforced. At the same time, we should intensify our prayers, penance, offerings, and petitions to God for his protection and deliverance from this deadly pandemic.

Your Servant in Christ,



Most Rev. Dr. Gabriel Mendy C.S.Sp.
Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Banjul, The Gambia.



Cc. Rev. Fr. Anthony Sonko, Vicar General.
File.

The use of Water for washing and drinking

Washing of 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.

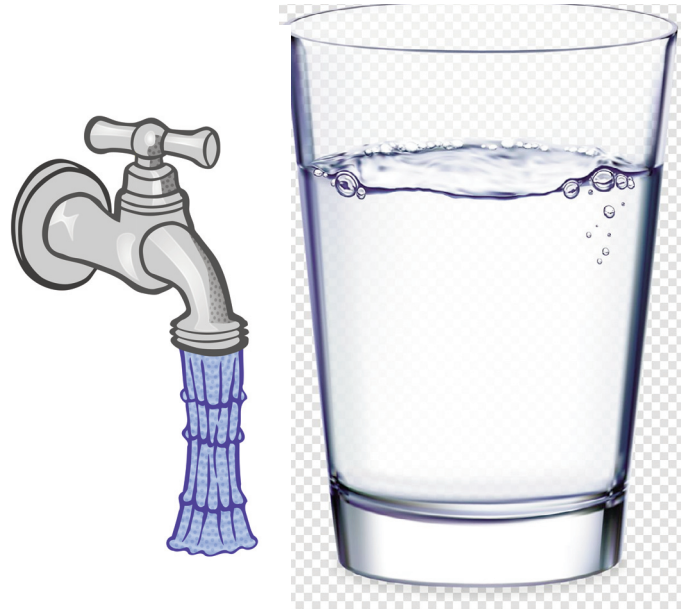
Rubbing the hands together creates friction, which removes the bacteria and creates a lather. Within that lather is the bacteria you have removed, ready to be washed away. Once you have worked up a good lather and rubbed all the surfaces together, rinse your hands and dry thoroughly, not forgetting in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

Prevent the spread of COVID-19 in

7 STEPS



- 01 Wash your hands frequently.
- 02 Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- 03 Cover your cough using the bend of your elbow or a tissue.
- 04 Avoid crowded places and close contact with anyone that has fever or cough.
- 05 Stay at home if you feel unwell.
- 06 If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early — but call first.
- 07 Get information from trusted sources.

Gambian Christian Anniversaries: August & September

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

15th August, 2007 (Sang Marie): Bishop Ellison convened an Assembly for the Diocese of Banjul to be held from

30th March to 4th April 2008.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Suscipe, quæsimus, Domine, sacrificia tuis instituta præceptis

Accept, O Lord, we pray, the sacrifices instituted by your commands

Reflections, readings and prayers for the Sundays in August and September - Year B



Sunday, August 1st, 2021

Eighteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 78:3-4, 23-25, 54

Second Reading: Ephesians 4:17, 20-24

Gospel: John 6:24-35

Reflection: So they said to Jesus, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”

It is a good spiritual practice to reflect upon your natural longings as an analogy for your spiritual longings. Naturally speaking, we regularly get hungry and thirsty. We eat and drink, but several hours later we hunger and thirst again. This is a cycle we cannot avoid. Our body continually craves food and drink. The same is true on a spiritual level. We cannot pray once and satisfy our spiritual longings forever. We cannot simply believe in Jesus and then be satisfied forever. Why? Because prayer and unity with Jesus is something that must take place daily throughout your day.

The Eucharist offers insights into this hunger and thirst in that it provides us with our “daily” food. We must daily seek a gift. Some of the Sacraments are given to us only once (Baptism and Confirmation). But, the Eucharist is a gift that we must continually consume and long for.

Sunday, August 8th, 2021

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:4-8

The Lord feeds Elijah, strengthening him for his journey to Horeb.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 34:2-9

A prayer of praise to God for his goodness

Second Reading: Ephesians 4:30—5:2

The Ephesians are encouraged to be imitators of Christ.

Gospel Reading: John 6:41-51

Jesus responds to the murmurs of the crowd, who wonders what he means when he says that he came down from heaven.

Reflection: In today’s reading, we hear Jesus say again, as he did in last week’s Gospel, that he is the bread of life. We also hear Jesus add that he is the living bread. Both of these statements help us understand better the gift that Jesus gives us in the Eucharist. We celebrate this gift of Jesus each time we gather for Mass. We believe that receiving Jesus in the Eucharist will lead us to eternal life.

Sunday, August 15th, 2021

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First Reading: Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a,10ab

The sign of God’s salvation will be a woman clothed with the sun.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 45:10-12,16

The queen takes her place next to God.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:20-27

Christ has redeemed Adam’s sin.

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-56

Mary greets Elizabeth and sings God’s praise.

Reflection: Today’s Gospel highlights Mary’s faith which enabled her to recognize the work of God in her people’s history and in her own life. Her openness to God allowed God to work through her so that salvation might come to all. Mary is a model and symbol of the Church. May we be like her, open and cooperative in God’s plan of salvation.

Sunday, August 22nd, 2021

Twenty-first Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Joshua 24:1-2a,15-17,18b

Joshua and the people declare that they will serve the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 34:2-21

The Lord hears the cries of the just.

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:21-32 (or shorter form

Ephesians 5:2a, 25-32)

Husbands and wives should love one another as Christ loves the Church.

Gospel Reading: John 6:60-69

Simon Peter confesses his faith that Jesus alone has the words of eternal life.

Reflection: Simon Peter’s response to Jesus’ question as to whether those closest to him will also leave, reminds us of the reports of Peter’s confession of faith in the Synoptic Gospels. Peter announces, on behalf of all the Twelve, that they have come to believe all that Jesus has taught about himself: Jesus is the one from God in whom they have found the path to eternal life.

This conclusion of the Bread of Life discourse focuses on personal faith in the life of Christian discipleship. Each person must make his or her own judgment about who Jesus is, and, in doing so, determine the way of life that he or she will follow. God’s grace invites us to be Jesus’ disciples, but each person must respond to the grace of God and confess as his or her own the belief that Jesus is the one from God. This faith then commits us to the path of life, leading us to eternal life.

Sunday, August 29th, 2021

Twenty-second Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Deuteronomy 4:1-2,6-8

Moses tells the Israelites to observe the commandments that God gave them.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 15:2-5

Those who do justice will find favor with God.

Second Reading: James 1:17-18,21b-22,27

James teaches that Christians should be doers of the Word.

Gospel Reading: Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

Jesus teaches that it is that which comes from our hearts that defiles us.

Reflection: Jesus' words challenge us as well. In our desire to show that we are holy, we might also give too much credence to externals, following rules without thinking about the intention behind them. Jesus reminds us that we do not make ourselves holy by our actions. Rather, we become holy when we allow God's Spirit to transform us. Our actions should be an expression of the conversion of our heart to God and to God's ways.

Sunday, September 5th, 2021

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Isaiah 35:4-7A

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 146:6-10

Second Reading: James 2:1-5

Alleluia: Matthew 4:23

Gospel: Mark 7:31-37

Reflection: He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!") and immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly.

How often do you hear Jesus say this to you? "Ephphatha! Be opened!" Or, how often do you hear Him speak to you with such authority? Did Jesus say this only because this man was physically deaf and He wanted to physically cure him? Or is there a deeper significance? By healing this man unable to hear physical sounds, Jesus was revealing something to us about what He wants to do for us. Jesus is giving us a clear and deeper message in this healing. Certainly, there are many messages we can take from this passage. Let's look at one. The message is in Jesus' command: "Be opened!" These are powerful words commanding action. They are not optional words. They are clear and definitive. "Be opened" is not a question, not an invitation, it is a command. This is significant!

Sunday, September 12th, 2021

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Isaiah 50:5-9A

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 116:1-9

Second Reading: James 2:14-18

Alleluia: Galatians 6:14

Gospel: Mark 8:27-35

Reflection: The emphasis on the gospel reading is; "From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. Then, Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do." We must always seek the ways of God and not the ways of men in all our desires in life. The ways of God, whether we like it or not, superimpose the ways of men.

Sunday, September 19th, 2021

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Wisdom 2:12, 17-20

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 54:3-6,8

Second Reading: James 3:16-4:3

Alleluia: 2 Thessalonians 2:14

Gospel: Mark 9:30-37

Reflection: Jesus tells us that, if we want to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, we must turn and become like little children. So let's ask ourselves, Who are little children? Little children are those innocent people who are ready to be taught. They will sit patiently beside you, and attentively listen to what you have to say. Jesus wants us to behave likewise towards Him and His teachings.

Little children do not have preconceived opinions about something. They have no prejudice or bias towards a subject. They see something for what it is, as opposed to how in their opinion, it should be like. Therefore, Jesus tells us to accept Him, His teachings and His Kingdom as He teaches.

Jesus also warns us that their Guardian Angels have more favour in the eyes of God. Therefore, we should never despise them. We should always come to their aid when a needy situation arises. Jesus says, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father."

Sunday, September 26th, 2021

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

First Reading: Numbers 11:25-29

Responsorial Psalm: Psalms 19:8, 10, 12-14

Second Reading: James 5:1-6

Alleluia: John 17:17A, 17B

Gospel: Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

Reflection: When Jesus talks about gouging out our eyes and cutting off our hands, He doesn't literally mean that, but means shedding off someone or something that may lead you into sin. You can shed off bad habits like adultery, drunkenness, gambling, idolatry, etc. They are fun and feel good when doing them, but they ultimately lead us into sin. Let us today resolve to identify those things that lead us into sin and shed them off, although mostly, we feel we cannot do without them. Jesus says they are not at all important. What is most important is making sure we inherit the Kingdom of God.



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