



# The Diocese of Banjul NEWSLETTER

*Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter*

## Beyond Sad!

**A National Tragedy, An Embarrassment to the Nation, And Every Gambian Should Be Mourning**

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**THE ROSARY  
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**Praying the Rosary  
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# DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

## *Our Mission and Vision*

**W**e 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.

**D**ioocese 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.

**D**ioocese 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

## Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child

**T**his proverb ‘spare the rod and spoil the child’ is a popular saying which comes from the Bible, where the verse reads, “He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him” (Proverbs 13:24). Simply put, it mandates all parents and care-givers to discipline their children when they do the wrong things.

Discipline is a very important part of life, without which no one can stand or walk or succeed in life. Adults have a responsibility and a duty of care to help our young ones control misbehavior. That requires, in any given situation, the most effective disciplinary response available. But in the end, the child needs to be assured of love and care from his parents or guardian and repeated coaching for acceptable standards of behavior.

However, harsh discipline and discipline differ. Camel treatment, severe beatings, and inhuman punishments can make child’s mind sick and complicated. He/she will be unable to lead a normal life. Can you expect such a person to be sincere, loyal, loving and successful? Never. He will always be a burden to society, and to his own self. Children who are abused, carry an unforgettable burning scar for their whole life, and whenever they get the chance, they pay back in full. In a child’s world, environment plays a very important part.

In biblical times, the rod was often used by shepherds to herd sheep. The main purpose of the rod was to guide the sheep and protect them from danger, not to hit them. This fact is supported by another verse: “Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23). In the Bible, good parenting is based on showing children love and respect, guiding them, teaching them and protecting them from harm.

Some parents fail to protect their children from harm. In fact, some tend to help their children get loose and out of control. There have been cases where parents fought teachers for seizing their children’s mobile phones when they use them to distract themselves during lessons at school. Every parent knows that, misuse of Smartphones by school children has negative impacts on the children’s learning and overall academic performance. The greater the use of a phone while studying, the greater the negative impact on learning. The skills and cognitive abilities students needed for academic success are negatively affected by inappropriate phone use. Therefore, it is an act of discipline to correct the practice of misusing phones by our children. It is a part of discipline. Discipline leads to an organized, successful and happy future life for everyone.

It is notable that, the mass failure of our students in the just concluded 2022 West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) is in part caused by lack of discipline on the part of our school children. Though the teachers and policy makers have their own blame basically, lack of discipline among school children is a major cause of poor academic performance, high dropout rate, etc.

Therefore, it is the duty of parents, teachers, school authorities, policy makers, stakeholders and society at large, not to spare the rod of discipline in moulding our children into morally upright citizens, and enable them succeed academically and in other life-pursuits; for them to participate in national development; and yet we have ended up failing to achieve this goal. In fact, this has translated into a great loss of the human resource, which are students who have not benefited academically and morally, after going through the school process, as evident in the mass failure in the last 2022 West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination. The rod of discipline should not be spared in bringing up our children. It is a pre-requisite for their future success and happiness.

## THE DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

### APPEAL FOR SUPPORT

**W**e 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.

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, 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.***

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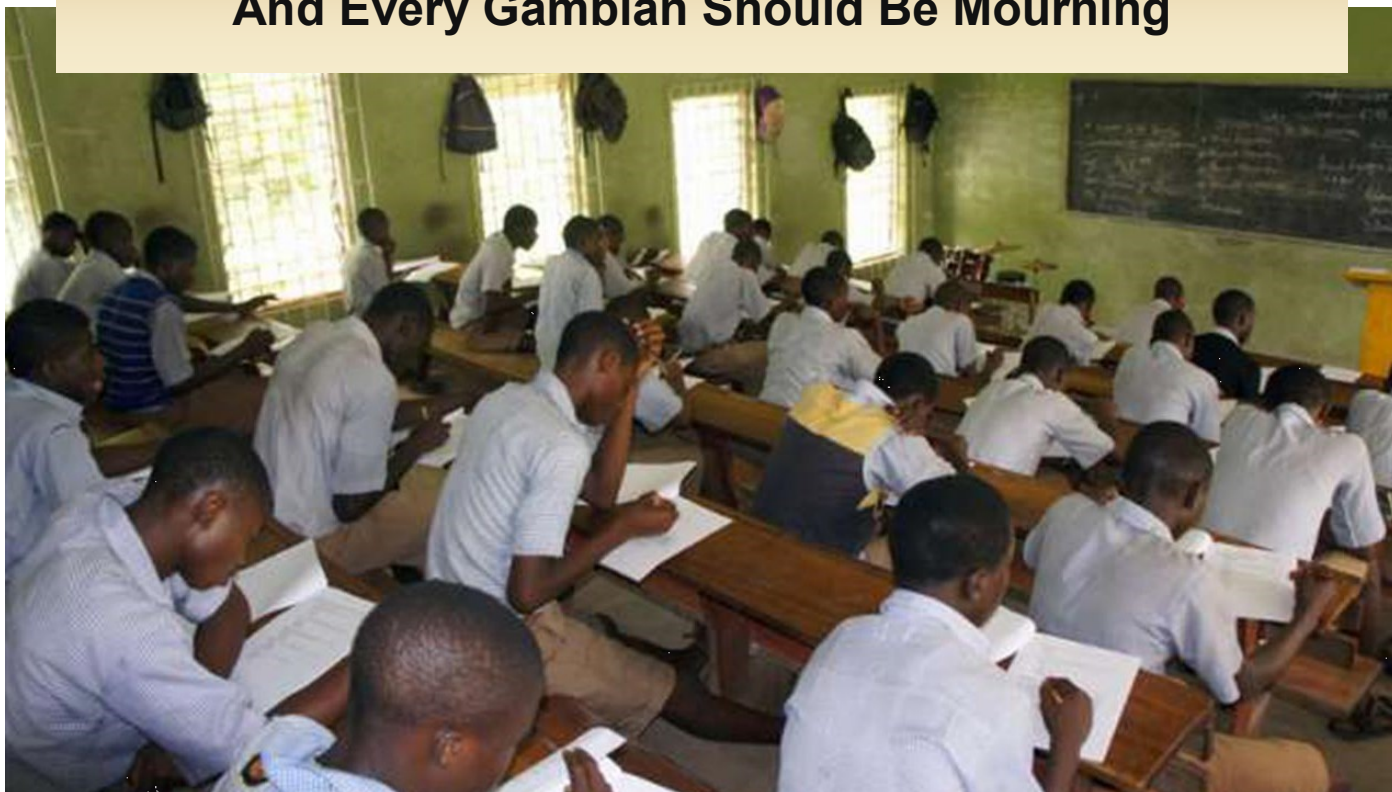
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## COVER STORY

# Beyond Sad!

## A National Tragedy, An Embarrassment to the Nation, And Every Gambian Should Be Mourning



**I**t has become very visible that, one of the major problems facing the educational system in The Gambia is the abysmal failure of students in public examinations, particularly at the secondary level of education. The high percentage of candidates who fail West African Senior Schools Certificate Examination (WASSCE) yearly is reflected in the low percentage of the candidates that meet the university admission requirements. Over the years, the trend shows a large majority of students without five credit passes with English Language and Mathematics. But, the results of the 2022, WASSCE are worst in the trend, and can be considered a national disaster and a big embarrassment to the families of the students and the nation, in general.

The situation is so pathetic that stakeholders keep on wondering why the level of education has persistently failed to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the society. Apart from the fact that the mass failure of students in public examinations constitutes wastage of investment in secondary education, it puts a big question mark on the quality of secondary education in the country. Each time the WASSCE results of students are released, it has been a tale of woes and national embarrassment.

Every right thinking person in this country ought to be shocked and devastated by the 2022 WASSCE results which showed that, out of almost 16, 000 students who sat for the examination in this country, less than 800 passed with five credits. About 1.8% passed with five credits and more, including English and Mathematics, required for admission into University of The Gambia. The result is one of the most dismal performances in the history of public examinations in this country, and we all should be mourning for this national tragedy.

This troubling and painful development is a true reflection of the deep rot in the nation's educational

system. Till date, since the release of the catastrophic results, the myriad of stakeholders have continued to trade blames on the causes of mass failure of students in public examinations. Some people past the blame on government, some on parents, some on society and students themselves, with the teachers having the lion share of the blame.

But, the fact remains that, mass failure of our students in public examinations could be traced to several factors that can be compartmentalized into the domains of parents, students, teachers, schools, government and the society. In other words, the causes of mass failure of the students in the public examinations are multi-dimensional in nature. Parents play significant roles in the education of their children and wards. Apart from the fact they pay school fees and other levies, they buy textbooks, uniforms and other materials required by their children and wards. In addition to this, they are expected to supervise their academic work and give them good moral training. They are also expected to visit schools, from time to time, to find out how their children and wards are behaving, with a view to taking corrective measures, where and when necessary. However, the failure of parents to play these roles negatively affect the academic performance of the students.

Also, the parents' inability to provide breakfast, textbooks and basic school needs for their children, less interaction with children's teachers and less involvement in the Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) result in poor academic performance of students. Insufficient family income and family type also contribute lead to poor academic performance. Moreover, another cause that could be traced to the parents include, lack of proper guidance for their children.

Furthermore, the importance of teachers in the educational attainment of the students cannot be



overemphasized. The quantity and quality of instructional delivery by the teacher will, to a large extent, determine the academic performance of the students. This perhaps usually prompts some parents to enroll their children in private schools, where better academic performance appears to be guaranteed, as a result of more supervision and higher quality of instructional delivery. Therefore, based on this, poor academic performance of students is largely blamed on the teachers who are regarded as the custodian of knowledge, skills and values required by the students to excel in various aspects of life. Others include teachers' absenteeism, inability to complete the syllabi and less interest in children's understanding of lessons, as well as poor methods of teaching and lack of resourcefulness in teaching.

On the other hand, evidence abounds to show that students are responsible for their poor academic performance. Poor study habits, psychological adjustment problems, lack of interest in schooling programme, low retention, association with wrong peers, low achievement motivation and emotional problems contribute to poor academic performance of most students. Lack of adequate financial support, absenteeism, truancy, use of local language in the classroom, lack of interest and joy in teachers' lessons and learning disability cause poor academic performance of students. Other causes include low cognitive ability, gender prematurity, medical problems and inability of students to understand examination questions.

In addition, the Gambian school system has its own share of the blame, with many schools having large number of students in a class, limited teaching materials, and inadequate textbooks. Government, on the other hand, plays crucial roles in the management of our educational system in terms of policy formulation, programmes' implementation, funding, administration, supervision, among others. The extent to which government is committed to these roles could make or mar the educational system. It is, therefore, not out of place to blame government for the mass failure of our students in public examinations. Instability of educational policy, leadership problems, job losses, inadequate or poor supervision of instruction, inadequate funding of education, are parts of the blame on the government. Others include the poor salaries of teachers, inadequate specialist teachers in our schools, etc.

Since the release of the tormenting results of the 2022 WASSCE in the country, accusations and counter-accusations on who to blame on the mass failure of students persist, but, the fact remains that, all the stakeholders have roles to play in solving the problem of abysmal failure of students in public examinations. Despite all speculations of what might be the causative agents, there is need for an empirical study to investigate and identify the major causes of the problem and make recommendations on how to reduce drastically the ugly phenomenon with a view to providing lasting solutions.

## REMEMBERING UNCLE HENRY - GPI

### TRIBUTE TO HENRY GOMEZ THE LONGEST SERVING STAFF OF THE GAMBIA PASTORAL INSTITUTE

#### A Dear Colleague, Uncle and Father

**M**r Henry Gomez was born on the 27th February, 1953 in Banjulinding. After completing his Education, he worked at the then Public Works Department (PWD) until his Retirement.

Henry Gomez was formally employed as a staff of the GPI in February 1990 about Thirty two (32) years ago. Sadness permeated the whole of GPI when we learnt of his death on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2022. Losing a coworker can be especially painful when we knew each other well and felt like family. Henry spent most of his time at GPI even during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic when we were asked to stay at home. Henry kept coming each morning. The GPI was his second home and sometimes he stayed in his office till 9pm willing and ready to do whatever kind of printing work one brings to him. He was patient, kind and quiet. He was a gentleman in all sense of the word. He was employed first as a driver and General Technical Assistance. He eventually became the Production Manager at the printing department in GPI the position he occupied until his sudden death. Henry was many things for GPI. He was electrician, driver, and repairer. Sometimes instead of doing his printing job he will be busy repairing broken fans, irons, watches etc. some of these items stayed in his office for months but eventually he will repair them. The late Bishop Cleary C.S.Sp used to call him 'slow but sure'. He is never in a hurry when given anything to do, but when he completes the task there is always a general feeling of satisfaction. He was a great listener who was always interested to listen to

others especially the junior staff that looked up to him as a father. He lived a good life.

We can rightly name Henry as one of the founding fathers of the GPI. His long dedicated service and loyalty to the GPI cannot be parallel to any. He worked with all his heart in a peaceful and calm manner. He was

immensely proud of his family especially his wife, children and grandchildren whom he talked about' all the time. There is a general feeling of sadness in GPI but we are consoled by the fact that he is in a better place.

It was great having known and worked with him for all these years. We will always remember him as a great employee, an excellent mentor but above a good disciple of Christ. We feel very privileged to have had you as a friend, dad and colleague.

We thank you for your commitment to Christ, your lifelong loyalty to GPI and your infectious spirit of dedication that brightens all of us each day at work. You were an outstanding example for all of us. You will be greatly missed by all. Rest in peace Papa GPI and may the angles welcome you to paradise. Amen.

He died on 30th September, 2022 and his vigil and funeral took place respectively at the St. Kizito's Church, Bakoteh on Thursday 6th and Friday 7th October, 2022. His interment was at the Old Jeshwang Christian Cemetery.



## OCTOBER THE ROSARY MONTH

## Praying the Rosary for our spiritual upliftment

The Rosary means “Crown of Roses”. Our Lady has revealed to several people that each time they say a Hail Mary they are giving her a beautiful rose and that each complete Rosary makes her a crown of roses. The rose is the queen of flowers, and so the Rosary is the rose of all devotions and it is, therefore, the most important one.

The Holy Rosary is considered a perfect prayer, because within it lies the awesome story of our salvation. With the Rosary, in fact, we meditate the mysteries of joy, of sorrow, of glory and of light of Jesus and Mary. It’s a simple prayer, humble so much like Mary.

It’s a prayer we can all say together with Her, the Mother of God. With the Hail Mary, we invite Her to pray for us. Our Lady always grants our request. She joins Her prayer to ours. Therefore, it becomes ever more useful, because what Mary asks, She always receives. Jesus can never say no to whatever His Mother asks for.

In every apparition, the heavenly Mother has invited us to say the Rosary as a powerful weapon against evil, to bring us to true peace. With your prayer made together with Your heavenly Mother, you can obtain the great gift of bringing about a change of hearts and conversion.

Above all, each day, through prayer, you can drive away from yourselves and from your homeland many dangers and many evils. It can seem a repetitive prayer, but, instead, it is like two sweethearts, who many times say to one another the words: “I love you”...

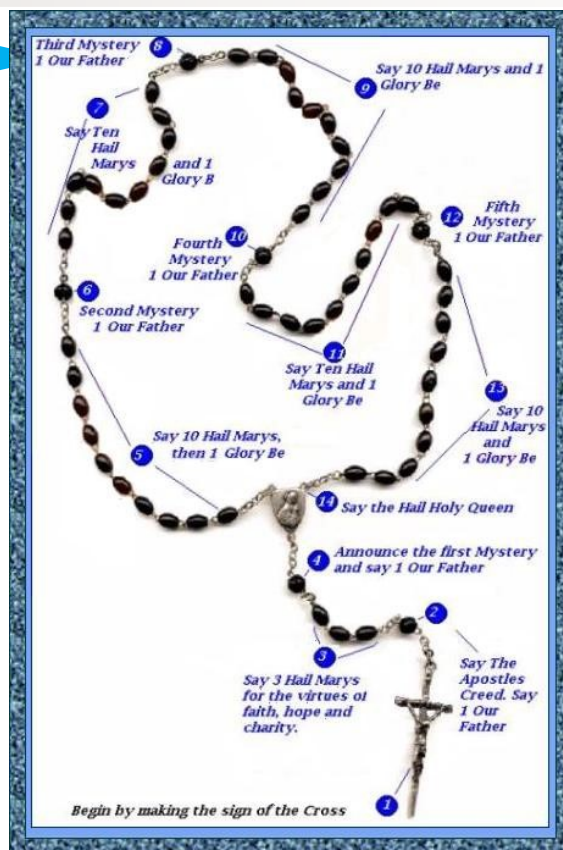
### The new mysteries

The Saint John Paul II on October 16th, 2002 with the Apostolic Letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae on the Most Holy Rosary declared that the following year would be the “Year of the Rosary”. For the first time in centuries a change was made in the Rosary. He has added 5 new mysteries of the Rosary: the “Luminous Mysteries” or “Mysteries of Light”.

The whole Rosary is composed of twenty decades. Each decade is recited in honor of a mystery in Our Lord’s Life and that of His Blessed Mother.

It is customary to recite five decades at a time, while meditating on one set of mysteries.

The decades may be separated, if the entire chaplet is completed on the same day.



Each Mystery may be meditate “bead by bead” for every Hail Mary of the decade.

## The Mysteries of the Holy Rosary

### JOYFUL (on Monday and Saturday)

- The annunciation of Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1: 26-38)
- The visitation of Mary to Elizabeth (Luke 1: 39-56)
- The birth of Jesus (Luke 2: 1-21)
- The presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2: 22-38)
- The finding of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2: 41-52)

### SORROWFUL (on Tuesday and Friday)

- The agony in the garden
- The scourging at the pillar (Matthew 27: 31)
- The crowning with thorns (Matthew 27: 31)
- The carrying of the cross (Matthew 27: 32)
- The crucifixion (Matthew 27: 33-56)

### GLORIOUS (on Wednesday and Sunday)

- The resurrection (John 20: 1-29)
- The ascension (Luke 24: 36-53)
- The descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2: 1-41)
- The assumption of Mary
- The coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven

### LUMINOUS (on Thursday)

- The baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3: 13-16)
- The wedding at Cana (John 2: 1-11)
- The proclamation of the Kingdom (Mark 1: 14-15)
- The Transfiguration (Matthew 17: 1-8)
- The Last Supper (Matthew 26: 26: 36-56)

## How to pray the Rosary

While holding the crucifix make the Sign of the Cross, and then recite the Apostles Creed.

Recite the Our Father on the first large bead.

Say a Hail Mary for an increase of faith, hope and charity on each of the three small beads.

Say the Glory Be to the Father on the next large bead.

Recite the Fatima Prayer "O my Jesus" on the large bead

Recall the first Rosary Mystery and recite the Our Father on the large bead.

On each of the adjacent ten small beads (also referred to as a decade) recite a Hail Mary while reflecting on the mystery.

On the next large bead, recite the Glory Be to the Father, and the Fatima prayer.

Each succeeding decade is prayed in a similar manner by recalling the appropriate mystery, reciting the Our Father,

ten Hail Marys, while reflecting on the mystery, the Glory Be to the Father, and the Fatima prayer.

When the fifth mystery is completed, the Rosary is Customarily concluded with the Hail Holy Queen, and the Sign of the Cross.

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Apostles' Creed:** I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day He arose again; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence, He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Fatima Prayer:** "O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Your Mercy". (*Our Lady at Fatima, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 1917*)

## RADIO VERITAS PRESENTS KIDS BOXING DAY FUN AND SPELLING BEE COMPETITION.

The outing will be held on the 26th of December, 2022 at the Gambia Pastoral Institute.

There will be a talent showcase, various indoor and outdoor games, such as bouncing Castle, treasure hunt, trampoline etc.

The spelling bee will be for children in grades 3,4,5 and 6.

The winner, first runner up, and second runner up will go home with a cash prize and stationery.

To register for the event you can pick up a form at the Gambia Pastoral Institute or call 3783711 or 7006955.

The cost for each form is D200.

Rush now and get your child registered for this great event.



## The Pope's Prayer Intentions

### October - *For a church open to everyone*

We pray for the Church; ever faithful to, and courageous in preaching the Gospel, may the Church be a community of solidarity, fraternity and welcome, always living in an atmosphere of synodality.

### November - *For children who suffer*

We pray for children who are suffering, especially those who are homeless, orphans, and victims of war; may they be guaranteed access to education and the opportunity to experience family affection.

#### PERSPECTIVE

By Andrew Sylva - [andrewsylva1982@gmail.com](mailto:andrewsylva1982@gmail.com)



The author

## The Gambia, the Smiling Coast of Africa turning into a Frowning Coast

**The Gambia is well known as 'the smiling coast' for the obvious reasons that the people are among the friendliest people you could hope to meet and never leave visitors without a soothing and reassuring smile, most especially the first-time visitors. The Smiling coast of West Africa simply refers to the friendliness of its people in generosity with smiles on their coast to many of the visitors. This unique and memorable cultural gestures is the main take-home report of anyone to have visited the country's shores in the past. Justifiably, the revenues from tourism account for close to 20% of GDP and will continue to spike higher.**

The Gambia may be the smallest country in Africa but it is certainly packing a punch in recent years as its reputation as a tourist hotspot gathers momentum and global attention. The majority of both leisure and business-related visits remain from Northern Europe with the UK and Scandinavia in particular being lured to West African shores in search of affordable alternatives to traditional Spanish, Italian or Greek summer holidays.

Undoubtedly, the present economic realities of The Gambia are transmuting the country from the 'Smiling Coast of Africa to the frowning country. The euphoria with which The Gambia gained independence from the British on February 18, 1965 has ostensibly fizzled out over time. At independence, there was high hopes and expectations from our nationalists that the country will go places as one of the best countries of Africa. At the nascent stage of independence, from 1965 to late 1970s, the country experienced a stable economy and good governance before things turned awry. Even the Second Republic Gambia which was commonly perceived as 'terrible' is relatively better the Third Republic.

The Gambia's grim socio-economic situation has seen many plunged into poverty as prices of essential goods continue to surge and basic utilities remain scarce. As it is now many Gambians have been plunged into severe economic recession, with most households facing increased economic precarity. Most importantly, high levels of poverty are closely intertwined with deficits in human capital accumulation and limited access to basic infrastructure. More fifty percent of the population were multidimensionally poor, reflecting low consumption levels, limited educational attainment, and gaps in access to drinking water, sanitation and electricity. Access to basic services and facilities is worse

in rural areas and shows a strong divide between the capital city region and the rest of the country.

The ugly sight of the masses toiling under excruciating economic conditions and the rate at which poverty has eaten deep into the country is not only frightening but heartbreaking. This devastating national situation has left many unemployed and has thus, forced them to venture into the battle and cry for survival. Records even has it that many of the employable youths don't have a job. Sadly, food inflation also skyrocketed, worsening the state of hunger. Import restrictions on rice and rising fuel costs have both contributed to this inflation. Overall inflation and poverty levels have been on the rise, further compounding the hunger crisis in The Gambia.

There is no gain saying the fact that adequacy of functional infrastructure is necessary for a growing economy like that of The Gambia. The state of this decay has become so bad that analysis carried on the ratio of "functional infrastructure" to the need for it by both the individual and the corporate bodies revealed that it is grossly inadequate. The analysis further reveals that over ninety percent of the corporate institutions and over forty percent of individual now resort to meeting their own infrastructural needs than to depend on the government to provide these basic needs to the generality of the populace.

The economic growth and national development of any country are dependent on the availability of functional infrastructure such as energy, roads, railways, water supply, education and a host of other amenities that converge to provide the required environment for the free flow of goods and services across the length and breadth of the country. Infrastructural decay around the country can to a greater extent be traced to corruption and lack of accountability and transparency by public/private office holders in the country. Corruption as a phenomenon is a global problem and exists in varying degrees in different countries. Irrespective of the type of government, be it democratic or dictatorial, capitalist or socialist, corruption exists. Corrupt practices are as old as the world. In The Gambia, it is one of the many unresolved challenges that have made development not to be human centred. Corruption is a long-term major political and economic challenge to Gambia in the provision of infrastructures. Although, corruption is rife in public organizations than private, corruption and inefficiency are characteristics of service delivery in The Gambia.



There are the challenges of small domestic market in The Gambia; The domestic market is small and located far away from large international markets. Economic growth remains volatile. Financial pressures are massive, resulting in significant debt burden, until the rescue initiative of the European Union and other development partners through Budget Support.

There is the challenges of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and tribalism as well as political cleavages based on identity resulting more from manipulation than inter-community tensions. Food insecurity is prevalent and the country is becoming increasingly susceptible to harmful climate events: The United Nations Development Programme's human development index ranked it the 172nd poorest country out of 186. While the causes of poverty in The Gambia are numerous, the two root problems are an overall lack of economic diversity as well as inadequate agricultural proficiency and productivity. The challenges in The Gambia today are enormous and daunting and call for greater urgency in providing the way out. The national cohesion it once enjoys was eroded during the Yahya Jammeh regime, this clearly undermines the implementation of initiatives and reforms in the National Development Plan which was launched in February 2018.

Corruption, gradually but steadily has eaten deep into the fabrics of Gambian society. A recent corruption scandal that is making the round among the top echelon of our country is a case in point – the Banjul Road Rehabilitation contract. It is unthinkable and unimaginable that a country that is bleeding red was planned to be swindled for self-aggrandizement to satisfy their whims and caprices. "So long as greed drives the economy, it's not economy, but catastrophe." -Abhijit Naskar. Corruption is a cancer: a cancer that eats away at a citizen's faith in democracy, diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity; already-tight national budgets, crowding out important national investments. It wastes the talent of entire generations. It scares away investments and jobs - Joe Biden.

The Smiling Coast of the West Africa is no more smiling because chronic poverty had eaten deep to the body and psyche of the people, making life brute, short and meaningless. They can no longer smile because of severe poverty, deprivation and depression which is a grim reality in the Gambia today. The cold statistics are there to bear a sordid witness to this exterminating scourge; today, over a third of The Gambia's population lives below the poverty line: \$1.25 USD per day. Where hard working teachers or nurses earned less than \$100 dollars a month. Poverty is expected to increase astronomically in 2023, and will decline marginally as growth recovers. The Gambia's **poverty rate remains at 48 percent, while food insecurity has risen from 5 to 8 percent over the past five years** as a result of weak food production systems and the effects of successive shocks such as drought and floods. In 2018, The Gambia suffered another drought leading a food security emergency. The Smiling Coast of the West Africa cannot be vibrant nor its people reeking under the weight of unemployment, hunger, food insecurity and then be happy to welcome visitors or tourists. Gambia unemployment rate for 2021 was **11.21%**, a 0.13% increase from 2020. Gambia unemployment rate for 2020 was 11.08%, a 1.58% increase from 2019. **Unemployment is a great tragedy. "The man who goes about hopelessly seeking work in order to earn bread for his children is a living reproach to civilization"**- *Carlos Saavedra Lamas*.

Today, high youth unemployment rate is challenging young people to find employment to better their lives in Gambia and to be able to smile once as in the past. The civil

service is the backbone and engine room of any government and its bureaucracy, it must be robust and responsive, sadly these has not been the case with the civil service in The Gambia. The Gambia's civil service has a number of key capacity weaknesses; Pay is too low to hire, motivate and retain key technical and professional staffs. Staff are not managed to achieve results, neither rewarded for good performance nor sanctioned for poor performance or breaking the rules. Frequent removals and transfers of Government officials have undermined job security and institutional knowledge, thus leading to an underperforming civil service.

Hitherto, the people have been suffering and yet smiling, because there was deficit in the infrastructure in The Gambia, yet the people made the best out of what is available. The main market challenge in The Gambia is poor infrastructure. The Gambia's low Doing Business ranking is driven partly by this problem. The Gambia does not boast of any major freeways or highways, but the road network does spread over several hundred kilometres, hence the low level of investment in the country. **"Don't tell me what you value, show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value."**-**Joe Biden**

Despite improvements made since The Gambia achieved independence, the overall state of national health is very poor. Inadequate sanitation directly causes most cases of illness. About one-third of people do not have access to safe drinking water. Malaria poses the most significant health threat, while other tuberculosis and various parasitic diseases are also highly prevalent health issues. The Gambia's small market has been a contributing hindrance to large investments. The low per capita income (PPP) of \$1,600 and GDP (PPP) of \$3.4 billion 2016 indicators characterize the small market size. However, the economy is beginning to grow, with GDP growth forecasted at five percent in 2018. The Gambia has faulty business structures and limited integration with other major economies thus making it difficult to serve other markets through a Gambia-based operation, hence the reason why many investors are not willing to invest in the Gambia.

In the past the warm and generous welcome of The Gambia people do not only open the hearts of millions of tourists to stay and enjoy themselves in the sunny beaches and warm allures of resorts, but it also opens their deep wallets. The people were truly happy in every sense of the words and representations and the coast responded with deep and cooler breeze to indicate the smile of the nature. That was then, things have drastically changed over the years and may continue to be so, unless and until drastic policy interventions is put in place by the Adama Barrow's administrations to ensure that the pains that kills the creativity and innovations of The Gambia people are frontally addressed. **The economy is the start and end of everything. You can't have successful education reform or any other reform if you don't have a strong economy** - **David Cameron**

And be mindful that ordinary Gambians have considerably more to fear than you do, never more so than now. They must be made to be truly Gambian in spirit and warmth. The dark era of the Yahya Jammeh along with the tortures and death of street protesters and opposition must not be allowed again in the history of the country. Huge numbers of Gambians that had discreetly left the country must be taken back home with qualitative and attractive incentives.

**Hopes brighten for the future as the Smiling coast of West Africa need to smile again and bring back to old glory of The Gambia.** It may take time before Gambians

begin to enjoy the economic dividends expected in a functioning democracy, yet hope and great future aspirations must be sustained that the possibility is real. The dwindling global financial flows affected The Gambia too, with dwindling inbound tourism and accompanying job losses. The dire and precarious financial situation not only wiped the smile of the faces of The Gambian, but also undermine growth and stability, until donors responded positively to ameliorate the situation and gradually putting back the smiles of the faces of the people. The past five years of Gambia and Gambians have been that of a grim one, a dark period of personal, national anguish and internal turmoil.

The need not to numb their pains with drugs, alcohol, television or isolate themselves in resignation to frustration in the guise of spending quality time alone. They must hope and dream again as the dark days are gone and also work to move The Gambia along the pathway to prosperity, which are also key for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Government has continued to make tangible efforts to stabilize the economy with robust support from Gambians living abroad, the private sector, and international partners, hence the strong rebound of The Gambia's economy, where its growth in 2018 reached 6.6 percent and prospects for sustained growth became positive over the medium term. Not only has the Inflation rate dropped to just above 6 percent, but gross official reserves also increased to about 3 months of imports. Thus, to ensure sustained growth, there is the need for government to stabilize electricity inputs and to develop the critical infrastructure and also promote trade integration as this will help frame the reforms of this country's state-owned enterprises.

Tourism and other services also remain essential to the future growth and development of The Gambia, hence urgent need for keener policy focus. The media must be made free and all draconian laws introduced under former dictator Yahya be repealed to give media the much-needed latitude to help sell and positively rebrand The Gambia for global acceptability and favorable perceptions.

Reducing the rising levels of poverty continues to be a major challenge for the government and people of the Gambia, yet it is a task that must be done to help put smiles back to the faces of the people in the smiling coast of West Africa. We must address poverty in The Gambia by raising incomes of the poor through significant investment in health, education and agriculture including supportive infrastructure, agricultural inputs, and agriculture extension. Government in partnership with all relevant stakeholders need to do the following so as to be able to address poverty in The Gambia; Create an enabling policy environment to promote Growth and development.

For government to address these challenges, it must work to among other things put in place a strategy is to build the capacity of the civil service and strive to formulate policies and allocate resources to implement those policies so as to ensure effective delivery of public services, only then can government bring back the smile on the faces of the people. Government needs to provide adequate infrastructure for the people to enable them maximize their investments. Government must invest more resources to address the challenges in the health sector and put the smile on the face of the people again.

The Gambia must come back to its original warm nature as a harbinger of hope as it strives to reposition the country for an organic and far-reaching national development. It may not need to look longer than Singapore for due emulation, not because both countries have small

populations living on a small land mass (size wise) or that the two countries gained full independence from the British in 1965. Far from it. However, if Singapore managed to do it, then there is some hope for The Gambia as she copies and peculiarize the success story of the Singapore, so as to sustain the smile on the face of the people. There are several ways in which The Gambia can learn from Singapore to develop when it seems improbable. Firstly, just as Singapore is at the mouth of the Malacca Strait, The Gambia has a narrow Atlantic coastline and is a natural harbour for goods from North and South America, Europe and the rest of Africa.

To be the Singapore of Africa, the current government needs to implement policies that will revitalise this sector and invest in increasing the competitiveness of The Gambia in the region. Long-term investment in technology and vital infrastructure, such as the airport, roads, ports, bridges is a pre-requisite to turn The Gambia into a transportation and logistics hub as well as put smiles on the faces of the people and their inbound tourists.

Government of The Gambia needs to promote the ease of doing business and focused on Key sectors requiring reforms and investment, which include education, manufacturing, health and infrastructure as these have a direct bearing on the ability of the nation to attract the social aspect of development. Having a civil service that is able to drive structural transformation is of paramount importance, hence the need to reform the civil service with requisite empowerment that would enable them develop the integrity, skills and vision to implement development agenda of the country.

It is the hope of many that the President, his cabinet and other stakeholders will embrace structurally transformative policies that will see The Gambia reach its undoubted potential and become a hub for business, transport, tourism and banking in the West African region. In addition to this, we hope our leaders will be ready to make the difficult and selfless decisions, to transform their nation into the powerhouse of tourism, leisure and fun that promotes and sustain smiles and happiness. National cohesion is key to implementing reforms needed for stability, and to jumpstart the economy, hence the need for all stakeholders to work with the leadership so that The Gambia can gradually heal its social and political divisions and thus began a new chapter of development and growth in such a manner that will justifies the confidence of the people in the country and put smiles back on the faces of the Gambians, only then can the smiling coast beam with renewed smiles again, trustingly justifying the name.

Obviously, the Smiling Coast of Africa is becoming a ghost of itself; things are going awry and the people are hungry and angry and it is high time the government of the day sit up to addressing the multifarious and multifaceted challenges facing The Gambian polity. The mood of the nation is in any way funny. A bad *government* cannot only be called as a 'bad' *government*; the real adjective should be this: Enemy! Yes, bad *government* is a real enemy for the country it governs, an enemy within!" — Mehmet Murat ildan

"If a government has come to a point not afraid of the people, the people must remind the government that they should be afraid of the people! The people who do not respond on the streets to the arrogance of governments are nothing but herds of coward sheep that have approved fascism!" - Mehmet Murat ildan

**"A pandemic will lead to permanent social, economic, and cultural changes. The key is to create good from a bad situation."** - Wayne Gerard Trotman.



## Commemoration

# THE PAPAL HISTORY

## **The Shortest Papacies of All Time? Pope John Paul I Barely Makes the List**

Through all these more or less flawed men who sat in the Chair of Peter, the Catholic Church teaches that the connection to St. Peter and his profession of faith in Christ endures.

Blessed John Paul I did not serve as Roman Pontiff for long, but 10 other popes had shorter pontificates than he did. Their stories are a microcosm of the history of the papacy. Some were friends of saints and worked for the good of the Church, while the qualifications of others might be a bit questionable.

## **Urban VII was pope for 13 days, September 15–27, 1590.**

He was born Giambattista Castagna in Rome, the home city of his mother. His father was of Genoan nobility. His uncle was a cardinal, whom he served at points during his long career in the Church. He held doctorates in civil and canon law. Castagna worked in government and diplomacy on behalf of the papacy, which at the time held civil power over parts of Italy. He led several commissions during the Council of Trent and helped organize the military alliance against the Ottoman Empire, according to the New Catholic Encyclopedia. He was appointed archbishop in 1553 and became a cardinal in 1583.

He had a reputation for genuine piety, intelligence, and ability to govern. After his election as pope, he made sure to address the needs of the poor in Rome. His initial plans included expanded public works to employ the poor.

As God's providence allowed, he did not have time to do much more than plan. He died of malaria at the age of 69. In his will, he left his personal fortune to support poor girls.

## **Celestine IV reigned for 15 days, October 25 – November 10, 1241.**

The future pope was born Goffredo da Castiglione in Milan. He spent time with the Cistercian religious order and was a cardinal bishop of Sabina. He was a nephew of Pope Urban III. He was already in poor health when he was elected, at a time when the papacy was a center of political conflict between backers and opponents of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II.

## **Boniface VI reigned for 16 days, April 11–26, 896.**

He was born in Rome. Not much is known about this pope, though records indicate that during his life he was canonically deprived of holy orders on two occasions: the first time as a subdeacon, and the second as a priest. His irregular past caused controversy over his election, the New Catholic Encyclopedia says.

## **Theodore II reigned for 20 days in December 897.**

Another little-known pope, it is said that his clergy loved him, that he loved peace, and that he lived a life of chastity and charity to the poor. He came to power soon after a low point of the papacy. Pope Theodore annulled the acts of the "Cadaver Synod," which had put on trial the corpse of his predecessor, Pope Formosus. He recovered the dead Roman Pontiff's body from the River Tiber and gave it a proper burial. He also reinstated clergy who had

been forced to resign.

## **Sisinnius was pope for 21 days, January 15 – February 4, 708.**

This pope was born in Syria. His health troubles included disabling arthritis, and he was unable to feed himself. The papacy was responsible for the military defense of Rome at this time, with Lombards invading from the north of Italy and Muslim armies advancing from the south. Sisinnius ordered the walls of Rome to be reinforced as his first act, the New Catholic Encyclopedia says. Before he died, Pope Sisinnius ordained one priest and consecrated a bishop for Corsica.

## **Marcellus II was pope for about 22 days in April and May, 1555.**

He was born Marcello Cervini at Montefano in Tuscany. Like the sainted Pope Marcellus of the fourth century, he kept his baptismal name as his papal name.

His father worked under several pontificates as a scribe and secretary.

Before Cervini was elected pope he served various roles as a secretary to popes and cardinals, including work to correct the Julian calendar. He was actively engaged with the "New Learning" of Renaissance humanism. He served as protector of the Vatican Library and helped improve and expand its collection. Cervini served the Vatican at the time of its response to the Protestant Reformation. He was a president at the Council of Trent, which continued through his short pontificate.

He gained a reputation as a Church reformer and had hoped to pursue this path during his papacy. He was not consecrated a bishop until the day after he was elected pope. Pope Marcellus, reputedly, became sick from overwork during the celebrations of Holy Week and Easter, and the illness turned fatal.

The *Missa Papae Marcelli* of Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was composed in his honor.

## **Damasus II reigned for 24 days in July and August, 1048.**

This pontiff was named Poppo. He was born in Bavaria and was of German extraction. He served as Bishop of Brixen in Tyrol, in what is now western Austria.

Popes at the time could be nominated in an unusual manner. Pope Damasus II was named by Holy Roman Emperor Henry III. The pope, however, soon died of malaria.

## **Pius III was pope for 27 calendar days, September 22 – October 18, 1503.**

He was born Francesco Todeschini in Siena. He was the nephew of Pope Pius II, a famous Renaissance-era pope. His uncle took him into his household and became his patron, allowing the young man to add the pontiff's family name Piccolomini to his own last name.

Francesco studied canon law. His uncle named him to become administrator of the Archdiocese of Siena and later made him a cardinal-deacon.

The future Roman Pontiff had a reputation of living an upright life as a cultured, gentle man, the New Catholic Encyclopedia reports. He took part in several conclaves of

his time, including that which elected Alexander VI.

His service to the papacy included several diplomatic appointments to Germany, France, and Perugia.

Francesco's own papal election took place amid ruling Italian families' disputes over control of Rome and included an unsuccessful power play by the Borgia family.

Pius III was known to be in poor health. At the time of the papal coronation he was already suffering from a diseased leg, which developed into a septic ulcer. He died at the age of 64.

#### **Leo XI was pope for 27 days, from April 1–27, 1605.**

The Florentine-born Alessandro de Medici was a member of the famous Medici family. He was grand-nephew to Pope Leo X. He sought to become a priest from an early age, but because his mother objected he was not ordained until after she died, according to the New Catholic Encyclopedia. He served as an ambassador to Rome on behalf of Tuscany, before he began to advance in the Church. He would eventually become a bishop, then archbishop of Florence, before being named a cardinal.

He served as a papal legate to France and was head of the Congregation of Bishops.

Among his great friends was St. Philip Neri, founder of the Oratorians. He was elected pope at the age of 69 and became sick almost immediately.

#### **Benedict V served as pope for 33 days, May 22–June 23, 964.**

He was born in Rome and had a reputation for great

learning.

He reigned at a time of great turmoil in the Church. Holy Roman Emperor Otto I had interfered with the pontificates of his predecessors. The emperor had forcibly deposed a pope and installed his own nominee on the See of Peter.

There were rival claimants to the papacy under Benedict V and Otto again interfered, laying siege to Rome and taking the pope away from Rome by force. Benedict either renounced the papacy or was forcibly deposed. He lived in exile in Hamburg for another year.

**John Paul I** served as Roman Pontiff from Aug. 26–Sept. 28, 1978, 33 calendar days.

His beatification on Sept. 4 renewed attention to his life. He had a reputation for humility and for teaching the faith in an understandable way.

The future John Paul I took part in the Second Vatican Council and was named patriarch of Venice.

As a cardinal, Luciani published a collection of "open letters" to historic figures, saints, famous writers, and fictional characters. The book, "Illustrissimi," included letters to Jesus, King David, Mark Twain, Charles Dickens, and Christopher Marlowe, as well as Pinocchio and Figaro, the barber of Seville.

He was the first pope to have two names. He took his papal name from his immediate predecessors, Sts. John XXIII and Paul VI.

## NEWS AROUND THE DIOCESE & BEYOND

### Jeun Esperance Weekend of Prayer and Reflection Retreat

Once a year, Jeun Esperance members from Senegal, Guinea Bissau and The Gambia, come together to strengthen their work, through a retreat, to reflect on their mission, enrich their prayer life with sharing of scripture, adoration, meditation, confessions, counseling and mentorship, to improve group members' effectiveness and efficiency in their evangelization work.

The annual retreat is rotational among member countries. This year's retreat took place at the Friendship Hostel in Bakau, from 16-18 September, with the theme: We are united in the body of Christ, called to serve with greater love (*1 Corinthians 12 and 13*)



### Seminar for young Bishops generates new zeal for mission

Recently appointed Bishops in Africa, Asia, America and Oceania gathered for a study seminar organized by the Dicastery of Evangelization from 5-17 September, looking at a wide range of topics to help them in their work in primarily mission territories around the world.

A meeting which brought together 81 bishops recently appointed in areas of Africa, Asia, America, and Oceania, just concluded, after a meeting with Pope Francis on Saturday. The Dicastery for Evangelization organized the study seminar, which took place from September 5 to 17 at the Pontifical College of St. Paul the Apostle, and brought together Church leaders, especially from mission territories.

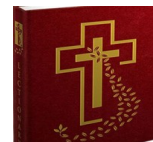
Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle presided over the closing Mass on Saturday in St. Peter's Basilica, and an audience followed with Pope Francis.

Bishop Francis Adesina of Ijebu-Ode Diocese in Nigeria participated in the seminar, and called the meetings very helpful in getting to know his brother bishops around the world in other mission territories, as well as learning about the Vatican dicasteries at the service of the local churches.



## Daily Mass Readings

## October &amp; November



**1st October, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Thérèse of Lisieux, Virgin, Religious, Doctor Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Job 42: 1-3, 5-6, 12-17  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 119: 66, 71, 75, 91, 125, 130  
**Alleluia:** Matthew 11: 25  
**Gospel:** Luke 10: 17-24

**2nd October, 2022 – Sunday, Year C**  
*TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

**First Reading:** Habakkuk 1: 2-3; 2: 2-4  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 95: 1-2, 6-7, 8-9  
**Second Reading:** Second Timothy 1: 6-8, 13-14  
**Alleluia:** First Peter 1: 25  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 5-10

**3rd October, 2022 – Monday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Galatians 1: 6-12  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 111: 1b-2, 7-8, 9 and 10c  
**Alleluia:** John 13: 34  
**Gospel:** Luke 10: 25-37

**4th October, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C**  
*Francis of Assisi, Religious Founder Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Galatians 1:13-24  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 139: 1b-3, 13-14ab, 14c-15  
**Alleluia:** Luke 11: 28  
**Gospel:** Luke 10: 38-42

**5th October, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Galatians 2: 1-2, 7-14  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 117: 1bc, 2  
**Alleluia:** Romans 8: 15bc  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 1-4

**6th October, 2022 – Thursday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Bruno, Priest, Hermit, Religious Founder / Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher, Virgin, Religious Founder*

**First Reading:** Galatians 3: 1-5  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Luke 1: 69-70, 71-72, 73-75  
**Alleluia:** Acts 16: 14b  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 5-13

**7th October, 2022 – Friday, Year C**  
*Our Lady of the Rosary Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Galatians 3: 7-14  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 111: 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6  
**Alleluia:** John 12: 31b-32  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 15-26

**8th October, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**First Reading:** Galatians 3: 22-29  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 105: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7  
**Alleluia:** Luke 11: 28  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 27-28

**9th October, 2022 – Sunday, Year C**  
*TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

**First Reading:** Second Kings 5: 14-17  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98: 1, 2-3ab, 3c-4  
**Second Reading:** Second Timothy 2: 8-13  
**Alleluia:** First Thessalonians 5: 18  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 11-19

**10th October, 2022 – Monday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Galatians 4: 22-24, 26-27, 31 – 5: 1  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 113: 1b-2, 3-4, 5a and 6-7  
**Alleluia:** Psalm 95: 8  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 29-32

**11th October, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Galatians 5: 1-6  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 119: 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48  
**Alleluia:** Hebrews 4: 12  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 37-41

**12th October, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Galatians 5: 18-25  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 1: 1-2, 3, 4 and 6  
**Alleluia:** John 10: 27  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 42-46

**13th October, 2022 – Thursday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 1: 1-10  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98: 1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4, 5-6  
**Alleluia:** John 14: 6  
**Gospel:** Luke 11: 47-54

**14th October, 2022 – Friday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Callistus I, Pope, Martyr*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 1: 11-14  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 33: 1-2, 4-5, 12-13  
**Alleluia:** Psalms 33: 22  
**Gospel:** Luke 12: 1-7

**15th October, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Teresa of Avila, Virgin, Religious, Doctor Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 1: 15-23  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 8: 2-3ab, 4-5, 6-7  
**Alleluia:** John 15: 26a, 27a  
**Gospel:** Luke 12: 8-12

**16th October, 2022 – Sunday, Year C**  
*TWENTY-NINTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

**First Reading:** Exodus 17: 8-13  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 121: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8  
**Second Reading:** Second Timothy 3: 14 – 4: 2  
**Alleluia:** Hebrews 4: 12  
**Gospel:** Luke 18: 1-8

**17th October, 2022 – Monday**

*Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop, Martyr Obligatory Memorial*  
**First Reading:** Ephesians 2: 1-10  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 100: 1b-2, 3, 4ab, 4c-5  
**Alleluia:** Matthew 5: 3 **Gospel:** Luke 12: 13-21

18th October, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C

*Luke, Evangelist Feast*

**First Reading:** Second Timothy 4: 10-17b

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 145: 10-11, 12-13, 17-18

**Alleluia:** John 15: 16

**Gospel:** Luke 10: 1-9

19th October, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C

*Isaac Jogues and John de Brébeuf, Psalms, Religious, Missionaries, Martyrs, & Companions, Marturs Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 3: 2-12

**Responsorial Psalm:** Isaiah 12: 2-3, 4bcd, 5-6

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

**Gospel:** Luke 12: 39-48

20th October, 2022 – Thursday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday / Paul of the Cross, Priest, Religious Founder*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 3: 14-21

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 33: 1-2, 4-5, 11-12, 18-19

**Alleluia:** Philippians 3: 8-9

**Gospel:** Luke 12: 49-53

21st October, 2022 – Friday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 4: 1-6

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 24: 1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6

**Alleluia:** Matthew 11: 25

**Gospel:** Luke 12: 54-59

22nd October, 2022 – Saturday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday / John Paul II, Pope / Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 4: 7-16

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5

**Alleluia:** Ezekiel 33: 11

**Gospel:** Luke 13: 1-9

23rd October, 2022 – Sunday, Year C

*THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

**First Reading:** Sirach 35: 12-14, 16-18

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 34: 2-3, 17-18, 19, 23

**Second Reading:** Second Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18

**Alleluia:** Second Corinthians 5: 19

**Gospel:** Luke 18: 9-14

24th October, 2022 – Monday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday / Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop, Religious Founder*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 4: 32 – 5: 8

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 1: 1-2, 3, 4 and 6

**Alleluia:** John 17: 17b, 17a

**Gospel:** Luke 13: 10-17

25th October, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 5: 21-33

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 128: 1-2, 3, 4-5

**Alleluia:** Matthew 11: 25

**Gospel:** Luke 13: 18-21

26th October, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 6: 1-9

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 145: 10-11, 12-13ab, 13cd-14

**Alleluia:** Second Thessalonians 2: 14

**Gospel:** Luke 13: 22-30

27th October, 2022 – Thursday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 6: 10-20

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 144: 1b, 2, 9-10

**Alleluia:** Luke 19: 38; 2:14

**Gospel:** Luke 13: 31-35

28th October, 2022 – Friday, Year C

*Simon and Jude, Apostles Feast*

**First Reading:** Ephesians 2: 19-22

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 19: 2-3, 4-5

**Gospel:** Luke 6: 12-16

29th October, 2022 – Saturday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday / Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**First Reading:** Philippians 1: 18b-26

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 42: 2, 3, 5cdef

**Alleluia:** Matthew 11: 29ab

**Gospel:** Luke 14: 1, 7-11

30th October, 2022 – Sunday, Year C

*THIRTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME*

**First Reading:** Wisdom 11: 22 – 12: 2

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 145: 1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13, 14

**Second Reading:** Second Thessalonians 1: 11 – 2: 2

**Alleluia:** John 3: 16

**Gospel:** Luke 19: 1-10

31st October, 2022 – Monday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Philippians 2: 1-4

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 131: 1bcde, 2, 3

**Alleluia:** John 8: 31b-32

**Gospel:** Luke 14: 12-14

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1st November, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C

*ALL SAINTS Solemnity, Holy Day of Obligation*

**First Reading:** Revelation 7: 2-4, 9-14

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 24: 1b-2, 3-4ab, 5-6

**Second Reading:** First John 3: 1-3

**Alleluia:** Matthew 11: 28

**Gospel:** Matthew 5: 1-12a

2nd November, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C

*THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED (ALL SOULS)*

**First Reading:** Wisdom 3: 1-9

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

**Second Reading:** Romans 5: 5-11

**Alleluia:** Matthew 25: 34

**Gospel:** John 6: 37-40

3rd November, 2022 – Thursday, Year C

*Ordinary Weekday / Martin de Porres, Religious*

**First Reading:** Philippians 3: 3-8a

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 105: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7

**Alleluia:** Matthew 11: 28

**Gospel:** Luke 15: 1-10

4th November, 2022 – Friday, Year C

*Charles Borromeo, Bishop Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Philippians 3: 17 – 4: 1

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4ab, 4cd-5

**Alleluia:** First John 2: 5

**Gospel:** Luke 16: 1-8



**5th November, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**First Reading:** Philippians 4: 10-19  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 112: 1b-2, 5-6, 8a and 9  
**Alleluia:** Second Corinthians 8: 9  
**Gospel:** Luke 16: 9-15

**6th November, 2022 – Sunday, Year C**  
**THIRTY-SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**First Reading:** Second Maccabees 7: 1-2, 9-14  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 17: 1, 5-6, 8, 15  
**Second Reading:** Second Thessalonians 2: 16 – 3: 5  
**Alleluia:** Revelation 1: 5a, 6b  
**Gospel:** Luke 20: 27-38

**7th November, 2022 – Monday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Titus 1: 1-9  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 24: 1b-2, 3-4ab, 5-6  
**Alleluia:** Philippians 2: 15d, 16a  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 1-6

**8th November, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Titus 2: 1-8, 11-14  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 37: 3-4, 18 and 23, 27 and 29  
**Alleluia:** John 14: 23  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 7-10

**9th November, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C**  
**DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA IN ROME Feast**

**First Reading:** Ezekiel 47: 1-2, 8-9, 12  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 46: 2-3, 5-6, 8-9  
**Second Reading:** First Corinthians 3: 9c-11, 16-17  
**Alleluia:** Second Chronicles 7: 16  
**Gospel:** John 2: 13-22

**10th November, 2022 – Thursday, Year C**  
*Leo the Great, Pope, Doctor Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Philemon 1: 7-20  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 146: 7, 8-9a, 9bc-10  
**Alleluia:** John 15: 5  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 20-25

**11th November, 2022 – Friday, Year C**  
*Martin of Tours, Bishop Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Second John 1: 4-9  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 119: 1, 2, 10, 11, 17, 18  
**Alleluia:** Luke 21: 28  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 26-37

**12th November, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Josaphat, Bishop, Religious, Martyr Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Third John 1: 5-8  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 112: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6  
**Alleluia:** Second Thessalonians 2: 14  
**Gospel:** Luke 18: 1-8

**13th November, 2022 – Sunday, Year C**  
**THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**First Reading:** Malachi 3: 19-20a  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98: 5-6, 7-8, 9  
**Second Reading:** Second Thessalonians 3: 7-12  
**Alleluia:** Luke 21: 28  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 5-19

**14th November, 2022 – Monday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday*

**First Reading:** Revelation 1: 1-4; 2: 1-5  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 1: 1-2, 3, 4 and 6  
**Alleluia:** John 8: 12  
**Gospel:** Luke 18: 35-43

**15th November, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Albert the Great, Bishop, Religious, Doctor*

**First Reading:** Revelation 3: 1-6, 14-22  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 15: 2-3a, 3bc-4ab, 5  
**Alleluia:** First John 4: 10b  
**Gospel:** Luke 19: 1-10

**16th November, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Margaret of Scotland, Married Woman / Gertrude the Great, Virgin, Religious*

**First Reading:** Revelation 4: 1-11  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 150: 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6  
**Alleluia:** John 15: 16  
**Gospel:** Luke 19: 11-28

**17th November, 2022 – Thursday, Year C**  
*Elizabeth of Hungary, Married Woman, Religious Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Revelation 5: 1-10  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 149: 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 9b  
**Alleluia:** Psalms 95: 8  
**Gospel:** Luke 19: 41-44

**18th November, 2022 – Friday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Dedication of the Churches of Peter and Paul / Rose Philippine Duchesne, Virgin, Religious, Missionary / Ordinary*

**First Reading:** Revelation 10: 8-11  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 119: 14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131  
**Alleluia:** John 10: 27  
**Gospel:** Luke 19: 45-48

OR

**18th November, 2022 – Friday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Dedication of the Churches of Peter and Paul / Rose Philippine Duchesne, Virgin, Religious, Missionary / Proper*

**First Reading:** Acts 28: 11-16, 30-31  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98: 1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4, 5-6  
**Gospel:** Matthew 14: 22-33

**19th November, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**First Reading:** Revelation 11: 4-12  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 144: 1, 2, 9-10  
**Alleluia:** Second Timothy 1: 10  
**Gospel:** Luke 20: 27-40

**20th November, 2022 – Sunday, Year C**  
**CHRIST THE KING Solemnity (Thirty-fourth and Last Sunday in Ordinary Time)**

**First Reading:** Second Samuel 5: 1-3  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5  
**Second Reading:** Colossians 1: 12-20  
**Alleluia:** Mark 11: 9, 10  
**Gospel:** Luke 23: 35-43

**21st November, 2022 – Monday, Year C**  
*Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Revelation 14: 1-3, 4b-5  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 24: 1bc-2, 3-4ab, 5-6  
**Alleluia:** Matthew 24: 42a, 44  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 1-4

**22nd November, 2022 – Tuesday, Year C**  
*Cecilia, Virgin, Martyr Obligatory Memorial*

**First Reading:** Revelation 14: 14-19  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 96: 10, 11-12, 13  
**Alleluia:** Revelation 2: 10c  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 5-11

**23rd November, 2022 – Wednesday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Clement I, Pope, Martyr / Columban, Abbot, Missionary / Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, Priest, Religious, Martyr*

**First Reading:** Revelation 15: 1-4  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98: 1, 2-3ab, 7-8, 9  
**Alleluia:** Revelation 2: 10c  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 12-19

**24th November, 2022 – Thursday, Year C**  
*Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest, Martyr, & Companions, Martyrs Obligatory Memorial, Thanksgiving Day / Ordinary*

**First Reading:** Revelation 18: 1-2, 21-23; 19: 1-3, 9a  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 100: 2, 3, 4, 5  
**Alleluia:** Luke 21: 28  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 20-28

OR

**24th November, 2022 – Thursday, Year C**  
*Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest, Martyr, & Companions, Martyrs Obligatory Memorial, Thanksgiving Day / Proper*

**First Reading:** Sirach 50: 22-24  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 145: 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11  
**Second Reading:** First Corinthians 1: 3-9  
**Alleluia:** First Thessalonians 5: 18  
**Gospel:** Luke 17: 11-19

**25th November, 2022 – Friday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin, Martyr*

**First Reading:** Revelation 20: 1-4, 11-21: 2  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 84: 3, 4, 5-6a and 8a  
**Alleluia:** Luke 21: 28  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 29-33

**26th November, 2022 – Saturday, Year C**  
*Ordinary Weekday / Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**First Reading:** Revelation 22: 1-7  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 95: 1-2, 3-5, 6-7ab  
**Alleluia:** Luke 21: 36  
**Gospel:** Luke 21: 34-36

**27th November, 2022 – Sunday, Year A**  
*FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 2: 1-5  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9  
**Second Reading:** Romans 13: 11-14  
**Alleluia:** Psalm 85: 8  
**Gospel:** Matthew 24: 37-44

**28th November, 2022 – Monday, Year A**  
*Advent Weekday*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 4: 2-6  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9  
**Alleluia:** Psalm 80: 4  
**Gospel:** Matthew 8: 5-11

**29th November, 2022 – Tuesday, Year A**  
*Advent Weekday*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 11: 1-10  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 72: 1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17  
**Gospel:** Luke 10: 21-24

**30th November, 2022 – Wednesday, Year A**  
*Andrew, Apostle Feast*

**First Reading:** Romans 10: 9-18  
**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 19: 8, 9, 10, 11  
**Alleluia:** Matthew 4: 19  
**Gospel:** Matthew 4: 18-22



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## CONCERN

# OUR PARISHES URGENTLY NEED TRAINED MUSICIANS

*Burang Goree-Ndiaye*

## The state of music in our churches

**U**nlike the Methodist and Anglican Churches, and the mushrooming evangelical houses of worship in the country, the Catholic Diocese of Banjul has only one Gambian organist, who can read sheet music, whereas these churches have more than one. Also, most, if not all, of their choirmasters can read sheet music. I believe, even their choristers can also decipher musical notes, and understand music language. I stand to be challenged on this.

Apart from the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption, the Star of the Sea Parish is the only other parish that, presently, has a trained organist, who, by the way, is not a Gambian. As a parishioner of Holy Family Church, I have observed with deep concern that, whenever he is out of the country, as his job requires him to travel quite often, the church is left without an organist to enrich the singing at Sunday Masses with splendid organ accompaniment. For many years, the Star of the Sea Parish relied on the late Mr. Leon Ndow to play the organ in both churches, which, in my view was physically and mentally taxing for him, as he had advanced in age. His passing left a huge void in the musical domain of the Parish, until when the current organist presented himself to fill the void that existed.

All the while the late Uncle Leon was the recognized Parish organist, I do not think any serious thought was given by the church leadership to a successor, when he became incapacitated, or was any effort made to have a young parishioner trained to assume the role he played so devotedly as church organist. I also do not think the leadership of the Parish has given, or is giving, serious thought to the inevitable departure of the current organist.

When this reality dawned on me, I engaged the choirmaster of the Holy Family Church and offered to pay for the tutoring of any young parishioner who has, and expresses an interest in learning to play the keyboards, for as long as was necessary for him/her to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to play at Mass. Regrettably, the young man who expressed interest did not take his tutoring as seriously as was expected. Consequently, my financial and material support had to be withdrawn.

Let me turn to guitarists in our church choirs. As a guitar player myself, with many decades of experience, I find the guitarists who play in our choirs not well-grounded in the art. Their style of playing limits them to playing Serer and Wolof songs, which have become dominant in our liturgy. This style of playing the instrument confines them to playing only melodies on the first three frets, and if the scale or pitch of the song goes up, they are compelled to use a *capo*. I consider this style of guitar playing unprogressive, as it does not encourage mastery of chords and chord progressions. A good guitarist should have a wide and in-depth knowledge of chords, and be able to play them at different locations on the fretboard where they can be played.

## Advantages of being able to read sheet music

Being able to read music helps one understand music better. If one knows how to read music, one can interpret all forms of music, simple or complicated classical pieces, as the musical symbols are universal, and applicable to all types of instruments. Musical notation gives the same information to a musical performer, no matter the nationality, age or social status: what notes to play and how fast or slow to play them.

By learning to read sheet music, one's eyes and ears will be tuned for more complex aspects of music. The best benefit from learning to read sheet music is the infinite music theory knowledge it

brings to a person. One who can read music can understand every scale, theories of melody and harmony, intervals and chord progressions in a much better, faster and efficient way.

Whenever I attend a service at any of the non-Catholic churches, I am always carried away by the musical dexterity of the organist, and the soulfulness of the music coming from the organ. There is nothing more pleasing to the ear than a flawless playing of an organ, by a musically well-trained, experienced and confident organist.

It is so satisfying and spiritually-uplifting sitting in a church and listening to a choir singing a rather complicated anthem, backed by smooth and fluid organ music, being played by an accomplished organist. The fact that our choirs hardly, if ever, sing anthems can be attributed to the lack or limited musical knowledge of our so-called organists, choirmasters and choristers, collectively.

## Addressing the lack of musicians in our churches

One way of addressing the lack of musically-trained organists and choirmasters in our churches is to identify and encourage a handful of children, aged 5 and over, who have an aptitude for music, and are truly interested in learning to read and play music, and have them enrolled in a music school (which, unfortunately, we do not have many of), or engage a trained and experienced tutor to teach them how to play music the right way. By so doing, the Diocese can be assured of a supply of much-needed, properly tutored organists and choirmasters for our many churches.

Not only do our churches need, and should have competent organists and choirmasters, but also all choristers must learn to read music, and be proficient in the sol-fa. By being able to read sheet music, choristers will facilitate and enhance their learning and singing of new songs, as well as build their confidence as choristers.

Another way of ensuring that our young parishioners take interest in music, develop their musical talent and aptitude, and enable a pool of prospective organists and choirmasters to be created, is to introduce the teaching of music in our Catholic schools, especially in the lower grades. Taking music lessons, both theoretical and practical, should be made compulsory for all Catholic students, in their first six years of schooling. Children, as quick learners, should be introduced early to the variety of musical instruments that can be learned, and not just to keyboards and guitar. So, we should catch them early, when they are more receptive and impressionable. The present organist of the Cathedral learned to read and play music when he was a boy, thanks to the foresight and insistence of his father, who is passionate about music.

Our Catholic churches should make every effort possible to ensure that they have one or two well-trained organists to play at Sunday Masses and other occasions. The same goes for choirmasters. If we do not take the problem of not having well-trained musicians in our churches seriously, and address it expeditiously and enthusiastically, we will one-day be faced, and in the not-too-distant future, with Sunday Masses that are dull, dry and depressing, instead of being spiritually uplifting, as there won't be any organist to enliven the atmosphere with the sound of music.

We need more than one well-trained organist, and choirmaster in our churches. The main advantage of having more than one organist or choirmaster versed in music in a church is that, when the principal organist or choirmaster is absent, the other can fill in. Having more than one organist guarantees that there will be organ music at all Masses or church services. Even if there is no choir to animate the Mass or service, the organist can provide the much-needed music to uplift the spirit of the congregation.





**October 1st: St. Therese of Lisieux,  
doctor of the Church**

**Therese** was born to devout parents in 1873 in Alençon, France, youngest of nine children. When she was four, her mother died; and her father, a watch-maker, moved to Lisieux. Early on, she wanted to follow two of her sisters in the religious life, but was told she was too young. She persisted, and in 1888 was admitted as a Carmelite nun. Therese is known for her 'Little Way', which asserts that it is not necessary to achieve 'great deeds' to become holy. 'I see that it is enough to realise one's nothingness and give oneself wholly, like a child, into the arms of the loving God.' Therese suffered from tuberculosis, and died aged only 24 on 30th September, 1897. Her autobiography, *L'histoire d'une âme* ('The story of a soul') was edited by her sister Pauline and published after Therese's death. It became a best-seller. Therese was canonised in 1925. The Gambia's largest church is dedicated to St. Therese. In this diocese, we pray, especially today, for the priests and people of the parish of St. Therese, Kanifing.

**October 4th: St. Francis of Assisi, religious**

**St. Francis** is one of the best-loved saints. He was born into a wealthy family in Assisi, Italy, around 1181. In his early 20s, after being a soldier and a prisoner of war, he experienced conversion. Francis sold all his possessions, gave the proceeds to the Church, and began a life of poverty. In 1209, Pope Innocent III approved the formation of the Franciscan Order, which stressed the need to imitate the life of Christ. Francis viewed nature as a mirror of God, calling all creatures his brothers and sisters. In 1209, he approved the formation of a women's order (the Poor Clares). In 1219, Francis visited Egypt and the Holy Land. In 1224, after a vision, he became the first person to receive the stigmata. Francis helped to restore popular faith in a Church, which had been corrupted by wealth and political aspirations. He died in October, 1226 and was canonised in 1228.

**October 7th: Our Lady of the Rosary**

**October** is the month of the Holy Rosary. Today, in particular, we are reminded to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, following the example of Mary, who was associated with her Son's incarnation, ministry, passion and resurrection. In this diocese, we pray today for the people of the Church of the Holy Rosary, Lamin, opened in April 1995.

**October 9th: Blessed John Henry Newman**

**John Henry Newman** (1801-1890), was an Anglican priest who became a leader of the Oxford Movement, a group of Anglicans who wished to return the Church of England to Catholic beliefs and forms of worship. In 1845 Newman left the Church of England and was received into

the Roman Catholic Church, where he was eventually made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII. Newman was instrumental in founding the Catholic University of Ireland, which evolved into University College, Dublin, today the largest university in Ireland. Newman's beatification was proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI in September 2010, during his visit to the United Kingdom. Newman's writings include his autobiography 'Apologia Pro Vita Sua (1865-66)'. He wrote the popular hymns 'Lead, Kindly Light' and 'Praise to the Holiest in the Height'. Newman is the patron of the English Ordinariate, set up by Benedict XVI for former Anglicans, who are in full communion with Rome, while retaining some Anglican forms of worship.

**October 13th: St. Edward, king and confessor**

**Edward** (1404-1466) was the last of the Anglo-Saxon kings of England, renowned for second-sight, curing scrofula and generosity to the poor. He founded Westminster Abbey, the best-known church in England. The title 'confessor' is given to an outstanding witness to the Gospel. It was conferred on Edward in his lifetime by Pope Alexander II. Edward's tomb at Westminster Abbey was a place of pilgrimage until the Reformation, as it has become again in modern times. Pope Benedict XVI prayed there in September 2010, with the Archbishop of Canterbury. In this diocese, the school at Bwiam is named in St. Edward's honour, and today, we pray for past and present teachers and pupils of that school.

**October 15th: St. Teresa of Avila,  
doctor of the Church**

**Teresa** was born in Avila, Spain, in 1515. She joined the Carmelite Order and received mystic revelations. She underwent many trials in reforming her order. Her writings are marked by a deep understanding of doctrine. She died in 1582. She is one of the patron saints of Spain.

*Omnes sancti et sanctæ Dei, intercedite pro nobis  
(All holy men and women of God, intercede for us)*

**October 17th: St. Ignatius of Antioch,  
bishop and martyr**

**Ignatius** succeeded the Apostle Peter as second Bishop of Antioch (in present-day Turkey). During the reign of the Roman Emperor Trajan, he was arrested and sent to Rome. On his journey to execution, Ignatius wrote letters encouraging fellow-Christians to remain faithful despite persecution. He met his death by being thrown to wild animals.

**October 18th: St. Luke evangelist**

**Luke** was not an eye-witness of Christ's ministry, but accompanied St. Paul to Macedonia and Rome. Paul referred to Luke as 'the beloved physician'.

Luke's cultural background was Greek, and he was

writing for Greeks. His Gospel account of Our Lord's ministry emphasises Jesus' compassion and his sympathy and openness towards women - who at that time were generally treated as inferior to men.

The Acts of the Apostles is a continuation of Luke's Gospel. It deals with events in the life of the early Church.

#### **October 28th: St. Simon & St. Jude, apostles**

**Simon** was born in Cana and was known as the Zealot.

**Jude**, known also as Thaddæus, asked Jesus at the Last Supper why he showed himself only to the apostles and not to the world (John 14: 22).

#### **November 4th: St. Charles Borromeo, bishop**

**Charles** was nobly born in 1583 at Arona (in present-day Italy) and was known in his youth for his saintly life and academic ability. When he was 23, his uncle, Pope Pius IV (1559-65), made him Cardinal Archbishop of Milan. Charles gave his inheritance to the poor. His endeavours to revive the spiritual zeal of the clergy made him enemies. During the plague of 1575, he relieved distress and gave the last rites to the dying. Charles founded the Order of Oblates. He fought hard to eradicate Protestantism from his diocese. He died in 1584.

#### **November 10th: St. Leo, the Great pope**

**Leo** is one of the Doctors (teachers) of the early Church. He was born towards the end of the 4th century in Tuscany (part of present-day Italy). As Pope, from 440 to 451, he championed orthodoxy. When the monk Eutyches of Constantinople asserted that Christ had only a divine nature, Leo wrote his 'tome' insisting that Christ was true God and true man. Leo's teachings, as the 'voice of Peter', were embraced by the Council of Chalcedon, and his example, letters and sermons contributed to the growth of papal authority.

#### **November 21st: Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

We honour Mary's dedication of herself to God from her childhood by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who filled her with grace at prayers and work in The Gambia since 1964 of the Presentation Sisters.

#### **November 24th: St. Andrew Dung-Lac & companions martyrs**

Born in 1795, Andrew was a priest in Vietnam, his homeland. He was a Catholic convert ordained to the priesthood, and was arrested in 1839. He was one of 117 people martyred in Vietnam between 1820 and 1862. In June 19th, 1988 they were canonised by St. John Paul II.

## ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS DAY REFLECTIONS

**All Saints is November First, one of the great days of the Church's calendar – a holy day of obligation.**

Remembering martyrs and other saints, and dedicating a specific day to each of them, has been a Christian tradition since the 4th century. But it wasn't until AD609 that Pope Boniface IV designated 13th May as the commemoration of all the Church's martyrs.

Over 200 years later, in 837, Pope Gregory IV extended the feast to include the commemoration of all the saints, and designated 1st November as the date.

The saints are examples of 'virtuous and godly living'. The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that during our earthly pilgrimage 'we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses'.

Sainthood is not so much about hero-worship as about having friends: the saints are the real men and women of every age in whose lives we can glimpse heaven in our midst. They are our partners in prayer.

**Pope Benedict has written:** 'Human life is a journey. Towards what destination? How do we find the way? Life is like a voyage on the sea of history, often dark and stormy, a voyage in which we watch for the stars that indicate the route. The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach him we also need lights close by - people who shine with his light and so guide us along our way.'

*Pope Benedict XVI: Spe Salvi*

'We celebrate the Solemnity of All Saints. This invites us to turn our gaze to the immense multitude of those who have already reached the blessed land, and points us on the path that will lead us to that destination.'

*Pope John Paul II*

**ALL SOULS falls this year on a Wednesday, November Second.**

On this day, we commemorate all the faithful departed.

We remember and pray for the souls of those in Purgatory – the place or state in which those who have died, atone for their less grave sins, before being granted the vision of God in heaven.

When a soul leaves the body, it is not entirely cleansed from venial (minor) sins. But, through the power of prayer, the faithful on earth may be able to help the departed to gain the Beatific Vision, bringing the soul eternal happiness.

So at the Mass, when visiting family graves, and in our private prayers, we remember our dead.

Praying for the dead is an ancient Christian tradition, but it was Odilo, Abbot of Cluny, in France, who in AD998 designated a specific day for remembering and praying for those in the process of purification. This started as a local feast in his monasteries and gradually spread throughout the Catholic Church towards the end of the 11th century.

'For the souls in Purgatory, waiting for eternal happiness and for meeting the Beloved is a source of suffering, because of the punishment due to sin, which separates them from God. But, there is also the certitude that once the time of purification is over, the soul will go to meet the One it desires.' *Pope John Paul II*

Grant to us, Lord God, to trust you, not for ourselves alone, but for those also whom we love and who are hidden from us by the shadow of death; so that, as we believe your power to have raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, we may trust your love to give eternal life to all who believe in him.

Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, now and for ever. Amen.



## October & November

**8th October, 1878:** Death of the Superior of the Mission, Fr. Renoux, who arrived six months earlier on 11th April.

**15th October, 1884:** Opening of Bethel Methodist Church on Stanley Street, Banjul.

**26th October, 1905:** Arrival of Fr. John Meehan, ordained in Paris the previous year.

**16th October, 1931:** Fr. Meehan was nominated first Ecclesiastical Superior of the Banjul Mission, which in May that year had become self-governing. (His appointment was confirmed in January 1931).

**1st October, 1933:** Ordination in Paris of Fr. Thomas Jobe, who celebrated his first Mass in Banjul on 15th October 1934.

**21st November, 1936:** Fr. Joseph Charles Mendy arrived from a retreat in Dakar, bringing with him an English priest, Fr. Harold Whiteside.

**27th October, 1938:** Arrival of Fr. Michael Moloney (later became Bishop Moloney).

**10th October, 1945:** Arrival of Fr. James White, who died in The Gambia in February 1996.

**1st November, 1948:** Opening of St. Therese's Elementary School with 114 pupils.

**30th November, 1951:** Fr. Moloney was named Prefect of the Banjul Mission, which had been designated a Prefecture Apostolic on 15th April that year.

**16th October, 1952:** Arrival of Fr. William Costelloe and Fr. Reginald Gillooly.

**26th October, 1958:** Enthronement of Bishop Moloney as first Bishop of Banjul, at Hagan Street Church, becoming his Cathedral.

**3rd October, 1959:** Building began in Bakau of Stella Maris Church (Star of the Sea).

**17th October, 1962:** Founding of Pioneer Total Abstinence Association.

**20th October, 1965:** Arrival of Fr. John Sharpe.

**3rd October, 1967:** Arrival of Fr. Michael Casey, who retired from service in The Gambia after 47 years' service.

**28th October, 1968:** Arrival of the first Presentation Sisters, Sr. Cecilia and Sr. Margaret.

**12th November, 1968:** Arrival of Br. Liam Sheridan and Br. Benedict Stapleton to begin Lamin Technical School.

**27th October, 1970:** Arrival of Fr. Robert Ellison (who later became the Bishop of Banjul).

**11th October, 1972:** Fr. Sharpe moved to Kunkujang to found a mission station.

**12th November, 1972:** Bishop Moloney blessed the Junior Seminary at Fajara. The first Director was Fr. Pierre Sagna (later, Bishop Sagna). Among the 19 seminarians were Fr. Anthony Gabasi and Fr. Peter Gomez (deceased).

**4th November, 1976:** First meeting of all Mission personnel to work out a pastoral plan for the diocese.

**29th October, 1977:** Death of James Ndow, first Gambian Principal of Gambia High School.

**31st October, 1981:** Departure of Fr. Michael Murray owing to ill-health.

**23rd November, 1983:** Sudden death in Ireland of Fr. Francis Farrell.

**18th November, 1999:** Funeral in Banjul of Tony Blain, former Director of Education, who had died in the USA.

**6th November, 2000:** President Yahya Jammeh appointed Bishop Michael Cleary an honorary Commander of the Order of the Republic of The Gambia (CRG).

**13th November, 2000:** Death of Rachel Palmer, former Head of the School of Nursing, Banjul.

**13th October, 2002:** Death in Ireland of Fr. Vincent Comer, former Principal of St. Peter's Technical High School Lamin, and Vicar-General of the diocese.

**6th October, 2005:** Death in Ireland of Sr. Benigna Kearney, who had taught in The Gambia for more than 50 years.

**17th November, 2007:** Bishop Ellison began a three-day pastoral visit to the neighbouring Diocese of Ziguinchor.

**24th November, 2007:** Archbishop Théodore-Adrien Sarr of Dakar was among 23 new cardinals created by Pope Benedict XVI.

**17th October, 2008:** Death in the USA of Arthur K. Carrol, Methodist, who after retirement as head of the Gambia Public Transport Corporation, worked for the Catholic charity, Caritas. Mr. Carrol's funeral was held at Wesley Methodist Church, Banjul on 7th November.

**10th-18th November, 2008:** Fr. Peter Conaty, former Director of GPI, returned after 20 years to lead a workshop on the liturgy for priests, religious and choir leaders.

**21st November, 2008:** At Farafenni, Bishop Ellison ordained Fr. John Mendy.

**29th November, 2008:** Sr. Vivian Aduni, Sr. Benedicta Peligabase, Ghanaians, and Sr. Marie Sylva, Gambian, made their first profession as Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny.

**14th November, 2009:** At Brikama, Bishop Ellison ordained Fr. Yenes Manneh.

**2nd to 23rd October, 2009:** Bishop Ellison was among 244 bishops who took part in the Synod for Africa in Rome.

**5th October, 2009:** Death in Banjul of Matilda Ann Faal, aged 98, who had attended Holy Spirit, Banjul every day since its opening.

**25th November, 2009:** Death of Marcel Jinage Badji, aged 58, Director of St. Joseph's Family Farm, Bwiam.

**1st – 10th October, 2010:** Sr. Calixte Thomas, Sr. Josephine Kamada, Sr. Teresa Mundow and Sr. Jeanne-Therese Ndeye joined Cluny Sisters from all over Africa at a synod in Dakar.

**15th November, 2010:** Simon Suta Mendy became Catechist Co-ordinator at GPI.

**29th October, 2011:** Mass of Thanksgiving at the Cathedral for the 50th anniversary as a reverend sister of Sr. Jeanne-Thérèse Ndeye, first Gambian Sister of St. Joseph of Cluny.

**10th November, 2012:** Bishop Ellison ordained Fr. Aimé Joseph Colley and Fr. Matthew M. Mendy at Lamin.

**17th November, 2012:** Sr. Barbara Koranteng from Ghana, Sr. Rahel Matandala from Kenya, and Sr. Victoria Tholley from Sierra Leone made their first profession at the Novitiate of St. Joseph of Cluny at Kanifing.

**9th November, 2013:** At Brikama, Bishop Ellison ordained Fr. Victor Ndecky.

**1st October, 2016:** Ellen B. Mendy and Harriet B. Mendy made their first vows as novices of the Presentation of Mary.



**19th October, 2016:** At Bakau Stadium, the Gambian Christian Council held an ecumenical gathering to pray for the peace, human rights, security and religious freedom, especially for Christians, in The Gambia.

**7th October, 2017:** Dawida Krzempek of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) celebrated the Silver Jubilee of her religious profession, having spent 17 of her 25 years as religious sister in The Gambia.

**5th October, 2018:** Three priests of the Salesians of St. John Bosco took up ministry at Kunkujang-Mariama.

**2nd November, 2018:** The Duchess of Cornwall, wife of the Prince of Wales, visited St. Therese's Upper Basic

School, Kanifing.

**5th November, 2018:** At Jaama Hall, the choir of St. Peter's, Lamin staged a Silver Jubilee Concert.

**9th November, 2018:** Crowds of Christians and Muslims welcomed Bishop Gabriel Mendy when he paid his first visit to Basse. He also confirmed 17 young Catholics.

**19th November, 2018:** Bishop Mendy hosted a dinner at GPI for Archbishop Dagoberto Campos-Salas, Apostolic Nuncio to The Gambia.

**2nd October, 2021:** Ordination of Rev. Fr. John Nicolas Correa at the St. Kizito's Parish, Bakoteh.

## October & November

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



# Our Sunday Readings

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

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

**1st Reading:** Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

**2nd Reading:** 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

**Alleluia:** 1 Peter 1:25

**Gospel:** Luke 17:5-10

**Homily Theme:** We Are Unprofitable Servants – Luke 17:5-10

**Reflections:** This is a hard command to live. Most often, when we have done something well, and fulfilled our duty, we seek recognition and praise. We want to be noticed. And while this may be a “normal” reaction, it’s not the most humble reaction. Humility comes in many degrees, and the deepest degree of humility allows a person to repeat this passage above and mean it. On the other hand, it is good when we see goodness in others and acknowledge it. We should do this not to build up their ego but to give praise to God for the good thing done. Embracing the will of God as a holy “obligation” also enables us to fulfill it more fully. When doing the will of God is seen as something extraordinary, we may not build a proper habit of fulfilling it. Doing as God commanded will set you on the “fast track” toward holiness.

**Prayer:** *Lord, I am an unprofitable servant. When I fulfill Your holy will, I acknowledge that this is a holy obligation of love and my most fundamental duty. Help me to see Your will as the most normal part of my daily life. Help me to embrace it with wholehearted faith and obedience. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

**October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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

**1st Reading:** 2 Kings 5:14-17

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

**2nd Reading:** 2 Timothy 2:8-13

**Alleluia:** 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Gospel:** Luke 17:11-19

**Homily Theme:** Ten Were Cleansed, Where Are The Other Nine? – Luke 17:11-19

**Reflections:** These words were spoken by Jesus after He healed ten lepers and only one of them, a foreigner, returned to Jesus to thank Him. Ten were cleansed physically of their leprosy but only one received a much deeper healing. Upon returning to Jesus with a grateful heart, Jesus said to this one leper, “Stand up and go; your faith has saved you” . When we sincerely offer thanks to God for all that He has done, we are manifesting great faith in God as a result. We are pointing to Him and His goodness as the source of our blessings and it takes faith to see this and to profess it. Reflect, today, upon all that God has done for you. Pray that you will understand all of the countless ways that God graces your life. As you see them, ponder those blessings, count them and be grateful for them. And from that gratitude, return a joyful thanks to God. In that act, your faith will also save you.

**Prayer:** *Lord, I do thank You for the countless blessings that You have bestowed upon me throughout my life. I thank You for the ways in which You have graced me, led me and healed me. Help me to see clearly all that You have done and continue to do for me. As I see these blessings, help me to daily express my gratitude in faith. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

**October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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

**1st Reading:** Exodus 17:8-13

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 121:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

**2nd Reading:** 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2

**Alleluia:** Hebrews 4:12

**Gospel:** Luke 18:1-8

**Homily Theme:** Why We Should Persist in Prayer – Luke 18:1-8

**Reflections:** Jesus used this story to teach a lesson about the necessity “to pray always without becoming weary” (Luke 18:1). It’s interesting that the image of the judge is one “who neither feared God nor respected any human being” (Luke 18:2). But Jesus uses this image of an unjust judge to reveal the power of persistence and to reveal the depths of God’s mercy. First, we learn that this woman never gave up. So with us, we must never cease to lose hope in prayer. We must pray always, constantly and persistently. It’s not that prayer changes God; rather, prayer changes us and disposes us to receive the immeasurable graces from God. Second, we learn that if an uncaring judge will eventually give a good decision, then so much more will the merciful and all-loving God pour forth His good judgments in our lives when we trust Him. There should be no doubt in our lives that God can do all good things for us if we but let Him. You do not change God’s mind by begging Him. Rather, your prayer must be so persistent that it opens you to the will of God and allows His grace to flow in accord with His perfect will.

**Prayer:** *Lord, I beg of You that Your perfect and holy will be done in my life. I abandon all to You, dear Lord. Do with me as You will. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

### October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

*Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C*

**1st Reading:** Sirach 35:15BC-17, 20-22AB

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 34:2-3, 17-18, 19, 23

**2nd Reading:** 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

**Alleluia:** 2 Corinthians 5:19

**Gospel:** Luke 18:9-14

**Homily Theme:** Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector – Luke 18:9-14

**Reflections:** This Scripture passage is the introduction to the Parable of the Pharisee and Tax Collector. This parable offers quite a contrast between two general attitudes. First, the Pharisee’s attitude reveals that he is very impressed with himself, thinking highly of his public image, and is unaware of his own sin. Second, the tax collector’s attitude reveals that he is deeply aware of his own sin, is sorry for it and knows he is in need of God’s mercy. The result of these two very different attitudes is that the tax collector went home justified whereas the Pharisee did not. Reflect, today, upon the prayer of this tax collector: “O God, be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13). Make it your prayer. Admit your sin. Acknowledge your need for the mercy of God and allow that mercy to exalt you within the righteousness of God.

**Prayer:** *Lord, Jesus Christ, please be merciful to me, for I am a sinner. I acknowledge my sin and my weakness and I beg for Your abundant mercy. Please pour forth, your mercy and help me to open my heart to all that You wish to bestow. Help me to live in the humble truth, dear Lord. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen*

### October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

*Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C*

**1st Reading:** Wisdom 11:22-12:2

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 145:1-2, 8-9, 10-11, 13, 14

**2nd Reading:** 2 Thessalonians 1:11-2:2

**Alleluia:** John 3:16

**Gospel:** Luke 19:1-10

**Homily Theme:** Zacchaeus, Come Down, Today I Must Stay at Your House – Luke 19:1-10

**Reflections:** First, Zacchaeus was seen by many as a sinner. He was a tax collector and, therefore, was not respected by the people. There is little doubt that this would have affected Zacchaeus and been a temptation for him to see himself as unworthy of Jesus’ compassion. But Jesus came precisely for the sinner. Therefore, truth be told, Zacchaeus was the perfect “candidate” for the mercy and compassion of Jesus. Second, when Zacchaeus witnessed that Jesus came to him and selected him out of everyone present to be the one to spend time with, he was overjoyed! The same must be true with us. Jesus does pick us and He does want to be with us. If we allow ourselves to see this, the natural result will be joy. Do you have joy at this knowledge? Third, as a result of Jesus’ compassion, Zacchaeus changed his life. He committed to giving half his possessions to the poor and to repay four times over anyone he had previously cheated. This is a sign that Zacchaeus began to discover true riches. He began to immediately repay to others the kindness and compassion shown to him by Jesus.

**Prayer:** *Lord, I turn to You in my sin and beg for Your mercy and compassion. Thank You in advance for showering Your mercy upon me. May I receive that mercy with great joy and, in turn, may I shower Your mercy upon others. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

### November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022

*Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C*

**1st Reading:** 2 Maccabees 7:1-2, 9-14

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15

**2nd Reading:** 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

**Alleluia:** Revelation 1:5A, 6B

**Gospel:** Luke 20:27-38

**Homily Theme:** In Heaven People Will Not Marry or Get Married – Luke 20:27-40

**Reflections:** And the Sadducees go on to present Jesus with a difficult scenario in order to trap Him. They present the story of seven brothers who each died without having any children. After each one dies, the next takes the first brother’s wife as his own. One thing this story reveals to us is that the Truth is perfect and cannot be overcome. The Truth always wins! Jesus, by stating what is true, unmasks the foolishness of the Sadducees. He shows that no human trickery can undermine the Truth. This is an important lesson for us to learn in that it applies to all aspects of life. We may not have the same question as the Sadducees, but there is little doubt that as we go through life we will come up with difficult questions. Our questions may not be there as a way of trapping Jesus or challenging Him, but we will inevitably have them. Reflect, today, upon that which challenges you the most in your journey of faith. Perhaps it’s a question about the afterlife, or about suffering, or creation. Perhaps it’s something deeply personal. Or perhaps you have not spent enough time, as of late, to come up with questions for our Lord. Whatever the case may be, seek out the Truth in all things and ask our Lord for wisdom, so that you may daily enter more deeply into faith.

**Prayer:** *Lord, I do desire to know all that You have revealed. I desire to understand those things that are most confusing and challenging in life. Help me each day to deepen my faith in You and my understanding of Your Truth. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

## November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### *Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C*

**1st Reading:** Malachi 3:19-20A

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 98:5-6, 7-8, 9

**2nd Reading:** 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

**Alleluia:** Luke 21:28

**Gospel:** Luke 21:5-19

**Homily Theme:** Nation Will Rise Against Nation and Kingdom Against Kingdom – Luke 21:5-11

**Reflections:** This prophecy of Jesus will most certainly unfold. How will it unfold, practically speaking? That's still to be seen. So what do we take from this prophetic word from our Lord? Though this passage may, in fact, refer to more grand and universal events to come, it may also speak to our own particular situations present in our life today. Therefore, we should allow His words to speak to us within those situations. One specific message this passage tells us is that, we should not be surprised if, at times, it appears as if our world is rattled to the core. In other words, when we see chaos, evil, sin and malice all around us, we should not be surprised and we should not get discouraged. This is an important message for us as we press on through life. For each one of us, there may be many "earthquakes, famines, and plagues" that we encounter in life. They will take on various forms and will be the cause of much distress at times. But they do not need to be. If we understand that Jesus is aware of the chaos we may encounter, and if we understand that He actually prepared us for it, we will be more at peace when the troubles come.

**Prayer:** *Lord, when my world seems to cave in around me, help me to turn my eyes to You and to trust in Your mercy and grace. Help me to know that You will never abandon me and that You have a perfect plan for all things. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

## November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### *Feast of Christ the King, Year C*

**1st Reading:** 2 Samuel 5:1-3

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5

**2nd Reading:** Colossians 1:12-20

**Alleluia:** Mark 11:9, 10

**Gospel:** Luke 23:35-43

**Homily Theme:** Jesus Christ The King of the Universe (Solemnity)

**Reflections:** This is the last Sunday of the Church year, which means we focus on the final and glorious things to come! It also means that next Sunday is already the First Sunday of Advent. When we say Jesus is a king, we mean a few things. First, He is our Shepherd. As our Shepherd He desires to lead us personally as a loving father would. He wants to enter our lives personally, intimately and carefully, never imposing Himself but always offering Himself as our guide. It's Christ's authority as King that gives us the authority and duty as Christians to do all we

can to fight civil injustices and bring about a respect for every human person. All civil law ultimately gains its authority from Christ alone, since He is the one and only Universal King. But many do not recognize Him as King, so what about them? Should we "impose" God's law upon those who do not believe? The answer is both yes and no. First, there are some things we cannot impose. For example, we cannot force people to go to Mass each Sunday. This would hinder one's freedom to enter into this precious gift. Reflect, today, upon your own embrace of Christ as King. Does He truly govern your life in every way? Do you allow Him to have complete control over your life? When this is done freely and completely, the Kingdom of God is established in your life. Let Him reign so that you can be converted and, through you, others can come to know Him as Lord of all!

**Prayer:** *Lord, You are the sovereign King of the Universe. You are Lord of all. Come reign in my life and make my soul Your holy dwelling place. Lord, come transform our world and make it a place of true peace and justice. May Your Kingdom come! Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

## November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### *First Sunday of Advent, Year A*

**1st Reading:** Isaiah 2:1-5

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

**2nd Reading:** Romans 13:11-14

**Alleluia:** Psalm 85:8

**Gospel:** Matthew 24:37-44

**Homily Theme:** The Coming of Jesus – Luke 12:39-48, Matthew 24:42-51

**Reflections:** This Scripture offers us an invitation. It can be said that Jesus comes to us at an unexpected hour in two ways. First, we know that He will return one day in glory, to judge the living and the dead. His Second Coming is real, and we should be aware of the fact that it could happen at any time. Sure, it may not happen for many years, or even for many hundreds of years, but it will happen. There will be one moment when, the world as it is, will end and the new order will be established. Ideally, we live each and every day in anticipation of that day and that moment. We must live in such a way that we are always ready for that end. Second, we must realize that Jesus does come to us, continually, by grace. Traditionally, we speak of His two comings:

- 1) His Incarnation, and
- 2) His return in glory.

But there is a third coming we can speak of which is His coming by grace into our lives. And this coming is quite real and should be something to which we are continually attentive. Reflect, today, upon your life of prayer. Know that the moments you dedicate exclusively to prayer each day are essential to your holiness and relationship with God. And know that those moments must help to build a habit of always being attentive to God. Being prepared this way will allow you to meet Christ at every moment that He comes to you by grace.

**Prayer:** *Lord, help me to foster in my heart a life of prayer. Help me to seek You always and to always be prepared for You when You come. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*





# THE VOICE OF GOD

## MESSAGE OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

### Radio Veritas Identity

**R**adio Veritas 102.9 FM is the first Christian Radio Station in The Gambia launched on January 20th, 2021 by Most Rev. Dr. Gabriel Mendy C.S.Sp the Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Banjul. It is a Catholic Radio at the service of the Gospel, an instrument of evangelization and promotion of all initiatives and activities of the Catholic Church in The Gambia. Radio Veritas is for all Gambians, transmitting both in English and Wolof, celebrating the rich diversity of contemporary Gambia, affirming all that is life-giving and striving to promote justice. The Radio is managed by the Communications Commission and headed by a Director, Programs Manager, Reporters and producers.

Radio Veritas Gambia is a non-profit and non-commercial Catholic Radio that broadcasts eighteen hours daily. We rely mainly on voluntarism, prayers and financial support of its listeners and friends.

### Radio Veritas Objective/Goal

The principal objective of Radio Veritas Gambia is to promote Catholic Radio Programming via FM stations and through the internet

### Radio Veritas Aim

We aim to bring the Gospel message of faith, hope and love to people.

### Marian Spirituality

The Radio Veritas Gambia, also responds to a call from Mary, promotes devotion to the Blessed Virgin. Love for Our Lady explains the phenomenon of volunteerism and the explosion of listeners around the globe. Through Radio Veritas, Our Lady has reawakened prayer and promoted deeper faith. She reaches out to all who are distant, both physically and spiritually, offering consolation to the suffering, support to families, guidance to the young, and joy and peace to everyone.

### Radio Veritas Gambia Programming

RV offers daily programs that include:

- Prayer
- Spiritual reflections

- Eucharistic liturgy
- Para liturgical prayers
- Catechesis
- Promotion of the rich Catholic heritage
- Devotions and historical events
- Life of saints, i.e. the saint of the day
- Gospel Music
- Social and human interest shows

### Radio Veritas Gambia Affiliation

Radio Veritas Gambia partners with the National Radio station (GRTS), FM stations in The Gambia and with the World Family of Catholic Communicators (SIGNIS) dedicated to the Service of the Church.

### Our Service to the Church

Radio Veritas Gambia employs modern mass media and technology to spread the Gospel message, which is an important Church Ministry. Those who contribute to the development of Radio Veritas and promote its Christian vision help ensure the growth of the Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

