



The Diocese of Banjul **NEWSLETTER**

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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 is doing right and well, as a means of inspiring and encouraging others to do the same. It is hope-filled, optimistic, and forward-looking. In the main, the newsletter moves our readers beyond inspiration and toward action, and gives them the information, tools, and resources they need to answer God's call to holiness and bring the light of Christ to others.



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Editorial Hint**NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION**

In the dialogue Republic, by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, a need or problem encourages creative efforts to meet the need or solve the problem. Therefore, when the need for something becomes essential, one is forced to find ways of getting or achieving it. Put differently, when we are left with no other option but to complete a certain task, or live through a certain situation, we are compelled by the natural law of survival, to manage to do so, by any means.

The Russian - Ukraine war has caused an inevitable rising cost of food worldwide and it is being speculated that developing countries like ours, will face the harsh realities the most, as we are largely food-import dependent. Should we then allow ourselves to be submerged into this looming catastrophe likely to claim the lives of many, especially the most vulnerable ones among us? Therefore, the rational thing to do in times such as the one we face now, is to make creativity our watchword. It is a time of necessity, and invention of survival strategies should be the smartest thing for us all to do. We expect our leaders to figure out what survival methods to adopt and draw up the necessary roadmap to mitigate the impending catastrophe.

A government that keeps mute in the midst of national challenges is not worth its onions. Our government should, therefore, embark on policies that will help us find alternative means of survival in the current, very challenging dispensation. For instance, in situations like this, research and development in areas such as agriculture and food production become one of the pivotal measures that our leadership needs to take up, and this ought to be done without an iota of hesitation, as well as learning from our regional neighbors; what they are doing that works.

When something is essential for our survival, the human mind finds some way or the other to attain it. This means that necessity is the main force behind every new invention and discovery. Let us make hay while the sun shines, as a stitch in time saves nine!

KAADU DUNDA GI -***The Living Word*****Every Sunday at 12:00hrs on GRTS.****Keep up-to-date with your Diocese!****Visit: www.banjuldiocese.gm****THE DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER****2022 APPEAL FOR SUPPORT**

We have a small favor to ask. Many people are beginning to turn to the Diocese of Banjul Newsletter for vital, independent, and quality journalism. Therefore, readers around the world now need to support us financially. Thus, as 2022 begins, there's a New Year resolution we would like you to consider. We would like to invite you to join the myriad of readers who have taken the step to support us financially – keeping us open to all, and fiercely independent. In 2021, this support assisted in sustaining our work in diverse spheres. It enabled diligent, fact-checked, authoritative journalism to thrive in an era of falsehood, sensation, hype and breathtaking misinformation and misconception. In 2022, we will be no less active.

With no shareholders or billionaire owner, we can set our own agenda and provide trustworthy journalism that's free from commercial and political influence, offering a counterweight to the spread of misinformation. When it's never mattered more, we can investigate and challenge without fear or favour. Unlike many others, Banjul Newsletter journalism is available for everyone to read, regardless of what they can afford to pay. We do this because we believe in information equality. While others commoditize information, we seek to democratize it. Greater numbers of people can keep track of societal issues, understand their impact, and become inspired to take meaningful action. If there were ever a time to join us, it is now.

Every contribution, however big or small, powers our journalism and sustains our future. Support the Banjul Newsletter for as little as any amount. If you can, please consider supporting us with a regular amount each month. Thank you.

Looming Bread 'War' in Our Nation

How we can avert it



People are becoming very apprehensive as rumors make waves around The Gambia that, the price of bread will be increased to D15 at minimum. Giving way for such an increase in the price of an essential food product like bread is not in the best interest of the nation and the people, especially the very poor ones.

Well, good leadership or a dynamic leadership is about generating useful ideas. It is about adjusting to challenge the awful realities of the times. It is about thinking out of the box!

The Russian-Ukraine war we are witnessing today presents every human society with new challenges in varying ways. Yet, there is a common denominator among these challenges on the face of the earth, which is the rising cost of living, especially food products. The war is causing food and fuel crises. Smaller supplies and higher prices for food mean that the world's poor could be forced to do without.

The rising prices may lead to social tensions, especially in countries with weaker social safety nets, fewer job opportunities, limited fiscal space, etc. The IMF has echoed similar concerns. It said in March that, steeper price increases for food and fuel may spur a greater risk of unrest in some regions, from Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin

America to the Caucasus and Central Asia, while food insecurity is likely to further increase in parts of Africa and the Middle East. The conflict disrupted Ukraine's planting and harvest season, destroyed critical fields, stores, infrastructure and production, especially in eastern Ukraine. Moreover, the conflict has resulted in shipping being halted from the Black Sea, from where about 90% of Ukraine's grains are exported. Most African nations depend largely on imports, especially food items.

The unavoidable call of the visible consequences of the war is that we must adjust our systems in order to survive the war. We must start to look inwards into the strengths and opportunities available for us. The conflict will likely impact food security in Africa severely, both through availability and pricing of some food crops, particularly wheat, and the attendant bread products which is our staple food in The Gambia, and as we are used to the use of wheat, flour for bread-making, whereas, the price of wheat is rising astronomically, the looming question is what do we do to avert an imminent disaster? And, what if that's just an initial hit? War and plague won't last forever. But the underlying problem; a world increasingly divided along geopolitical fault-lines — only looks set to get worse. Hence, we must inevitably brace for scarcity and high prices. Reversal of globalization will force nations to shift to activities they're less good at, and vastly reduce productivity.

Arresting the Bread Crisis

Good news for our survival abound! There are affordable alternative food products that can be used to substitute a reasonable proportion of what flour in bread production which can even provide us with more nutritious bread and cheaper bread costs.

Different studies have developed a variety of nutritious breads using cassava flour, with similar characteristics to wheat flour breads. This is called the wheat-cassava composite flours. The use of cassava flour in bread making has been proven as a convenient alternative for promoting the use of a local crop, as well as reducing imports of wheat



flour, promoting the production of high quality cassava flour, offering a gluten-free product and developing biofortified and fortified foods. In bread production, the incorporation of cassava flour additive improves the nutritional value and bread making quality of the baked foods.

Currently, cassava flour is mixed with wheat flour to make bread in some African countries such as Ghana, Cameroun, Congo, Malawi, and Nigeria.



For instance, in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) has initiated a policy of 20 per cent cassava flour inclusion in bread and confectionary production to reduce wheat importation and address the high cost

of the product in the market. The policy rests on the fact that, with 20 per cent cassava inclusion, the country will save millions from wheat importation and a reduced cost of production for bakers. In fact, there are some countries that are even doing 40 to 50 per cent of cassava flour in bread-making. The policy can ultimately build an agri-business ecosystem that would address the challenges in the agricultural sector, and foster the achievement of export substitution, job creation, economic diversification, as well as food and nutrition security.

Also, the readily available sweet potato has been advocated to boost production of bakery products in Nigeria through the use of Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) in bread and other confectioneries to keep prices affordable to Nigerians, as major inputs become costlier. Low production of wheat in Nigeria, falling value of Naira, and heavy dependence on importation of other inputs in bakery businesses, have made operations difficult for bakers and made prices of bread, especially, unaffordable to the poor. Aside from the nutritional benefits of OFSP puree, which include beta-carotene and fibre, with high nutritional value in Vitamin-A for eye health, Vitamin B6 for healthy metabolism and nervous system, Vitamin-C for immune health and Vitamin-D, which play an important role in carrying out vital functions in the body system, its inclusion would reduce the yearly wheat importation and conserve foreign reserves, because, at a 20 per cent inclusion, the colour, texture and taste of bread are very good. And, apart from health benefits to consumers, the substitution helps bakers to marginally reduce cost of production per loaf in a latest analysis based on current

prices of inputs and their substitutes. Application of OFSP puree in wheat flour for bread reduces the usage of milk, sugar and wheat flour. On every 50kg bag of wheat flour, 1.5kgs of sugar is saved, 10kgs of wheat flour is substituted with the puree and N180 is saved on every kilogramme substituted. In Nigeria, using 10kgs of OFSP puree with 40kgs of wheat flour reduces cost of production by N1800, apart from reduction in the quantity of sugar used. Moreover, the bread shelf life is elongated and 500gm of milk is saved per 50kg-bag of flour, when 10kg puree is included.

At the agro-sector level, the potential demand of these wheat substitutes would deepen production. On production of sweet potato, The Gambia's arable land is suitable for production and an average of 10 metric tonnes can be produced per hectare. It takes between three and four months for a product like potato to mature. Hence, sweet potato can be planted three times in a year, especially if supported with irrigation facilities. Without irrigation, two crops of production are also feasible. According to experts, sweet potato puree is even more competitive than cassava flour inclusion or full wheat flour usage in confectionaries. Thus, if farmers can sell sweet potato easily to puree processors, poverty will be alleviated and standard of life will improve as a result of multiplier effect on the value chain players.

In Nigeria, the OFSP was approved and released since 2012 as a crop with potential to drastically reduce malnutrition based on its bio-fortification with Vitamins A and C, among others.

There is enough scientific evidence that shows the effectiveness of using cassava and sweet potato to elaborate different kind of breads. The potential benefits of using them in bread making include reduction of dependence on wheat and wheat flour imports, foreign exchange savings, increase farming incomes, reduction in food insecurity and boost of rural development by promoting agro production.

There should be a synergy between our government and our neighbors who have tried these strategies as a way to promote their adoption in our system, especially Nigeria, the largest producer of cassava in the world. Our government should then send an economic cum fact-finding mission to a country like Nigeria, Ghana, Malawi, etc., to appraise the scenario with the aim of understanding the economics and benefits of cassava-wheat composite flour as an alternative to the hugely exorbitant wheat, in order to reduce bread (a staple food) shortage in our country. If necessity is the mother of invention, it is also the father of cooperation, and, at a time like the one we all face today, we Africans are bound to cooperate like never before. We must develop the practice of learning from one another.

SYNOD PRAYER



We stand before You, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us, make Yourself at home in our hearts;

Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder.

Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right.

All this we ask of You, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.

Amen.

Opinion

The Morgue at the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH) in Banjul



The author

By Philip Saine

To keep up with the necessary periodical maintenance at the Edward Francis Small Teaching Hospital (EFSTH) admissions wards are supported by corporate institutions. Thus, we find the **Petrogas-** Medical Ward and the **1st Lady Fund-** Obstetrics Unit. These innovations contribute significantly in reducing mortality, but still greater results could be achieved if both patient and individual health care providers are rewarded.

The Morgue, however, benefited little from such initiatives and the name remains unchanged- the '**Mortuary or Dead House**'. It is on record that GAMTEL had installed some useful equipment. Recently, this mortuary at the EFSTH had a remarkable upgrading that would facilitate sanitary operation. The work was undertaken by Gambian philanthropists living abroad and should be encouraged and provided with greater space for continuous support.

During the renovation, a refrigerated container was noted to be holding about 40 corpses. It is known that hospitals quite often provide pathological services for the determination of causes of death; such will provide vital information for public health planning. Corpses are retained until complete investigations can be done. It is also necessary to hold deceased bodies suspected of foul play to allow for legal courses of action. It was not only the presence of human bodies in a refrigerated container that was worrying, but their very long period of retention (5 to

10 years). The bodies are under refrigeration and, therefore, pose little or no public health hazard. It is important not to underestimate the cost of maintaining such storage facilities and also not to ignore the denial of proper storage to situations that really demand for it. The operation of the morgue should stipulate the maximum period a corpse could be retained in the mortuary. The public should be well informed of this policy and continuous reminders, be given to any person or institution that brings in a corpse.

The potential public health hazards, the rising cost of refrigeration, and the occupied space, justify the questioning that circulates amongst the public. It is a human behaviour, particularly Gambian, to show respect and dignity to any human remains or body parts.

Whatever is the original cause of this pathetic situation at the mortuary, concerned authorities including the Hospital Operations and Management Board, Ministry of Health, and Police, are engaged in finding a solution. Arriving at an acceptable solution demands careful consideration of legal processes, public health and socio-cultural norms. Opportunities should be given to family members to verify identifiable corpses. The minimum religious rites (*Muslim and Christian*) should be allowed and facilitated. It is reasonable to envisage mass burial, but there should be a public announcement of the place, date and time of a mass funeral. Some members of the public would like to perform '*works of mercy*' by attending the funeral and offering prayers for either known or unknown persons.



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The author

THE POLITICAL CAREER AND PHILOSOPHY OF HON. HALIFA SALLAH

A lesson for us all

Halifa Sallah is a highly respected and loved Gambian politician, democrat and reformist who was until recently a member of the National Assembly representing Serekunda Central. He is the Secretary-General of the People's Democratic Organisation for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS). He served as a spokesman and advisor to President Adama Barrow during the 2016 Presidential Election campaign, until March 2017. He worked vigorously in support of democratisation, women's empowerment and freedom of speech.

Sallah co-founded PDOIS in 1986, and was elected as its Secretary-General in 1987. He has been a major contributor to *Foroyaa*, the party's newspaper. He contested elections for the House of Representatives in 1987 and 1992, and was a staunch opposer of the Yahya Jammeh regime. He stood, unsuccessfully, for the National Assembly in 1997, but was elected in 2002, serving until 2007. During that time, he also served as Minority Leader. Sallah has also served in the Pan-African Parliament, and was the National Alliance for Democracy and Development (NADD)'s candidate for president in the 2006 Presidential Election, coming third with 6% of the vote.

After returning from the United States in the late 1970s, Sallah became involved with the People's Movement for Independence against Neo-Colonialism and Capitalism (PMINCC). It is also believed that he was one of the editors of *The Voice of the Future* newspaper. Along with other PMINCC members, he was arrested in October 1983 and went on trial in 1984 for his involvement in distributing *The Voice*. He was acquitted, but lost his job as a result of the trial.

Following Yahya Jammeh's coup in 1994, Sallah and other PDOIS leaders adopted a principled stance in response, with him and Sedia Jatta and Sadia both turning down offers to join the Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council. Both men were detained in August 1994 for publishing an edition of *Foroyaa*, despite the ban on political activities. They were put on trial, found guilty, and fined, but they resumed publication of the paper in November 1994 as a non-partisan newspaper.

Sallah again, unsuccessfully, contested the Serekunda East constituency in the 1997 election but was elected to the new constituency of Serekunda Central in the 2002 parliamentary election. As the United Democratic Party (UDP) had boycotted the election, the PDOIS, with two seats, emerged as the largest opposition party, and Sallah became the Minority Leader in the National Assembly. He also served as a member of the Pan-African Parliament in this period. In June 2005, he was expelled from the National Assembly, along with three other opposition MPs, on the grounds of dual-party membership. NADD, an opposition, alliance that the PDOIS had joined earlier that year, had been registered as a political party, and the Supreme Court of The Gambia ruled that holding dual membership was against the Gambian Constitution. Some criticised the ruling, claiming that it was a move to silence parliamentary opposition, as there was nothing in the Constitution that regulated political parties. On 29 September, 2005 a by-election was held in Serekunda Central, in which Sallah was re-elected by a "huge" margin.

On 15 November, 2005, he was arrested along with two other opposition leaders on the grounds of subversion, accused of having

collaborated with the President of Senegal. The charges, however, were dropped following the intervention of Olusegun Obasanjo, then-President of Nigeria. During the election, the US Embassy described Sallah as "known and respected throughout the country and abroad for his constant admonishment of President Jammeh's government for its failure to adhere to the country's constitution and the principles of democracy." They also wrote: "A win by Halifa Sallah would almost certainly usher in a new era in Gambian government and politics. Sallah's ideas are consistent with democratic ethos and we would expect a Sallah administration to be a reliable friend of the US."

He lost his seat in the National Assembly in the 2007 parliamentary election to Sainey Jaiteh, a member of the ruling APRC. While not mentioning Sallah by name, Yahya Jammeh made a coded reference to him and Hamat Bah when he expressed his satisfaction at the defeat of "the two empty barrels in the National Assembly". Sallah blamed the opposition's poor performance in the election on a split in its ranks and said that he intended to retire from politics and concentrate on writing. On 8 March, 2009, Sallah was arrested and taken to the Central Prison, Mile II. The Jammeh regime accused him of spying. However, the charges were dropped against him on 25 March "in the interest of peace and justice". Sallah was also reportedly detained in June 2009, when he went to visit a group of imprisoned journalists at the National Intelligence Agency. He was held overnight before being released on bail. Before the 2011 Gambian Presidential Election, Sallah released a statement saying he would not be a candidate because "the office of President or Vice President is not of value to him."

Mr. Halifa Sallah is a member of the National Assembly of The Republic of The Gambia, member of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, and former member of the Pan-African Parliament. He is a founding member and Secretary-General of the People's Democratic Organization for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS) political party. Sallah is the author of "The Road to Self-Determination and Independence," and "Treatise on Founding a Federation of African Republics." He is also the author of an upcoming book "The Impasse" on the crisis after the 2016 Presidential Election in The Gambia.

In February 2016, it was announced that Sallah would be PDOIS' candidate in the 2016 Gambian Presidential Election. He later became the spokesperson for Coalition 2016, and following Jammeh's defeat by Adama Barrow in the election, declared that Jammeh would be treated like a "rebel leader" if he did not relinquish power by 19 January 2017, when his term ended. Sallah remained the coalition spokesperson following Barrow's election. It was rumoured that Sallah was being considered for Vice-President by Barrow, but Barrow changed his mind following a meeting with Ousainou Darboe and other UDP members. Sallah subsequently declined the offer of a cabinet position. On 17 February, 2017, Sallah was appointed as Special Advisor to the President on Governance. News commented that his "appointment will bring absolute, total, complete confidence to the Barrow administration.

On 24 February, 2017, Sallah announced that he would be contesting the 2017 Parliamentary Election to the National Assembly. Upon submitting his nomination to the Independent

Electoral Commission, he said that it would be the duty of the incoming NAMs to build up the National Assembly as an oversight institution. Sallah also resigned from his executive role as an advisor. He stood in the constituency of Serekunda and was duly elected. In August, Sallah called for a debate with Ousainou Darboe, the leader of the United Democratic Party (UDP), over the credibility of Coalition 2016's Memorandum of Understanding, stating that Barrow would only serve for three years, instead of a full five years. In November 2021, Halifa Sallah's candidacy for the Presidential Election of 2021-22 was validated by the Independent Electoral Commission.

However, having had a rewarding and applauded political career, Hon. Halifa Sallah announced his resignation from active and representatives' politics in December 2021. Halifa Sallah's resignation from active and representative politics marked the end of populist, principled and ideology-based politics. He was a consummate politician, a great scholar and teacher, an accomplished administrator, a champion for the emancipation of humanity, a nationalist, a patriot and above all, an activist, who lived and worked for social justice and the struggle for upliftment and enhancement of the fundamental rights of the common people of The Gambia.

Hon. Sallah's first mission in politics was to fight external colonial domination and achieve freedom for The Gambia. His second mission was to fight internal oppression, so that the poor Gambian masses and the less privileged will be emancipated. He was a genuine democratic humanist, who practiced what he preached. Hon. Sallah is a highly respected politician in The Gambia and beyond. He symbolized democratization, women's empowerment and freedom of speech. He was also 'a democratic humanist who believes in the upliftment of humanity and the dignity of women'.

His life was an Odyssey of struggle, commitment and loyalty that are common with all great philosophers and leaders. The development of Sallah's political philosophy passed through different sources of inspiration, all geared towards the evolution of an egalitarian society of his dream. He was able to combine the ideas of Rousseau, Voltaire, Jefferson, Tom Paine and Shakespeare's popular approach. He had also read Gandhi extensively and greatly influenced by him. He is seen by his admirers as essentially a freedom fighter. They also believe he fought for both political freedom and for mental and cultural freedom of humanity.

To Halifa, politics is not a do or die affair. He believes that when a politician joined politics, he is doing it with an aim of how to deliver his message through campaign, and to either win or lose in good faith. 'Politics without bitterness' was his idea, that you are not just there to win in a political competition. People insist on winning after putting in their resources and, at the end of the day, when they lose, they get disappointed. To him, politics is just like a race in the Olympics, where if you don't get the gold, you get the bronze or silver, and be satisfied, even if you don't win. The fact that you are in the competition should be satisfying. He believes that, as a loser in an election, you should be able to look up to a declared winner and congratulate him. That is the beauty of politics. If you meet the person who won, shake his hand, laugh about it, as life is a game.

The Gambia and Gambians have been blessed with the likes of Halifa Sallah, who has, over the years kept, a sterling record in the pursuit of social justice, equity and fair play in their quest to ensure the entrenchment of an egalitarian society in which the fundamental rights of all and sundry especially the downtrodden are protected. In the pursuit of these noble ideals, he has been made to go through harrowing experiences in the hands of government officials, including incarceration, dehumanisation and other heart-rending travails.

Halifa Sallah greatly influenced many people; this can be deeply rooted considering the legacy of selflessness and egalitarianism which he had preached and practised. In order to examine his

legacy, it could be established by examining the opinion of people who either knew or associated with him, on his contribution and relevance to The Gambia's political development. Mai Fatty is of the view that "Hon. Sallah will remain a colossus in Gambian politics for a long time. Not endorsing him doesn't mean I do not value his immense standing". Continuing, Fatty described Halifa, as the only *Mwalimu* in Gambian political history, who has carved an indelible imprint on the psyche of thousands of Gambians, including myself. Although we share different political philosophies, there has always existed a deep sense of mutual respect, love and genuine appreciation between us. "According to him, Hon. Sallah is The Gambia's Kwame Nkrumah, a man whose vision for his country was far ahead of his generation, and whose sacrifice is second to none.

Honourable Halifa Sallah, leader of PDOIS, has announced his retirement saying that he has retired from political representations, but that his love for The Gambia and her people remains the same. He said "We struggle for you to take back your country, power and voice. I was cautioning you that 2021 was your opportunity to move from poverty to prosperity, injustice to justice", "There are intellectuals who want to change this country and ready to sacrifice to change the destiny of this country, but they don't see the concern from the people who are suffering."

He said "I cautioned you (Gambians) that democracy could only thrive under the sovereignty of a people who are dignified and not allow themselves to be induced or intimidated by anybody, if we surrender our democracy to copper coins to dalasi, ultimately there are billionaires in the world willing to take minerals, everything a country has by financing elections and winning not for the people but for themselves."

"Gambians have decided, each of us must sit down and ask ourselves the question; who is the loser and the winner? Adding that there are no winners or losers but there is a task to be performed and a challenge to be addressed which is nation-building and do not in any way think that I am emotionally broken, I will be calmer and the fire that was burning in me will quench today: "I thought I could inspire you to refuse to take the rope of slavery and put it back around your neck, but since you have done that, the tears have dried in my eyes, now".

Speaking to reporters at a news conference held at his party bureau in Churchill's Town, he said: "this is the end of my political representation", as he admonished citizens of a missed opportunity in not electing him for a genuine system change where sovereign wealth of the people will be used for their socio-economic development.

This paper has discussed Hon. Halifa Sallah's Political career and ideology and a lesson for us all Gambians. He has demonstrated what democracy constitutes: the democratic ideal springs from the ideas of liberty, equality, majority rule through free elections, protection of the rights of the poor masses and freedom to subscribe to multiple loyalties in matters of politics and economics, rather than absolute loyalty to state. Ultimately, democracy is preserved and strengthened by maintaining differences and variations. The spirit of democracy is the idea of importance and worth in the individual and faith in the kind of world where the individual can achieve as much of his potential as possible. But, so far, experience has shown that the greatest enemy of individual freedom is the individual himself. Halifa Sallah is a great leader, who practised what he preached. His political career of no bitterness attached and his philosophy of equality, freedom, liberty and avowed wish of emancipating the Gambian masses should be a lesson for us all. What is more relevant in the reconstruction of Halifa's life and times as a fundamental politician, is to have an idea of how he reacted to certain socio-economic and political developments which have taken place around him, and the impact of such developments on his thought process. This reconstruction will help in better understanding and appreciating the circumstances of his emergence as a populist, in the emergence of radical

nationalism in The Gambia. We recall and recount his political ideologies and philosophy and highlight how his many years of fighting to improve political transition provided insights for other emerging democracies. He has left permanent imprints in the sands of time and a monumental political landmark in The Gambia. *It is*

regrettable, however, in the words of PLO Lumumba that those who have ideas have no power, and those with power have completely no ideas". This is truly the irony of life and politics.

The author has an extensive experience in International Development/Development Cooperation spanning over a decade. He is also a friend and an admirer of Hon. Halifa Sallah.

ENCROACHMENT INTO KUNKUJANG PLACE OF WORSHIP



BY: PHILIP SAINÉ

It was in August 1987 that a land measuring 850m x 300 m was applied for the purpose of a Catholic Shrine at Kunkujang Mariama. The application was approved and granted by the Commissioner Western Division, in Brikama. On 3rd September 1987, an official document allocating the requested land was handed over to the Christian Shrine Committee (CSC).

At the time of taking delivery, the allocated land was then bushy and full of tall palm trees. The CSC was responsible to for the land to be cleared and the ground consecrated on Saturday, 5th December 1987. A *grotto* was erected and dedicated to 'Our Lady Queen of Peace'. This is now known as the Roman Catholic 'Shrine' or more fully addressed as 'Our Lady of Peace - Kunkujang Mariama'. The primary purpose of this shrine in the midst of a remote virgin forest then was to carve out hallowed space and environment conducive for Christian meditation, spiritual growth, fasting and prayer.

Today, the situation at Kunkujang Mariama is very worrying, indeed. The forces of intimidation and encroachment have been relentless on both School lands and the land of 'Our Lady of Peace - Kunkujang Mariama'.

Encoachment into the land of this Roman Catholic Diocese in Kunkujang Mariama was first reported on 23rd August 2016. The Physical Planning Authority responded by serving a notice to one Dodou Modou Kah, who was acting under the authority of the Alkalo Adama Jallow, requiring the demolition and removal of an erected building fence. . Following sustained trespass on the Diocese of properties at Kunkujang Mariama West Coast Region of the Republic of The Gambia, a protest letter was sent to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government and Lands on 19th February 2018 **TRESPASS ON ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSION PROPERTY IN KUNKUJANG MARIAMA WEST COAST REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA**.

While the Diocese continues to cry for justice, the *trespassers refuse to vacate the land and have continued in*

their intimidation, taunts and threats on worshippers, in particular.

The perpetrators of these heinous acts have hardened and emboldened through the years. Currently they have resorted to not only the trespass and destruction of landed property, but have seized, partitioned and sold property that is not lawfully theirs. This violation of land belonging to the Roman Catholic Diocese at Kunkujang Mariama is of grave concern to and not only limited to the mission directly affected, but to all Gambians of good faith. The social fabric of a once peaceful society is being threatened with disintegration before our very eyes. These mal-practices are benefitting only a few 'lords' whose appetite for material gain is insatiable. The Church has all along being patiently awaiting justice while pursuing the legal processes. But it seems that the state institutions responsible to adjudicate and decide on these matters seem impotent. The Land Commission that government intends to set-up to resolve such matters may arrive too late.

One would have assumed that between the Ministry of Local Government and Lands and Religious Affairs, the Department of Justice, the Department of Lands, the Office of the Governor West Coast Region and the Inspector General of Police (*the Keeper of the Law*), together, have adequate powers and authority to adjudicate on the matter, implement what is just in law, protect the offended party, and maintain the peace in the area. Disappointingly, this has not been the case.

Under the current explosive situation at Kunkujang Mariama, it is urgent that both the Minister of Local Government and Lands and Religious Affairs and the Minister of Justice, together take the lead in conducting a review this sensitive case without delay. Hopefully, it will arrest the general downward slide to lawlessness prevailing at the village. During this proposed process, it should be necessary to remind the Alkalo that he has been appointed head of the whole community of Kunkujang Mariama. That he is required, by law, to administrate justice to all, irrespective of social position, tribe, race or religious affiliation. Simultaneously, politicians, civil society activists and religious leaders of our diverse faith communities are invited to work to restore mutual trust and bring peace amongst the peoples of the area.



BLESSED MARIE RIVIER IS NOW A SAINT



We join the Presentation of Mary Sisters in The Gambia in celebrating with great joy the canonization of their foundress, Blessed Marie Rivier. Pope Saint John Paul II said these words in his homily on 23rd May 1982 during the beatification of Saint Marie Rivier: “So, what is the secret of Marie Rivier’s zeal. One is struck by her boldness, her tenacity, her expansive joy, her courage. Her life demonstrates well the power of faith in a simple upright soul which surrenders itself entirely to the grace of baptism. She relied on God.” She is recognized for her life of holiness, apostolic zeal, especially among the poor and vulnerable.

On May 15, 2022, Pope Francis canonized ten holy people including a diminutive French woman who showed great tenacity and courage during a time of religious persecution, a woman whose soul was so on fire with a passion for sharing Christ with others. The miracle of her canonization took place in the Philippines when a fetus experiencing life threatening swelling (Edema) was cured through Blessed Marie Rivier’s intercession. Angela Marie Vier Albaracin Degamo was born later that year.

The sisters of the Presentation of Mary in The Gambia and some members of the Marie Rivier Associates travelled to Rome to take

part in this historic celebration. At 10:15am in Rome, Marie Rivier was declared a saint. Approximately 45,000 of the faithful filled St. Peter’s Square for the Papal Mass and canonization of 10 new saints. Though diverse in many ways, different countries, languages and cultures were all unified in the love of God, and as a family, they celebrated their faith and Marie Rivier’s sainthood. Her ministry and mission continue today in the life and work of her sisters all over the world and, in a special way, in our diocese. Saint Marie Rivier is a witness of God’s love. She

embodied Jesus Christ, and was passionate about all that Jesus Christ loved...the gospel, His mother, the beatitudes, the poor, the children and youth. No wonder she is known as the woman apostle. Within a few decades of her death in 1838, her daughters are now present in all five continents of the world. St. Marie Rivier would be a very good patron for catechists and persecuted Christians and all those who risk their lives for the sake of bringing Christ to others, so that they can find in the courage and boldness of the woman apostle, an inspiration. Saint Marie Rivier pray for us.



Fr. Peter S. Lopez

The Life of Blessed Anne Marie Rivier

A Brief Biography of Blessed Marie Rivier, Foundress of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary

Marie Rivier, fondly known as Marinette, was born December 19, 1768 in Montpezat, France. At the end of April 1770, Marinette, then sixteen months old, had a bad fall which left her severely handicapped. Her mother, a woman of great faith, carried her to the statue of the Pieta each day.

Soon the little girl, who watched her mother pray, was certain: "The Blessed Virgin will cure me!" Left alone at the feet of Mary holding her dead Son in her arms, Marie meditated. This mystery of passionate love filled her heart. Finally, on September 8, 1774, Marinette began to walk! These four years of "schooling" with Mary marked Marie Rivier's life forever—she obtained everything through Mary's intercession.

When the French Revolution broke out and any religious action was suspicious, Marie Rivier secretly held Sunday assemblies. She was cautious, but remained an apostle with a heart of fire! In 1794, the village of Thueyts beckoned her and she willingly responded. Soon, four young women joined her and allowed themselves to be set afire by the Gospel. At a time when all the convents were being closed, Marie Rivier opened hers. On November 21, 1796, the feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, Marie and her four companions consecrated themselves to God. The new community grew very quickly, despite the poverty it experienced.

For Marie Rivier and her daughters, the Christian education of youth was, and will remain, a priority. However, religious education extended to adults as well. The poor also held a special place in Marie's heart and she opened her first orphanage in 1814. Even if the house was poor, welcoming the most destitute was sacred.

Nothing would stop Marie's apostolic ardor. Priests asked her to speak to their parishioners, to assemble the women and girls of their parish, to rekindle fervor. Marie spoke with clarity, energy, and a gentleness that touched every heart. An inner strength gave her support and caused her to cry out: "Either make Jesus Christ known or die!" When she died on February 3, 1838, this Woman-Apostle with a heart of fire had founded 141 houses and received

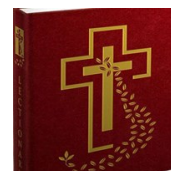


more than 350 Sisters to continue her mission. Marie Rivier, "a prophet for our time," was beatified in Rome by Pope John Paul II, on May 23, 1982.

"My daughters will one day cross the seas. This prediction came true in 1853 when the Sisters arrived in Canada. Then, in 1873, the first foundation in the United States was established in Glens Falls, New York. Today, the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary serve in nineteen countries of the world: France, Switzerland, Canada, United States, England, Spain, Italy, Madeira, Portugal, Mozambique, Japan, Philippines, Senegal, The Gambia, Ireland, Peru, Brazil, Cameroon, Indonesia, and Burkina Faso. Our Generalate is presently located at Castelgandolfo (Rome), Italy.

Daily Mass Readings

June & July



1 JUNE 2022 – WEDNESDAY *Justin, Martyr Obligatory Memorial*
First Reading: [Acts 20](#): 28-38 Gospel: [John 17](#): 11b-19

2 JUNE 2022 – THURSDAY Easter Weekday
Marcellinus and Peter, Martyrs
First Reading: [Acts 22](#): 30; 23: 6-11 Gospel: [John 17](#): 20-26

3 JUNE 2022 – FRIDAY
Charles Lwanga & Companions, Martyrs Obligatory Memorial
First Reading: [Acts 25](#): 13b-21 Gospel: [John 21](#): 15-19

4 JUNE 2022 – SATURDAY
First Reading: [Acts 28](#): 16-20, 30-31 Gospel: [John 21](#): 20-25

5 JUNE 2022 – SUNDAY **PENTECOST Solemnity / Vigil**
First Reading: [Genesis 11](#): 1-9 or [Exodus 19](#): 3-8a, 16-20b or [Ezekiel 37](#): 1-14 or [Joel 3](#): 1-5
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 104](#): 1-2, 24, 35, 27-28, 29, 30
Second Reading: [Romans 8](#): 22-27 Gospel: [John 7](#): 37-39

5 JUNE 2022 – SUNDAY **PENTECOST Solemnity / Day**
First Reading: [Acts 2](#): 1-11
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 104](#): 1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34
Second Reading: [First Corinthians 12](#): 3b-7, 12-13 or [Romans 8](#): 8-17
Gospel: [John 20](#): 19-23 or [John 14](#): 15-16, 23b-26

6 JUNE 2022 – MONDAY Ordinary Weekday
Tenth Week in Ordinary Time
Norbert, Bishop, Religious Founder First Reading:
[First Kings 17](#): 1-6 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 1-12

7 JUNE 2022 – TUESDAY Ordinary Weekday
First Reading: [First Kings 17](#): 7-16 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 13-16

8 JUNE 2022 – WEDNESDAY
First Reading: [First Kings 18](#): 20-39 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 17-19

9 JUNE 2022 – THURSDAY Ordinary Weekday
Ephrem of Syria, Deacon, Doctor
First Reading: [First Kings 18](#): 41-46 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 20-26

10 JUNE 2022 – FRIDAY
First Reading: [First Kings 19](#): 9a, 11-16 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 27-32

11 JUNE 2022 – SATURDAY
Barnabas, Apostle Obligatory Memorial
First Reading: [Acts 11](#): 21b-26; 13: 1-3 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 33-37

12 JUNE 2022 – SUNDAY **THE HOLY TRINITY Solemnity**
First Reading: [Proverbs 8](#): 22-31 Gospel: [John 16](#): 12-15

13 JUNE 2022 – MONDAY Eleventh Week in Ordinary Time
Anthony of Padua, Priest, Religious, Doctor Obligatory Memorial
First Reading: [First Kings 21](#): 1-16 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 38-42

14 JUNE 2022 – TUESDAY Ordinary Weekday
First Reading: [First Kings 21](#): 17-29 Gospel: [Matthew 5](#): 43-48

15 JUNE 2022 – WEDNESDAY
First Reading: [Second Kings 2](#): 1, 6-14 Gospel: [Matthew 6](#): 1-6, 16-18

16 JUNE 2022 – THURSDAY
First Reading: [Sirach 48](#): 1-14 Gospel: [Matthew 6](#): 7-15

17 JUNE 2022 – FRIDAY
First Reading: [Second Kings 11](#): 1-4, 9-18, 20 Gospel: [Matthew 6](#): 19-23

18 JUNE 2022 – SATURDAY Ordinary Weekday / Optional
Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary
First Reading: [Second Chronicles 24](#): 17-25 Gospel: [Matthew 6](#): 24-34

19 JUNE 2022 – SUNDAY **THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST Solemnity**
First Reading: [Genesis 14](#): 18-20 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 110](#): 1, 2, 3, 4
Second Reading: [First Corinthians 11](#): 23-26 Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 11b-17

20 JUNE 2022 – MONDAY
First Reading: [Second Kings 17](#): 5-8, 13-15a, 18
Gospel: [Matthew 7](#): 1-5

21 JUNE 2022 – TUESDAY *Aloysius Gonzaga, Religious Obligatory Memorial*
First Reading: [Second Kings 19](#): 9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36
Gospel: [Matthew 7](#): 6, 12-14

22 JUNE 2022 – WEDNESDAY Ordinary Weekday
Paulinus of Nola, Bishop / John Fisher, Bishop, Martyr, and Thomas More, Married Man, Martyr
First Reading: [Second Kings 22](#): 8-13; 23: 1-3
Gospel: [Matthew 7](#): 15-20

23 JUNE 2022 – THURSDAY
NATIVITY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST Solemnity / Day
First Reading: [Isaiah 49](#): 1-6
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 139](#): 1b-3, 13-14ab, 14c-15
Second Reading: [Acts 13](#): 22-26 Gospel: [Luke 1](#): 57-66, 80

24 JUNE 2022 – FRIDAY **SACRED HEART OF JESUS Solemnity**
First Reading: [Ezekiel 34](#): 11-16
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 23](#): 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6
Second Reading: [Romans 5](#): 5b-11 Gospel: [Luke 15](#): 3-7

25 JUNE 2022 – SATURDAY
NATIVITY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST Solemnity / Vigil
First Reading: [Jeremiah 1](#): 4-10
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 71](#): 1-2, 3-4a, 5-6ab, 15ab and 17
Second Reading: [First Peter 1](#): 8-12 Gospel: [Luke 1](#): 5-17
OR
Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary
First Reading: [Lamentations 2](#): 2, 10-14, 18-19
Gospel: [Luke 2](#): 41-51

26 JUNE 2022 – SUNDAY Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
First Reading: [First Kings 19](#): 16b, 19-21
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 16](#): 1-2 and 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11
Second Reading: [Galatians 5](#): 1, 13-18 Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 51-62

27 JUNE 2022 – MONDAY Ordinary Weekday / *Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop, Doctor* First
Reading: [Amos 2](#): 6-10, 13-16 Gospel: [Matthew 8](#): 18-22

28 JUNE 2022 – TUESDAY
Irenaeus, Bishop, Martyr Obligatory Memorial
First Reading: [Amos 3](#): 1-8; 4: 11-12 Gospel: [Matthew 8](#): 23-27

29 JUNE 2022 – WEDNESDAY
PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES Solemnity / Vigil
First Reading: [Acts 3](#): 1-10
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 19](#): 2-3, 4-5
Second Reading: [Galatians 1](#): 11-20 Gospel: [John 21](#): 15-19

OR
PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES Solemnity / Day
First Reading: [Acts 12](#): 1-11
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 34](#): 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 Second
Reading: [Second Timothy 4](#): 6-8, 17-18 Gospel: [Matthew 16](#): 13-19

30 JUNE 2022 – THURSDAY Ordinary Weekday
First Martyrs of the Church of Rome
First Reading: [Amos 7](#): 10-17 Gospel: [Matthew 9](#): 1-8

1 JULY 2022 – FRIDAY Ordinary Weekday
Blessed Junipero Serra, Priest, Religious, Missionary
First Reading: [Amos 8](#): 4-6, 9-12 Gospel: [Matthew 9](#): 9-1

2 JULY 2022 – SATURDAY Ordinary Weekday / Optional
Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary
First Reading: [Amos 9](#): 11-15
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 85](#): 9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14
Alleluia: [John 10](#): 27 Gospel: [Matthew 9](#): 14-17

3 JULY 2022 – SUNDAY Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Isaiah 66](#): 10-14c
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 66](#): 1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16 and 20
 Second Reading: [Galatians 6](#): 14-18
 Alleluia: [Colossians 3](#): 15a, 16a Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 1-12, 17-20

4 JULY 2022 – MONDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Hosea 2](#): 16, 17c-18, 21-22
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 145](#): 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9
 Alleluia: [Second Timothy 1](#): 10 Gospel: [Matthew 9](#): 18-26

5 JULY 2022 – TUESDAY Ordinary Weekday

Elizabeth of Portugal, Married Woman / Anthony Mary Zaccaria, Priest, Religious Founder
 First Reading: [Hosea 8](#): 4-7, 11-13
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 115](#): 3-4, 5-6, 7ab-8, 9-10
 Alleluia: [John 10](#): 14 Gospel: [Matthew 9](#): 32-38

6 JULY 2022 – WEDNESDAY Ordinary Weekday

Maria Goretti, Virgin, Martyr First Reading: [Hosea 10](#): 1-3, 7-8, 12
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 105](#): 2-3, 4-5, 6-7
 Alleluia: [Mark 1](#): 15 Gospel: [Matthew 10](#): 1-7

7 JULY 2022 – THURSDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Hosea 11](#): 1-4, 8c-9
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 80](#): 2ac and 3b, 15-16
 Alleluia: [Mark 1](#): 15 Gospel: [Matthew 10](#): 7-15

8 JULY 2022 – FRIDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Hosea 14](#): 2-10
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 51](#): 3-4, 8-9, 12-13, 14 and 17
 Alleluia: [John 16](#): 13a; 14: 26d Gospel: [Matthew 10](#): 16-23

9 July 2022 – Saturday Ordinary Weekday

Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Augustine Zhao Rong, Priest, & Companions, Martyrs
 First Reading: [Isaiah 6](#): 1-8 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 93](#): 1ab, 1cd-2, 5
 Alleluia: [First Peter 4](#): 14 Gospel: [Matthew 10](#): 24-33

10 JULY 2022 – SUNDAY Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Deuteronomy 30](#): 10-14
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 69](#): 14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37
 or [Psalms 19](#): 8, 9, 10, 11 Second Reading: [Colossians 1](#): 15-20
 Alleluia: [John 6](#): 63c, 68c Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 25-37

11 JULY 2022 – MONDAY

Benedict, Abbot, Religious Founder Obligatory Memorial
 First Reading: [Isaiah 1](#): 10-17
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 50](#): 8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23
 Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 10 Gospel: [Matthew 10](#): 34 – 11: 1

12 JULY 2022 – TUESDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Isaiah 7](#): 1-9
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 48](#): 2-3a, 3b-4, 5-6, 7-8
 Alleluia: [Psalms 95](#): 8 Gospel: [Matthew 11](#): 20-24

13 July 2022 – Wednesday Ordinary Weekday

Henry, Married Man First Reading: [Isaiah 10](#): 5-7, 13b-16
 Gospel: [Matthew 11](#): 25-27

14 JULY 2022 – THURSDAY

Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha, Virgin Obligatory Memorial
 First Reading: [Isaiah 26](#): 7-9, 11, 16-19 Gospel: [Matthew 11](#): 28-30

15 JULY 2022 – FRIDAY

Bonaventure, Bishop, Religious, Doctor Obligatory Memorial
 First Reading: [Isaiah 38](#): 1-6, 21-22, 7-8
 Responsorial Psalm: [Isaiah 38](#): 10, 11, 12abcd, 16
 Gospel: [Matthew 12](#): 1-8

16 JULY 2022 – SATURDAY Ordinary Weekday

Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Our Lady of Mount Carmel
 First Reading: [Micah 2](#): 1-5
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 10](#): 1-2, 3-4, 7-8, 14
 Alleluia: [Second Corinthians 5](#): 19 Gospel: [Matthew 12](#): 14-21

17 JULY 2022 – SUNDAY Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Genesis 18](#): 1-10a
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 15](#): 2-3ab, 3cd-4, 5
 Second Reading: [Colossians 1](#): 24-28
 Alleluia: [Luke 8](#): 15 Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 38-42

18 JULY 2022 – MONDAY Ordinary Weekday

Camillus de Lellis, Priest
 First Reading: [Micah 6](#): 1-4, 6-8
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 50](#): 5-6, 8-9, 16bc-17, 21 and 23
 Alleluia: [Psalms 95](#): 8 Gospel: [Matthew 12](#): 38-42

19 JULY 2022 – TUESDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Micah 7](#): 14-15, 18-20 Gospel: [Matthew 12](#): 46-50

20 JULY 2022 – WEDNESDAY Ordinary Weekday

Apollinarius, Bishop, Martyr
 First Reading: [Jeremiah 1](#): 1, 4-10
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 71](#): 1-2, 3-4a, 5-6ab, 15 and 17
 Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 1-9

21 JULY 2022 – THURSDAY Ordinary Weekday

Lawrence of Brindisi, Priest, Religious, Doctor
 First Reading: [Jeremiah 2](#): 1-3, 7-8, 12-13
 Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 10-17

22 JULY 2022 – FRIDAY

Mary Magdalene, disciple of the Lord Obligatory Memorial
 First Reading: [Songs 3](#): 1-4b or [Second Corinthians 5](#): 14-17
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 63](#): 2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9
 Gospel: [John 20](#): 1-2, 11-18

23 JULY 2022 – SATURDAY Ordinary Weekday

Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Bridget of Sweden, Married Woman, Religious Founder
 First Reading: [Jeremiah 7](#): 1-11 Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 24-30

24 JULY 2022 – SUNDAY Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Genesis 18](#): 20-32
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 138](#): 1-2, 2-3, 6-7, 7-8
 Second Reading: [Colossians 2](#): 12-14 Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 1-13

25 JULY 2022 – MONDAY *James, Apostle Feast*

First Reading: [Second Corinthians 4](#): 7-15
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 138](#): 1bc-2ab, 2cd-3, 4-5, 6
 Alleluia: [John 15](#): 16 Gospel: [Matthew 20](#): 20-28

26 JULY 2022 – TUESDAY

Joachim and Anne, parents of the Virgin Mary Obligatory Memorial
 First Reading: [Jeremiah 14](#): 17-22
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 79](#): 8, 9, 11 and 13
 Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 36-43

27 JULY 2022 – WEDNESDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Jeremiah 15](#): 10, 16-21 Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 44-46

28 JULY 2022 – THURSDAY Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Jeremiah 18](#): 1-6 Gospel: [Matthew 13](#): 47-53

29 JULY 2022 – FRIDAY

Martha, disciple of the Lord Obligatory Memorial
 First Reading: [Jeremiah 26](#): 1-9
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 69](#): 5, 8-10, 14
 Alleluia: [John 8](#): 12 Gospel: [John 11](#): 19-27 or [Luke 10](#): 38-42

30 JULY 2022 – SATURDAY Ordinary Weekday

Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Peter Chrysologus, Bishop, Doctor
 First Reading: [Jeremiah 26](#): 11-16, 24
 Responsorial Psalm: [Psalms 69](#): 15-16, 30-31, 33-34
 Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 10 Gospel: [Matthew 14](#): 1-12

31 JULY 2022 – SUNDAY Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Ecclesiastes 1](#): 2; 2: 21-23
 Second Reading: [Colossians 3](#): 1-5, 9-11 Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 13-21

Weekday Celebration

June & July



3rd June: St. Charles Lwanga & his companions, *martyrs*

IN the Diocese of Banjul, we have a particular devotion to Charles Lwanga, the patron of one of our most lively parishes. Charles was born in 1865, and became a page at the court of King Mwanga II of Buganda, in what is now southern Uganda. The king forced himself immorally on the young men who served him. In 1886, he insisted that Catholics and other Christians at his court should abandon their faith. They refused, and were cruelly put to death. Among the king's victims were St. Charles Lwanga and St. Kizito. We pray, especially today, for the priests and people of St. Charles Lwanga, Fajikunda and of St. Kizito, Bakoteh.

11th June: St. Barnabas, *apostle*

BARNABAS was a Jew from the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, originally named Joseph. He was given his new name, Barnabas - which means 'son of consolation' - when he converted to Christianity soon after Pentecost. Barnabas was not one of the original twelve apostles, but was given the title of apostle because of his association with St. Paul, whom he introduced to the first Christian community. Barnabas was said to be the cousin of St. Mark, one of the Gospel writers. He went with Paul to Antioch, but later left Paul because of a disagreement, and accompanied Mark to Cyprus. Barnabas is said to have been stoned to death.

13th June: St Anthony of Padua, *doctor of the Church*

ANTHONY was born in Lisbon, Portugal in 1195. He wanted to work in North Africa, but was obliged, for health reasons, to work instead in Italy, where he gained renown as a preacher. Many traditions relate to miracles performed by St Anthony. He died in 1231, and his relics are preserved at Padua. Churches at Kololi and Kuntaur are dedicated to St. Anthony, as is the Cathedral in our neighbouring Diocese of Zinguinchor. We pray, especially today, for the priests and people in all three congregations.

22nd June: St. John Fisher & St. Thomas More, *martyrs*

JOHN Fisher was a Catholic bishop, who at the 16th-century Reformation in England, refused to take the oath of allegiance to King Henry VIII as head of the Church of England. Thomas More was a learned and devout man, who as Chancellor of England, had been very close to the king. He also refused. Both men were beheaded in 1535.

24th June: Nativity of St. John the Baptist

IN earlier times, the Nativity of John the Baptist was a great holiday throughout Europe, almost like Christmas. In

today's Church, it is honoured as a solemnity - a major holy day. John was the last of the Old Testament prophets, and the forerunner of Christ. John's importance is underlined in all four Gospels, but only St. Luke tells of his birth (Luke, chapters 1 and 2). Jesus said of John, 'I tell you, among those born of women, none is greater than John.' (Luke 7:28)

28th June: Sacred Heart of Jesus

THE SACRED Heart is a Catholic devotion to the heart of Jesus as representing his love for all humanity. It derives from the visions of a 17th-century French sister, St. Marguerite Marie Alacoque. This day has been a solemnity since 1856. Many churches, schools, hospitals and religious houses are dedicated to the Sacred Heart, and many Catholic homes display a picture of the Sacred Heart.

29th June: St. Peter & St. Paul, *apostles*

PETER played the leading part in the ministry of Jesus and in the life of the first Christian communities in Jerusalem and Rome. He and his brother Andrew, were fishermen, summoned by Jesus to be 'fishers of men'. Peter was married and took his wife with him on his missionary journeys. His first name was Simon, but when he recognised his Master as Christ, Jesus conferred on him the name of Peter, saying, 'You are Peter (Greek, Petros), and upon this rock (petra) I will build my church.' The Church teaches that 'You are Peter' authenticates the office of the Pope as St. Peter's successor, reinforced by the granting to Peter of the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the commission given to Peter by Jesus after the resurrection: 'Feed my sheep.'

PAUL is known as 'the Apostle to the Gentiles'. His first name was Saul, born of Jewish parents who were Roman citizens - which would later give Paul the right to be sent to Rome for trial. Saul was brought up a Pharisee. He opposed the new Christian sect, and took part in the stoning of Stephen, the first martyr. This led to his conversion on the road to Damascus, when he was blinded, and heard a voice saying, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.' Saul took the name of Paul and returned to Damascus to preach Christ. His field of activity was among the gentiles. The vivid account of Paul's missionary journeys given in the Acts of the Apostles ends with his preaching the Gospel in Rome for two whole years, while awaiting trial. Thirteen of Paul's letters to Christian communities appear in the New Testament.

3rd July: St. Thomas, *apostle*

THOMAS was one of the twelve apostles. His name comes from the Arabic for 'twin' (in Greek, Didymus). Although frightened, Thomas went with Jesus to Bethany when the news came that Jesus' friend Lazarus was sick (John 11:16). At the Last Supper, when Jesus told the

apostles that he was going from them to prepare a place for them, Thomas said: 'Lord, we do not know where you are going; and how can we know the way?' Jesus' reply was: 'I am the way, the truth and the life' (John 14:2-6). Thomas earned the nickname 'Doubting Thomas' because he found it hard to believe that the other apostles had seen the risen Jesus. But, when Jesus appeared and showed Thomas his wounds, Thomas exclaimed, 'My Lord and my God!' (John 20:26-29).

9th July: St. Augustine Zhao Rong and the martyrs of China

AUGUSTINE Zhao Rong was a Chinese priest who was martyred in 1815. One of his companions, 18-year-old Chi Zhuzi, who'd had his arm cut off and was about to be flayed, cried, 'Every piece of my flesh, every drop of my blood, will tell you that I am a Christian.' Today, the Church honours 119 saints martyred in China between the mid-17th century and 1930.

11th July: St. Benedict

BENEDICT - the 'Father of Western Monasticism' - was born into a noble family around 480. While studying in Rome, he was much influenced by the teachings of St. Jerome and St. Augustine. He retired to a hermit's life, and his sanctity attracted other solitaries. Benedict eventually established twelve monasteries. At Mount Cassino, where he became abbot, he established a wise and humane rule based on vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

22nd July: St. Mary Magdalene

MARY came from Magdala in Galilee. Jesus rescued her from possession by devils (Luke 8:2). Mary watched from afar when Jesus was crucified (Mark 15:10). Weeping at his tomb, she asked the risen Christ, whom she took to be the gardener, what had happened to Jesus' body. He simply replied, 'Mary,' and she at once recognised him (John 20:11-18). Mary is sometimes identified as the sister of Lazarus and as the sinner who anointed Jesus' feet. But this is not stated in the Gospels.

24th July: St. Sharbel Makhlūf, *priest*

JOSEPH Zaroun Makhlūf was born in 1828, son of a mule-driver in a Lebanese village. His father died when he was only three, and he was brought up by an uncle. At 23, Joseph joined the Monastery of St. Maron at Annaya,

taking the name 'Sharbel' in honour of a 2nd-century martyr. He was ordained in 1859. From 1875, like the 5th-century St. Maron, he lived as a hermit, following a strict fast. He was devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. He died on Christmas Eve 1898. Christians and non-Christians soon made Sharbel's tomb a place of pilgrimage and cures. In 1965, Pope Paul VI beatified him, and canonised him 12 years later. We pray, especially today, for the Lebanese community in The Gambia.

25th July: St. James *apostle*

JAMES and his brother John, were sons of a Galilean fisherman. They were among the first to be called by Jesus. Together with Peter, they witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter. They saw Christ transfigured and his agony in Gethsemane. James and John were rebuked by Jesus when they asked to sit by his throne when he came into His kingdom (Mark 10:39). James was beheaded on the order of Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:1-3). He is called 'the Great' to distinguish him from another apostle, James 'the Less', who became bishop in Jerusalem. The Catholic school at Kity 2 is named in honour of St. James.

29th July: St. Martha

MARTHA lived in Bethany with her sister Mary, and her brother, Lazarus. When Jesus visited their house, Martha provided for his needs. At her request, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. We pray today for members past and present of St. Martha's Society in The Gambia, founded in 1973.

31st July: St. Ignatius of Loyola *priest*

BORN into the Spanish nobility in 1491, Ignatius became a soldier. He was converted while recovering from wounds. After a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he studied in Spain and France. In 1537, he was ordained, and with Frances Xavier and others, he established the Jesuit Order. Two years later, Pope Paul III approved the Order, and Ignatius was Jesuit General until his death in Rome in 1556, by when the Jesuits had branches in Italy, Spain, India and Brazil. The Jesuits were the most important force in the Catholic Counter-Reformation and a bulwark of the papacy. Ignatius laid the foundations of Jesuit schools, and his 'Spiritual Exercises' are still widely valued.

*Omnes Sancti et Sanctæ Dei, intercedite pro nobis.
All holy men and women of God, intercede for us.*

The Pope's Prayer Intentions

June - *For families*

We pray for Christian families around the world; may they embody and experience unconditional love and advance in holiness in their daily lives.

July - *For the elderly*

We pray for the elderly, who represent the roots and memory of a people; may their experience and wisdom help young people to look towards the future with hope and responsibility.

PLEASE NOTE THE RAINS ARE HERE AGAIN!!!!

WILL this year's rains be what our farmers need? Those who live in Greater Banjul may think of the rains as a nuisance: leaks in the roof, flooding in the streets, more mosquitoes. But for our farmers, rainfall at the right time and in the right quantity is well-nigh essential. At this time of year, let's remind ourselves that our farmers' needs are greater than those of the rest of us.

Gambian Christian

Anniversaries

June & July

21st June, 1900: Death, aged 44, of Fr. Charles Amman, Superior of the Catholic Mission since 1889. (In the Cathedral there is a plaque to his memory.)

22nd June, 1924 (Corpus Christi): Ordination by Bishop Le Hunsec of Dakar, in the Cathedral at Banjul, (then a parish church) of a citizen of Banjul, Fr. Joseph Charles Mendy. There were now four priests serving in the Mission.

20th June, 1930: Celebration of Fr. John Meehan's Silver Jubilee as a priest. Having arrived here in 1905, Fr. Meehan had been Superior since 1908. He was presented with the Mission's first motor car.

20th June, 1937: In Dublin, ordination to the priesthood of Fr. Michael Moloney CSSp, who was later to become First Bishop of Banjul.

9th June, 1949: It was announced in The Gambia Gazette that Edward Lloyd-Evans had been awarded the MBE.

15th July, 1951: Ordination in Dublin of Fr. Reginald Gillooly CSSp. He arrived in The Gambia the following year.

1st July, 1956: Ordination in Dublin of the priest-scholar Fr. Myles Fay CSSp, who subsequently served in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, the US, Rome and The Gambia. He died in Dublin on 2nd February 2006.

28th July, 1958: Work began on the building of the tower at the Cathedral.

3rd June, 1965: Departure of Fr. William Costelloe, who had first arrived in 1952.

27th July, 1973: Departure of Fr. Seamus Fleming. Since his arrival in 1962, he had principally worked around Basse and Bwiam.

19th June, 1977: Departure of Fr. Thomas Tarmey, who arrived in 1959.

15th July, 1985: The St. Vincent de Paul Society, founded in The Gambia in 1968, formed a national council.

21st May, 1995: Opening of St. Kizito's Church, Bakoteh.

25th June, 1995: Opening of St. John the Baptist's Church, Tenene.

8th June, 1996: Death of Justice Solomon Njie.

21st June, 1997: Opening of the new St. John the Baptist's Church, Farafenni.

24th June, 1997: Opening of Holy Trinity Church, Kafuta.

25th July, 2000: Death of Archbishop Johannes Dyba, first Papal Nuncio to The Gambia.

16th July, 2001: Death in Banjul, aged 90, of Sr. Albert Byrne SJC, who had served in The Gambia since 1935.

29th July, 2003: The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd. Rowan Williams, began a visit to The Gambia.

2nd July, 2006: Death, aged 86, of Cecilia Cole, teacher, magistrate, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and staunch Methodist.

8th July, 2006: Ordination at Kanifing, by Bishop Robert Ellison, of Fr. Michael Gomez CSSp.

9th July, 2006: Fr. Joseph Boafo CSSp bade farewell to the people of Stella Maris Parish, where he had spent 10 years as Parish Priest.

28th June, 2007: Bishop Robert Ellison appointed a nine member Diocesan Finance Committee, to serve for five years.

5th July, 2007: Death of Edward Paul Mansal, who had retired in July the previous year as Principal of St. Edward's Senior Secondary School, Bwiam.

5th - 8th June, 2008: Visit to The Gambia of Cardinal Theodore-Adrien Sarr, Archbishop of Dakar.

11th June, 2009: The 25th anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel was celebrated at an 'Open Day' at GPI.

13th June, 2009: Bishop Ellison and ten priests concelebrated Mass at the out-station Church of St. Paul, Makumbaya, to mark the end of the Year of St. Paul.

8th June, 2010: Fr. Matthias Murphy CSSp told the congregation at Holy Spirit, Banjul, that he was about to retire after many years as their Parish Priest.

9th-11th July, 2010: As part of the Youth Festival, a procession was held from St. Charles Lwanga, Fajikunda to St. Peter's, Lamin.

21st-23rd June, 2012: Senegalese and Gambian priests met at Kaolack to discuss co-operation between their dioceses.

27th June, 2014: Among speakers at GPI, to mark the end of the pastoral year, T.G.G. Senghore spoke on the history of the Catholic Mission in The Gambia.

8th-17th June, 2015: Visit of a former priest at Basse and Bansang in the late 1980s and early 90s, the Rt. Revd. John Kwofie CSSp, Bishop of Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana.

26th June, 2016: Fr. Peter Lopez, former Parish Priest at Blessed Sacrament, Kanifing, blessed four bells. They were unveiled on 3rd July by Bishop Ellison.

24th June, 2017: Bishop Ellison celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral to mark the 60th anniversary of the creation of the Diocese of Banjul by Pope Pius XII.

During June, 2017: Four Salesian priests visited the Diocese to explore the possibility of establishing a ministry at Kunkujang Mariama. They are now serving there.

7th July, 2017: Philip Saine launched his book, 'Challenges to Gambian Churches during Yahya Jammeh's Era'.

22-24th June, 2018: The National Youth Cross celebration attracted young people from every parish, together with Anglicans, Methodists and evangelical Christians. Sixty young people from the Dioceses of Dakar, Kaolack and Kolda participated in the event.

19th June, 2021: Death of Rev. Fr. Louis T. Mendy C.S.Sp in Scotland. A vigil and memorial mass was held for him at the Holy Family Church, Banjul, The Gambia on 1st & 2nd July, 2021. The mass, burial rites and interment were done in Scotland on the 2nd July, 2021.

1st July, 2021: Death of Rev. Fr. Peter Gomez in Banjul, The Gambia. The Vigil was held at St. Kizito's Parish, on 15th July, 2021, the mass and burial rites at St. Therese's Parish, Kanifing on 16th July, 2021 and interment at the Banjul Cemetery.

June and July

*Saviour of the world, by your Cross and
Resurrection you have set us free.*



Our Sunday Readings

5th June, 2022

Pentecost Sunday, Year C

1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3B-7, 12-13

Or: Romans 8:8-17 / Or Galatians 5:16-25

Gospel: John 20:19-23

Homily Theme: Pentecost! Receive the Holy Spirit –
John 20:19-23

Reflection: Today is Pentecost Sunday. This is the day that God sent to us a helper after Jesus returned to our Heavenly Father. The helper is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our advocate in all our times of hardships and comfort. He will keep reminding us of everything that Jesus taught us while He was here on earth. He will also be providing good counsel always when we fall into temptations.

Jesus, today, is sending the Holy Spirit to us and at the same time sending us forth to the world to proclaim the Good News. He knows that it will not be an easy task to proclaim the Gospel to the world. The world is full of evil and persecutions. The Holy Spirit will be with us to strengthen our faith and hope when we face turbulence from the evil one.

12th June, 2022

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, Year C

1st Reading: Proverbs 8:22-31

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

2nd Reading: Romans 5:1-5

Alleluia: Revelation 1:8

Gospel: John 16:12-15

Homily Theme: Everything that the father has is mine –
John 16:14-15

Reflection: “Everything that the Heavenly Father has belongs to Jesus Christ!”

It can be confusing, because from our human imagination, we can think that God the Father and the Holy Spirit don't own anything. The truth is that, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, is in essence one entity. It is the Almighty God manifesting Himself in the three forms.

The Holy Spirit will declare to us what is Holy as the Heavenly Father and the Son are. He will lead us to all truth, and God is Truth.

19th June, 2022

*Corpus Christi – The Solemnity of the Most Holy
Body and Blood of Christ, Year C*

1st Reading: Genesis 14:18-20

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 110:1, 2, 3, 4

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Alleluia: John 6:51

Gospel: Luke 9:11B-17

Homily Theme: Jesus feeds five thousand men – Luke
9:14-17

Reflection: Jesus manifested Himself as the Food that lasts forever. He revealed that He is the Bread of Life, Bread that never gets finished.

Out of only two fish and five loaves of bread, Jesus feeds a mammoth crowd, who among them were a whopping five thousand men. This was a miracle. What human beings can't comprehend, we call it a miracle. Jesus looked up to heaven and blessed the loaves and fish the same way He did during the Last Supper, when He said, “Take this all of you and eat it, for this is my body.”

Today, we are celebrating the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, The Corpus Christi. We celebrate the Transubstantiation of the Bread and Wine offered at the altar into The Most Holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. We always do this during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, I love You, trust You and believe in You. Forgive me my sins, so that when I receive Your Body and Blood, I may live in You and You in me forever. **Amen**

26th June, 2022

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

1st Reading: 1 Kings 19:16B, 19-21

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11

2nd Reading: Galatians 5:1, 13-18

Alleluia: 1 Samuel 3:9; John 6:68C

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

Homily Theme: Let the dead bury their dead

Reflection: Today, Jesus is teaching us about our priorities in this world. Our number-one priority and mandate are to serve God by proclaiming the Kingdom of God. Most of us usually think that our day-to-day life is more important than the core mandate of our very existence. God created us to Know Him, Love Him, Serve Him and Glorify Him all the days of our lives.

Jesus tells us today not to be distracted by anything else while we are on the course of serving God. It may sound

rude for Jesus to tell us that we should not bury our dead or departed loved ones or we should not bid our family and friends goodbye when embarking on a journey. But, the salient message here is, do not give other people or things more preference over God. Let us today know that Knowing God, Loving, Serving and Glorifying Him is our core mandate and our priority over other worldly affairs that preoccupy us.

3rd July, 2022

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

1st Reading: Isaiah 66:10-14c

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20

2nd Reading: Galatians 6:14-18

Alleluia: Colossians 3:15a, 16a

Gospel: Luke 10:1-12, 17-20 or Luke 10:1-9

Homily Theme: I am sending you like lambs among Wolves – Luke 10:1-12

Reflection: Today, Jesus is sending all of us to the whole world to proclaim the Good News. Just as Jesus says, the harvest is abundant, but those who have gone to gather, are very few. Even after sending us to the world to preach the Good News, He does not guarantee us a smooth sailing. This is not because He also faced the same rejection, but because the comfort of this world would not lead us to heaven, but the absence of it. Self sacrifice of the earthly pleasures, wealth, joy and comfort is what Jesus is advocating for. He tells us to carry no money, bag, no sack, no sandals. He also warns us not to be distracted by peoples' earthly pleasures, bad utterances, insults, ridicule or persecutions as we endeavour to proclaim the Good News.

Jesus wants us to embrace humility, love and peace as we go out there to proclaim His Kingdom. That is why He tells us to eat, drink and sleep in the homes of those who welcome us. This is a good example of what happens to our priests when they are sent to our parishes. We provide food, upkeep funds and shelter for them. They are not supposed to get it elsewhere.

10th July, 2022

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 30:10-14

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36-37 Or Psalms 19:8-11

2nd Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Alleluia: John 6:63C, 68C

Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

Homily Theme: The Parable of the Good Samaritan – who is my neighbour? – Luke 10:25-37

Reflection: You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself – **Luke 10:27**. This verse sums up the commandment of love as given by Jesus. The parable of the good Samaritan is all about love. Your neighbour is someone who, regardless of their tribe, race, nationality, gender or creed, will come to your help during your greatest time of need without

expecting any reward in return. Jesus is today telling us that the psychological barriers that we have put in our heads and hearts like race, tribe, religion etc., are not important and always drive us away from embracing God's Love. When you think that you cannot help someone because they adhere to a different faith, that makes you a sinner because you have gone against the commandment of love.

17th July, 2022

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

1st Reading: Genesis 18:1-10A

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 15:2-3A, 3BC-4AB, 5

2nd Reading: Colossians 1:24-28

Alleluia: Luke 8:15

Gospel: Luke 10:38-42

Homily Theme: Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things – Luke 10:38-42

Reflection: It is our human instincts or behaviour that tell us that when a visitor comes to our home, we should cater for their needs, like food, drink and comfort. I am sure all of us would have done like Martha and despise Mary for being lazy and unhelpful. But today, Jesus has a different message for us, that when we are in the presence of the Lord, we should leave other activities and concentrate on listening to His Good News.

How is this verse applicable in our world today? This is how. Yes, we have different careers, jobs, businesses and professions, and have to dedicate our time for them, because we still praise and serve God through them. But, when we are called upon to dedicate our time to be in the presence of God, let's give 100% of our time and concentration doing just that.

24th July, 2022

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C

1st Reading: Genesis 18:20-32

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 138:1-2, 2-3, 6-7, 7-8

2nd Reading: Colossians 2:12-14

Alleluia: Romans 8:15BC

Gospel: Luke 11:1-13

Homily Theme: Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you – (Luke 11:1-13 and Matthew 7:7-12)

Reflection: Jesus today teaches us how to pray and the importance of praying for something over and over again. The main theme about this teaching is how God promises to provide for us anything we need in order to continue doing the work He created us to do. Here, God's providence is premised on the fact that we are doing what is according to His Holy Will. If it is against His will, then our prayers will not be answered.

Now, let's assume that what we are praying for is good and according to God's Holy Will. Jesus clarifies that we will never lack anything we pray for in His Name. What we ask for, we will get, what we seek we will find and whatever door we knock will be opened for us. This is in order to make sure God's work is done. Jesus knows very

well that we will encounter many hurdles and obstacles in our bid to do God's work. That is why He assures us His full support in case we run into them.

All we need to do is to know God and the work He wants us to do for Him here on earth. Once we discern and know that, the rest will fall into place. For God created all of us with a purpose. He is happy when we fulfill this purpose and gets angry when we deviate from that purpose. God created us to know, love, serve, praise and glorify Him all the days of our lives.

31st July, 2022

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

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

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

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

Alleluia: Matthew 5:3

Gospel: Luke 12:13-21

Homily Theme: You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you – Luke 12:13-21

Reflection: You know, most of us have been taken captive by money and material wealth. Some others by promiscuity and idolatry, others by administrative and political power. These are some of the things that are driving a wedge between us and God. Jesus knows very well that people tend to start worshipping all these earthly things and forget our God, who in the first place, is the owner of us human beings, together with all these wealth we are boasting with. Jesus tells us that God, the giver of life, will demand that life from us on the last day, and depending on where we stored our treasures, our souls will be taken to that destination. Now, how do you store treasures in the Kingdom of God? You do that by knowing God, loving Him, serving Him, praising and glorifying Him all the days of your life. You serve God by using the wealth he has given to you to serve His church and the least of your brothers, like the sick, prisoners, people living with disabilities etc.

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

HOLY MASS AND CANONIZATION OF THE BLESSEDS:

- Titus Brandsma
- Lazzaro, detto Devasahayam
- César de Bus
- Luigi Maria Palazzolo
- Giustino Maria Russolillo
- Charles de Foucauld
- Maria Rivier
- Maria Francesca di Gesù Rubatto
- Maria di Gesù Santocanale
- Maria Domenica Mantovani

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

***St Peter's Square
Sunday, 15 May 2022***

We have heard what Jesus told his disciples before leaving this world and returning to the Father. He told us what it means to be a Christian: “Even as I have loved you, so you must love one another” (Jn 13:34). This is the legacy that Christ bequeathed to us, the ultimate criterion for discerning whether or not we are truly his disciples. It is the commandment of love. Let us stop to consider two essential elements of this commandment: Jesus' love for us – “as I have loved you” – and the love he asks us to show to others – “so you must love one another”.

First, the words “as I have loved you”. How did Jesus love us? To the very end, to the total gift of himself. It is striking to think that he spoke these words on that night of darkness, when the atmosphere in the Upper Room was one of deep emotion and anxiety: deep emotion, because the Master was about to bid farewell to his disciples; anxiety because he had said that one of them would betray him. We can imagine the sorrow that filled the heart of Jesus, the

dark clouds that were gathering in the hearts of the apostles, and their bitterness at seeing Judas who, after receiving the morsel dipped for him by the Master, left the room to enter into the night of betrayal. Yet at the very hour of his betrayal, Jesus reaffirmed his love for his own. For amid the darkness and tempests of life, that is the most important thing of all: God loves us.

Brothers and sisters, may this message be the core of our own faith and all the ways in which we express it: “... not that we loved God but that he loved us” (1 Jn 4:10). Let us never forget this. Our abilities and our merits are not the central thing, but rather the unconditional, free and unmerited love of God. Our Christian lives begin not with doctrine and good works, but with the amazement born of realizing that we are loved, prior to any response on our part. While the world frequently tries to convince us that we are valued only for what we can produce, the Gospel reminds us of the real truth of life: *we are loved*. A contemporary spiritual writer put it this way: “Long before any human being saw us, we were seen by God's loving eyes. Long before anyone heard us cry or laugh, we were heard by our God, who is all ears for us. Long before any person spoke to us in this world, we were spoken to by the voice of eternal love” (H. NOUWEN, *Life of the Beloved*). He loved us first; he waits for us; he keeps loving us. This is our identity: we are God's loved ones. This is our strength: we are loved by God.



Story Cont'd at the back page

HOLY MASS AND CANONIZATION OF THE BLESSEDS:

Cont'd from page 19

Acknowledging this truth requires a conversion in the way we often think of holiness. At times, by over-emphasizing our efforts to do good works, we have created an ideal of holiness excessively based on ourselves, our personal heroics, our capacity for renunciation, our readiness for self-sacrifice to achieve a reward. This can at times appear as an overly “pelagian” way of viewing life and holiness. We have turned holiness into an unattainable goal. We have separated it from everyday life, instead of looking for it and embracing it in our daily routines, in the dust of the streets, in the trials of real life and, in the words of Teresa of Avila to her Sisters, “among the pots and pans”. Being disciples of Jesus and advancing on the path of holiness means first and foremost letting ourselves be transfigured by the power of God’s love. Let us never forget the primacy of God over self, of the Spirit over the flesh, of grace over works. For we at times give more importance to self, flesh and works. No, the primacy is that of God over self, of the Spirit over the flesh, of grace over works.

The love that we receive from the Lord is the force that transforms our lives. It opens our hearts and enables us to love. For this reason, Jesus says – here is the second element – “*as I have loved you, so must you love one another*”. That word “*as*” is not simply an invitation to imitate Jesus’ love; it tells us that we are able to love only because he has loved us, because he pours into our hearts his own Spirit, the Spirit of holiness, love that heals and transforms. As a result, we can make decisions and perform works of love in every situation and for every brother and sister whom we meet, because we ourselves are loved and we have the power to love. As I myself am loved, so I can love others. The love I give is united to Jesus’ love for me. “*As*” he loved me, so I can love others. The Christian life is just that simple. Let’s not make it more complicated with so many things. It is just that simple.

In practice, what does it mean to live this love? Before giving us this commandment, Jesus had washed the disciples’ feet; then, after giving it, he gave himself up to the wood of the cross. To love means this: *to serve* and *to give one’s life*. *To serve*, that is, not to put our own interests first: to clear our systems of the poison of greed and competitiveness; to fight the cancer of indifference and the worm of self-referentiality; to share the charisms and gifts that God has given us. Specifically, we should ask ourselves, “What do I do for others?” That is what it means to love, to go about our daily lives in a spirit of service, with unassuming love and without seeking any recompense.

Then, *to give one’s life*. This is about more than simply offering something of ours to others; it is about giving them our very selves. I like to ask people who seek my counsel whether they give alms. And if they do, whether they touch the hand of the recipient or simply, antiseptically, throw down the alms. Those people usually blush and say no. And I ask whether, in giving alms, they look the person in the eye, or look the other way. They say



no. Touching and looking, touching and looking at the flesh of Christ who suffers in our brothers and sisters. This is very important; it is what it means *to give one’s life*.

Holiness does not consist of a few heroic gestures, but of many small acts of daily love. “Are you called to the consecrated life? So many of you are here today! Then be holy by living out your commitment with joy. Are you married? Be holy by loving and caring for your husband or wife, as Christ does for the Church. Do you work for a living? Be holy by labouring with integrity and skill in the service of your brothers and sisters, by fighting for justice for your comrades, so that they do not remain without work, so that they always receive a just wage. Are you a parent or grandparent? Be holy by patiently teaching the little ones how to follow Jesus. Tell me, are you in a position of authority? So many people in authority are here today! Then be holy by working for the common good and renouncing personal gain” (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, 14). This is the path of holiness, and it is so simple! To see Jesus always in others.

To serve the Gospel and our brothers and sisters, to offer our lives without expecting anything in return, any worldly glory: this is a secret and it is our calling. That was how our fellow travellers canonized today lived their holiness. By embracing with enthusiasm their vocation – as a priest, as a consecrated woman, as a lay person – they devoted their lives to the Gospel. They discovered an incomparable joy and they became brilliant reflections of the Lord of history. For that is what a saint is: a luminous reflection of the Lord of history.

May we strive to do the same. The path of holiness is not barred; it is universal and it starts with Baptism. Let us strive to follow it, for each of us is called to holiness, to a form of holiness all our own. Holiness is always “original”, as Blessed Carlo Cutis used to say: it is not a photocopy, but an “original”, mine, yours, all of ours. It is uniquely our own. Truly, the Lord has a plan of love for everyone. He has a dream for your life, for my life, for the life of each of us. What else can I say? Pursue that dream with joy.

