



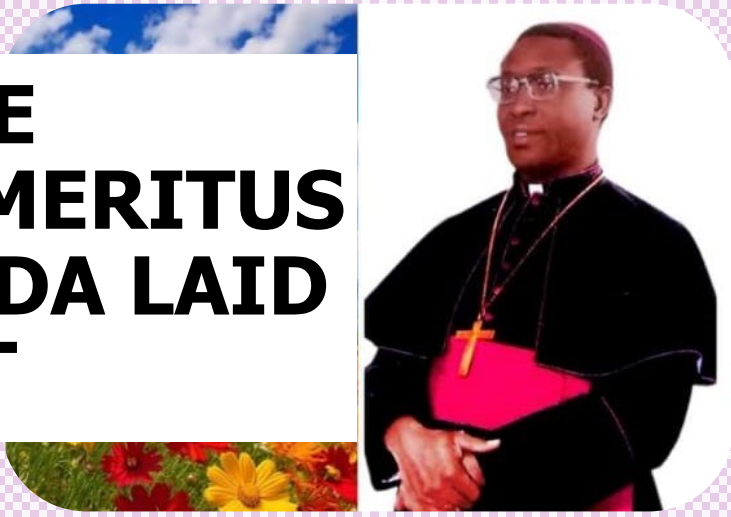
The Diocese of Banjul NEWSLETTER

Incorporating The Catholic Newsletter

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EDITORIAL HINT

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OUR UNFORTUNATE DEMOCRACY

DIOCESE OF BANJUL NEWSLETTER

Our Mission and Vision

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

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

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



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EDITORIAL HINT

Our Unfortunate Democracy

In actual fact, we do not have political parties in this country. Political parties in civilized societies need to be parties that are membership based, driven by membership interests and collective vision. In a practical sense, what we have in The Gambia is individual politicians trading with personal interests, and in that kind of manner, it is impossible to arrive at a durable and sustainable democracy and development. This is why we are in a quagmire of an unfortunate democracy. We face an unfortunate democracy when greed and impunity govern our politicians and leaders, such as what we see and hear in our National Assembly: “Hon Speaker, it is in the Constitution that as National Assembly Members, we decide our salaries and benefits and allowances. This is a benefit that we’re trying to get here. This is law, we are making law here, we can make it now and it becomes law.”

This was a statement made by a greedy and self-serving member of our National Assembly, proposing a salary bill that could sum up to almost 60 million dalasis of poor Gambian tax-payers money, when majority of Gambians are dying of poverty, hunger, frustration, despair, youth unemployment, poor maternal healthcare and assorted dimensions of poverty and deprivations. They have no consideration for the vast majority of the populace that voted them into office, who are in abject poverty and are struggling for livelihood.

Truly, democracy has not developed in our society to an appreciable level, due to greed and selfishness of the politicians, who see their ascension to power as an easy way of enriching themselves. It is seen from this context that politics is "all and all" and a "do or die" affair which must be won at all cost, no matter the consequences on the citizenry. It is emphasized that in this society, most people

are disillusioned because the government has not delivered the dividends of democracy expected to benefit them. Democracy as an administrative concept, cannot function effectively without due consideration to the basic rights and welfare of the masses, who are the real owners of the country. It is observed that the basic infrastructure, including water, power, shelter, food, health care, education, roads, and other social amenities and economic empowerment need to be made available to benefit the people. It is only when the citizenry is given basic necessities of life that they can think properly and participate effectively, to ensure the entrenchment of democracy. Democracy will develop to an acceptable level in our nation when the politicians place the interest of the country before their personal quest. It is like we are returning to that erstwhile ruinous age, when our nation was run by a selfish elite whose only interest is greed for power, position of privilege and wealth and material accumulation, all to the detriment of the citizenry.

The Gambia of our dreams will come if we eliminate greed, selfish interest and impunity in public service. When we say a nation is independent, the first thing we should ask ourselves is “have we been able to build a nation?” We have not really succeeded in building one yet.

We are failing to realize the full potential of being independent because we are not taking advantage of the economic opportunities offered by the global market place, nor harnessing our human resources to the fullest.

Our political system, which rewards mediocrity and not excellence; promotes selfish interests, greed and graft, over the collective interest of the citizenry, is responsible for our ‘unfortunate democracy’, in which everything is retrogressing and not advancing.



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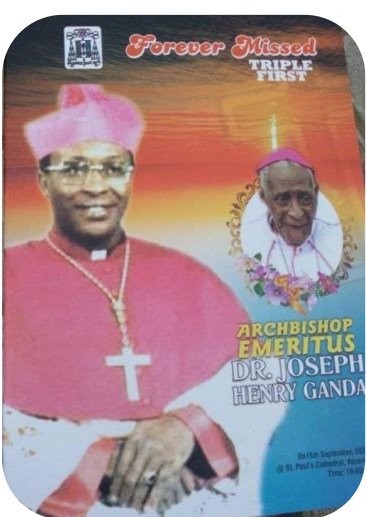
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COVER STORY

LATE ARCHBISHOP EMERITUS JOSEPH H. GANDA LAID TO REST



By Peter Konteh

Thousands gathered to pay final respects to Late Arch Bishop Emeritus Joseph H. Ganda at St. Paul's Cathedral in Kenema.

September 15, 2023 marked the culmination of a remarkable journey as thousands of people gathered at St. Paul's Cathedral in Kenema to bid farewell to the late Arch-bishop emeritus Joseph H. Ganda. The cathedral, which he himself constructed during his tenure as the Bishop of Kenema from 1971 to 1980, served as the fitting venue for the ceremony that highlighted his enduring legacy.

The atmosphere was filled with both solemnity and reverence as hundreds of priests, religious figures, and dignitaries from various corners of the globe paid their respects. Notably, five bishops and delegations from the West African region, as well as visitors from the United States and Europe, joined the local community to honor the life and achievements of Arch-bishop emeritus Joseph H. Ganda.

The sight of such a large and diverse gathering was a testament to the profound impact that Emeritus Joseph H. Ganda had on the lives of countless individuals.

As the ceremony commenced, the interior of the cathedral swelled with emotion and echoes of prayers. Eulogies were delivered, recalling the late Arch-bishop's unwavering commitment to his faith, his tireless efforts in the Church and country of Sierra Leone, and the significant contributions he made during his tenure.

The presence of international visitors underscored the global reach of Archbishop emeritus Joseph H. Ganda's influence, serving as a reminder that his impact extended far beyond the boundaries of Kenema, which left an

indelible mark on the hearts and minds of individuals around the world.

The ceremony culminated in a moving funeral mass, with prayers offered for the eternal peace and rest of the late Archbishop's soul. As the casket was laid to rest in the cathedral, a profound silence enveloped the space, accompanied by a collective sense of gratitude for his life and achievements.

The legacy of Archbishop emeritus Joseph H. Ganda will continue to inspire generations to come, serving as a beacon of hope and a reminder of the transformative power of faith and service. His memory will forever be cherished by the community he served and the countless lives he touched.



May his soul rest in peace.



Religious Obligations

THE ROSARY IN CATHOLIC LIFE

The Catholic Church in The Gambia is renowned for its adherence to the church's command of dedication to the recitation of the holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In this practice and devotion to the Virgin Mary, they also portray a deep reliance on the maternal love, care and protection of the Virgin Mary by invoking her assistance in times of need through fervent recitation of the holy rosary. During the trying days in the Gambia, following the political challenges that besieged the nation in 2016, the Catholic Church took to the rosary beads and organized a long distance rosary recitation procession that took them almost 3 hours, under the scorching heat of the sun, from St. Therese Catholic Church in Kanifing all through the highway to the city of Banjul. At the end of the day, the intention of the rosary procession was realized for all in the country. Peace! Peace reigned in The Gambia.

Annually, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, locally called 'Sang Marie', is well celebrated in The Gambia, especially at the Cathedral in Banjul. The day is marked with, among other events, devotion of the holy rosary in honor of Mary. There is always a street procession in which the faithful sing hymns, recite the rosary and walk the length of Independence Drive, to the Cathedral where the benediction and other prayers are done. In all parts of the world, Catholics show a special devotion to the Virgin Mary through the recitation of the rosary. For instance, universally, October is devoted to the Holy Rosary in all catholic communities across the world, and usually seen as a perfect time for Catholics to reflect upon the meaning of the Rosary and its significance in their walk of faith.

Now, what is the rosary in catholic life? The Rosary is taken from the Latin word "rosarium", which means "crown of roses" or "garland of roses." To us members of the Catholic Faith, the Rosary is a form of prayer that we use along with its namesake prayer beads. When referring to the prayer, the word Rosary is usually capitalized, and when talking about the beads, the lower-case form is used.

According to pious tradition, the idea of the Rosary was given to Saint Dominic when the Virgin Mary appeared to him in an apparition in the year 1214. This Marian apparition is given the title of 'Our Lady of the Rosary'. The Dominican priest and theologian Alanus de Rupe promoted the practice of the Rosary by establishing the "fifteen rosary promises" and founding several rosary confraternities.

Devotion to the Rosary is one of the most distinguishable features of popular Catholic spirituality. The Rosary inspires us to meditate on the mysteries of the lives of Jesus and Mary. Meditation is an important part of our lives as Catholics. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, meditation "engages thought, imagination, emotion and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary, in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart and strengthen our will to follow Christ."

The Rosary is a devotion in honor of the Virgin Mary. It is made up of a set number of prayers. At the start of the Rosary are the introductory prayers which are composed of



one 'Apostle's Creed', one 'Our Father', three 'Hail Mary's' and one 'Glory Be'.

In the 16th century, Pope Pius V established the standard fifteen Mysteries of the Rosaries, which are grouped into three: the Joyful Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries and the Glorious Mysteries. In 2002, Pope John Paul II added a set of five to the existing fifteen mysteries and these became known as the Luminous Mysteries. Today, the total number of mysteries is twenty.

The Joyful Mysteries include the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38), the Visitation (Luke 1:40-56), the Nativity (Luke 2:6-20), the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:21-39), and the Finding of the child Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:41-51).

Then come the Sorrowful Mysteries, which include the Agony in the Garden (Matthew 26:36-46), the Scourging (Matt. 27:26), the Crowning with Thorns (Matt. 27:29), the Carrying of the Cross (John 19:17), and the Crucifixion (Luke 23:33-46).

The third mystery is the Glorious Mysteries, which are the Resurrection (Luke 24:1-12), the Ascension (Luke 24:50-51), the Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4), the Assumption of Mary into heaven (Rev. 12), and her Coronation (Rev. 12:1).

The Luminous Mysteries include the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, the Wedding at Cana, and Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God, the Transfiguration and the Institution of the Eucharist.

All throughout the history of the Catholic Church, many popes and saints have encouraged praying the Rosary. As we begin to understand and appreciate the Rosary and pray it more frequently, we come to see the true meaning of its meditations. We begin to appreciate how its prayers are reminders not only of Mary the Mother of God, but of Christ himself.

Through Mary, we are led to a closer relationship with her son, Jesus. The Rosary is an invitation for us to present our needs to God and to love Him more. When we recite the twelve prayers that form the decade of the rosary, we need to deeply reflect on the mystery associated with that decade. Simple recitation, whether vocally or in silence, is not enough, because we miss the true essence of the prayers.

Praying the Rosary, therefore, is not just simply about reciting prayers. It involves reflecting on the grace of God.

Praying is a powerful act that lets us develop and strengthen our relationship with God, and the Rosary offers the same beautiful reward. By praying the Rosary, we meditate on the events in the life of Jesus Christ and this lets us know God more.

When we are unaware of the meditation aspect of the Rosary, we reduce the prayer to an empty, repetitive and meaningless gesture. In Matthew 6:7, Jesus Christ forbids us to practice prayer in meaningless and repetitive babbles. It is precisely the reflective nature of the Rosary that distinguishes it as a powerful and profound way of praying.

Rosaries are not just beads or a prayer that we recite during the month of October. Many spiritual battles have been won because of this symbolic act. Many hearts have been touched and many discouraged people have been uplifted because of the Rosary.

At Fatima, Our Lady ended her initial message in May with the direction, "Pray the Rosary every day in order to obtain peace for the world and the end of the war." So crucial and necessary is this call that Lucia, one of the three children that saw the Virgin Mary at Fatima, devotes a whole section of her book to the Rosary. Sister Lucia, at this time a Carmelite, repeats a question she was asked many times: "Why should Our Lady have told us to say the Rosary every day rather than to attend Mass every day?" "I cannot be absolutely certain of the answer, as Our Lady did not explain, and it never occurred to me to ask," Lucia answers. But, she does go on to share what she thought and came to understand about this call, willingly leaving "all interpretation of the meaning of the Message to Holy Church, because it pertains to the Church to do so..." God is a Father who adapts Himself to the needs and possibilities of His children. Now if God, through Our Lady, had asked us to go to Mass and receive Holy Communion every day, there would undoubtedly have been a great many people who would have said, quite rightly, that this was not possible.

Lucia goes on to say, "On the other hand, to pray the Rosary is something everybody can do, rich and poor, wise

and ignorant, great and small." The Rosary request keeps everyone in the loop. Anyone can pray the Rosary anywhere, whenever they are able. "All people of good will can and must say the Rosary every day," Lucia counsels. "Why? In order to put ourselves in contact with God, to thank Him for His benefits and ask for the graces we need. It is the prayer which places us in familiar contact with God, like the son who goes to his father to thank him for the gifts he has received, to talk to him about special concerns, to receive his guidance, his help, his support and his blessing."

Lucia describes how she believes that, besides the Holy Mass, the Rosary "is the most pleasing prayer we can offer to God and one which is most advantageous to our own souls. If such were not the case, Our Lady would not have asked for it so insistently."

Furthermore, Sister Lucia articulates the power and necessity of the Rosary beautifully when she says: "Even for those people who do not know how, or who are not able to recollect themselves sufficiently to meditate, the simple act of taking the rosary in their hands, in order to pray, is already to become mindful of God, and a mention in each decade of a mystery of the life of Christ recalls Him to their minds; this in turn will light in their souls a gentle light of faith which supports the still smoldering wick, preventing it from extinguishing itself altogether". So, what can happen if we neglect this directive from our heavenly Mother at Fatima? Sister Lucia doesn't mince words: "Those who give up saying the Rosary and who do not go to daily Mass have nothing to sustain them, and so end up by losing themselves in the materialism of earthly life." She concludes, "Thus, the Rosary is the prayer which God, through His Church and Our Lady, has recommended most insistently to us all as a road to and a gateway of salvation: 'Pray the Rosary every day.' How do you plan to celebrate the month of Rosary? What is the significance of the Rosary in your personal life? How has it strengthened you in your walk of faith?"

VIEWPOINT



By Philip Saine

Mary was conceived without original sin, agreed with the Virgin birth and participated in the redemption of Man. The ever Virgin Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory. She is queen of heaven and earth and of all peoples. Mary did not ascend into heaven on her own power, as Christ did, but was raised into heaven by God's grace.

The belief in the Assumption of Mary was a widely-held tradition and a frequent meditation in the writings of saints throughout the centuries and defined officially in the

CELEBRATION OF OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION (SANG-MARIE) 2023

past century. In 1950, Pope Pius XII made an infallible ex-cathedra statement in an Apostolic Constitution '*Manificientissimus deus*' officially defining the dogma of the Assumption. In fact, the Catholic Church believe in 4 dogmas of Mary, referred to as *The Marian Dogmas*, namely:

Perpetual Virginity - *she remained a virgin before, during and after Christ's conception and birth.*

Immaculate Conception - *Mary, from the first moment of her conception was kept free of every stain of original sin.*

Divine Motherhood - *Mary is the Mother of God.*

Assumption of Mary - *At the moment of her death, Mary was taken to heaven, body and soul.*

Catholics around the world mark the Solemnity of the

Assumption of Mary yearly on August 15th. Since the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic in March 2020. The Gambia couldn't celebrate this feast day; in 2022 the celebrations were on a low scale because of the Public Health restrictions. The year 2023, however, saw a full return of *Sang Marie* celebrations in The Gambia.

In attendance were: The Lord Mayor of Banjul, Rohey Malick Lowe and Rt. Reverend St. Arist Kodjo Baiden, Anglican Bishop of The Gambia

Most Reverend Bishop Gabriel Mendy, (*Bishop of the Diocese of Banjul*) gave both a Sang Marie Message and a Sermon on the very day. Bishop Gabriel stated that although the dogma of Mary's assumption into heaven, body and soul, was officially declared in 1950, the belief and practice has been there since the second century; this is evident through the writings of the saints.

At the visitation of Mary to her cousin Elizabeth, Mary was acknowledged as the Mother of God. Mary responded positively and affirmed the greatness of God in the *Magnificat*. The Assumption was one of the privileges that Mary received. 'The Almighty has done great things for me and holy is His name'.

Bishop Gabriel remarked that we should live our lives in accordance with God's plan and that the clergy and religious should be very grateful for what God has given to the diocese. The country also received much blessings including peace that many nations envy. He, however noted that recently, a section of Gambian society does not recognize or cherish the great things God has given to The Gambia

Bishop Gabriel elaborated on 'What God did for Mary and what God did for us (*humanity*) through Mary'; that Mary was special and deserved all the honour and praise. She was preserved from the stain of sin and offered her conscience to God in accepting the divine plan. The Bishop drew attention to the similarity between the vision of the woman and the dragon as described in the book of Revelation (*12 Vs 1-6*) with the identity of Mary.

The Mass, Vespers and Procession were solemn and the people rejoiced when there was heavy rains, bringing back

memories of 'Sang Marie' in olden days. A new statue of Mary, imported into The Gambia in August 2022, was first used in a procession on 15th August, 2023. It is beautifully cast, measuring 55 inches high and weighing 300lbs.

St. Kizito's Parish Church, Bakoteh, experienced heavy downpour just at the time of the Consecration, with heavy heavy rains were also reported from the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption in Banjul, and the Eglise Saint Francois d'Assie de Keur Massar Dakar. It could be imagined that the abundant rains would be abundant torrents of love and grace flowing from the heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Perhaps the only event missed was the usual greetings of the **Late Imam Tamsir Gaye** as he typically would briefly meet up with the procession along Independence Drive. This was a symbolic Muslim- Christian peaceful cohabitation.

At the end of all the religious activities, the worshipers and visitors enjoyed the company of the Gambia Army Band for a display of music and March. The social events continued with different traditional groups showcasing their talents and dancing skills. The hunting devil masquerade was in action with boisterous festivities, drumming and dancing. The 2023 Sang Marie was successful indeed and much more than words could say!

From The Gambia, the 'Sang Marie boat and crew' sailed to Manchester in the UK, Atlanta Georgia USA and then to Norway. In Manchester Fr. Bruno Toupan from The Gambia was present. The Bishop of Salisbury, John Arnold, officiated the service at the St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church. It was followed by a wonderful reception at St. Malachy Roman Catholic School.

In Atlanta, Fr. Anthony Gabisi officiated the mass celebrating the 30th anniversary of 'Sang Marie' in the US. It was a fantastic celebration that had a procession of the statue of Mary from the Immaculate Heart of Mary School ground to the Church. The occasion was highlighted by a Diaspora Group Awards.

PERSPECTIVE

By Andrew Sylva - andrewsylva1982@gmail.com

The author



Looking Beyond Financial Aid and Grants in the Contemporary Gambia

The development, growth and management of The Gambia have been far flung. Gambia has passed through the excruciating and painful experience of colonial exploitation (just like other African countries) that had robbed her of ancestral and God-given natural resources that would have been channelled into proper use to benefit her citizenry. Its development efforts have been marked with vicissitudes that at a time in their colonial development trajectory an idea was hashed if the country would be exchanged with other countries in the sub-region. This was ostensibly based on the fact that The Gambia was seen as not a viable entity enough, without meaningful natural resources. To achieve colonial drive the British in different occasions had to borrow money from the Sierra-Leonian Colonial Administration in order to cushion administrative overhead costs. Though, colonialism had come and gone but its trails are still very much around the

nooks and crannies of The Gambia. However, we cannot wish colonialism and its concomitant effects (aftermath) away but have to devise our own indigenous means of living with the former colonial virus of exploitation and its multiplier effects (neo-colonialism) which have refused to be flushed out from The Gambia's blood stream.

At independence the British reasoned that The Gambia would continue to be assisted with financial assistance in order to augment her development efforts. The Gambia's economy as is constituted today largely remains a donor based one, looking up for grants, handouts and aid from well-meaning developed countries of Europe and America. As it is today, the country cannot continue to be dependent on donors, aid and grants from the conceptual west and other philanthropic organisations. The thing here is for The Gambia to devise its own indigenous means of generating income and development.

This piece recommends that for The Gambia to overcome her present social, economic, political, health, education woes, etc., there is the urgent need for the people and the leadership of this country to create their own indigenous identity based on their own language, culture, technology, politics, economy, education, religion, craft, etc. that would be interwoven in good governance and transparency. This multi-dimensional approach to tackling the problems of the country would help give the country a new face-lift. Development studies have demonstrated that there is not a model or "recipe" for progress and modernization. A diversity of development policies is needed in order to face these structural problems of colonialism. Any real attempt at development must focus on the rupture of the old colonial legacy. Otherwise, social, political and economic change would purely constitute a perpetuation of actual unequal conditions that were set up during the colonial period.

Establishment of a strong agricultural industry, capable of providing food to Gambia's entire population is the first and most important step in economic stability for the country. Agriculture is a strong key to economic development and so, for The Gambia to further develop economically, it has to shift from current subsistence agriculture to industrial agriculture. Therefore, there is need to empower small-scale farmers, who produce the bulk of the nation's staple foods. The agenda would include the application of micro-credit as an instrument of economic empowerment aimed at providing resources to small-scale farmers to purchase critical inputs, including improved seeds and seedlings, fertilizers, agro-processing machinery, etc. This process is expected to spur agricultural output and boost farmer's income with a resultant promotion of economic development.

Profitability in the agricultural industry will allow for taxable property and income which the state can use to increase revenues and invest in education for what will be an increasingly unemployed labour force as a move is made from subsistence agriculture being a large part of GDP to a more manageable amount which will enable other sectors of the economy to develop.

Resource trade and manufacturing will also need to be grown in order to break from the colonial system. Recent research on colonialism opines that states need to use their resources to their own advantage and not perpetuate extravagance, despotism, opportunism, personal advancement and enrichment at the expense of the masses. The idea of enjoying the same economic and social lifestyles and privileges which the former colonial/imperial administrators enjoyed should be discontinued.

Government institutions need reorganization and empowerment. Lack of power is a universal and basic characteristic of poverty. Poverty is not solely a lack of income, but rather it is also characterized by a vicious cycle of powerlessness, stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion and material deprivation, which all mutually reinforce each other. Developing an inter-linkages approach can improve opportunities for more effective national cooperation, inclusive policies, poverty alleviation, improved national synergies, and stronger and more sustainable partnerships with even the private sector. The main driver of empowerment is economic: Governments' main role should be to deliver inclusive, pro-poor growth. In this approach, both the quantity and quality of a country's growth are decisive in empowering poor people, both directly, in terms of liberating them from hunger and want, and indirectly, by providing them with the means to acquire education, voice and agency.

Colonial legacies must be outgrown in favour of national interest. The Gambian government must work for the interest of the state and its citizens, not for the simple hold on to power and wealth which has permeated the country since independence began. It has to be noted that good governance which ensures decent living and employment is the best form of social security and is more effective in addressing poverty. It is also recognised that all workers whether in the formal or informal sector need to be protected as the security of their jobs and future needs to be safeguarded and guaranteed.

The development efforts of The Gambian Government are hampered by inadequate transport, communication, water and power infrastructure and good roads across the nooks and crannies of the country. The River Gambia is poorly utilized and should be upgraded to be a gate-way to other parts of West Africa. As a matter of fact, for the country to develop meaningfully and achieve the SDGs, it needs adequate infrastructure. Inadequate infrastructure remains a major obstacle towards the country achieving its full economic growth potential. The idea of depriving rural dwellers of the country of basic infrastructure should be discontinued.

Human capital development is an absolute necessity for The Gambia's economic development. The increase in infrastructure investment will require more engineers, technicians and artisans to implement new infrastructure projects and maintain the existing infrastructure. The availability of skills is one of the elements that investors wanting to invest in a country consider with the level of skills determining the country's productivity and competitiveness. There are a number of concerns regarding human capital development in the country and these require unique programmes focused on addressing them. These concerns must be addressed as a minimum: Poor quality of basic education including Mathematics and Science; Youth unemployed and unemployable; re-structure of the education system; Youth with qualifications but without experience.

Similarly, in order to improve on Science and Technology (S&T) literacy, the foundation has to be laid and this must begin from the schools. Pupils and students must be provided with early and regular contact with technology. Exposing these groups to technological concepts and hands-on design-related activities is the most likely way to help them acquire the desired knowledge, skills, ways of thinking and acting and capabilities consistent with S&T literacy.

The Gambia's economy needs robust diversification in many areas of production such as cotton, palm oil, fishing, sesame, cashew, cassava, biomass, rice, timber, hide and skin, yam, maize, poultry, livestock etc. Economic diversification holds great potential to increasing Gambia's resilience and would contribute to achieving and sustaining long term economic growth and development in the country. Broadly-based economies, active in a wide range of sectors, and firmly integrated into the sub-region, are better able to generate healthy and sustainable growth. However, the expansion of activities in underdeveloped sectors, or indeed the development of new activities, is a significant challenge and requires a combined effort of Gambian government and the private sector and with the assistance of African countries' stronger economies. In addition, and in light of the small size of the country's economy, a regional approach to economic diversification is imperative to reap the benefits of larger domestic markets and economies of scale.

Transparency and accountability should be the watch

dog of the Gambian Government in their development efforts. Gambia's natural and human resources have for many decades been a source of power and wealth for the country's ruling elites, and less often for Gambians themselves. The government should be transparent and accountable to the people who elected them. Transparency and accountability are critical for the efficient functioning of a modern economy and for fostering social well-being of the people. Transparency ensures that information is available that can be used to measure the authorities' performance and to guard against any possible misuse of powers. In that sense, transparency serves to achieve accountability, which means that authorities can be held responsible for their actions and inactions. Without transparency and accountability, trust will be lacking between the government and those whom it governs. The result would be social instability and an environment that is less than conducive for economic growth. A lack of transparency, integrity and accountability is related to economic under-performance and fetters progress toward poverty eradication in many developing nations, including The Gambia. As one of the world's most under-developed countries, the barriers to development and poverty eradication that corruption imposes are costs that The Gambia and other sub-Saharan African countries can ill afford.

Cutting down wasteful spending and eradicating corruption in The Gambia will go a long way in improving the economy of the country. As small as the Gambia is, its government's structures and Ministries are too many and this means the government would be spending a lot of money on these structures and Ministries/Departments. Money that would have been channelled into other important sectors of the economy is used to maintain these structures. As much as possible budget deficits that characterize Gambian government budgeting system since independence should be done away with. The Gambia government spends a lot of money on the citizens' behalf, on its staff, offices, vehicles, logistics, fuels and the like, and NONE of this goes to build more power plants, roads, housing schemes, hospitals and welfare projects. Each ministry has at least one Minister, with a Permanent Secretary, and on average 3 directors. The Ministers and Permanent Secretaries have personal assistants, special assistants and special advisers. Each of these expects to drive an official car to work, complete with police orderlies and other file carriers. Then they will need houses, furniture and running costs of the vehicles and utilities. The costs of all these somehow find their way into the overhead budgets of the ministries at the expense of tax payers' money.

In The Gambia as well as in other parts of Africa, leadership has posed a serious challenge to economic growth and development. What Gambia needs now is a resourceful, charismatic and visionary leader who will turn around the economy. The Gambian government in the First Republic was characterized with inefficiency; conservatism and ineptitude that it took a number of wrong decisions that have continued to hurt the country. For instance, what was the rationale for not establishing a university in the country at independence? The importance of a university education cannot be over-emphasized. Almost three decades after independence, it appears the government has produced more negative than positive benefits to the country. Even though it is more propitious to hold accountable the country's litany of problems on colonial legacy, the heartbreaking veracity lingers that the country, particularly their post-independence leaders are the focal source of their

misery.

The central government of The Gambia should as a matter of necessity set up Natural Resources Search Committee (N.R.S.C.) to explore the nooks and crannies of the country to search for untapped natural resources in the land. This committee should be made up of Gambian engineers, scientists, geologists, environmental specialists etc. The massive expanse of lands in the country still harbours some unidentified, untapped natural resources. Probably, who knows, one day, The Gambia may have solid and or liquid minerals to explore. There is need to maximize the available lands in the country to attain better economic growth and development.

The Gambia is a relatively poor country with little or no natural resources for now to boost with and also no money to spend on capital projects and in other essential areas which can benefit the poor masses. In this respect, the government can generate income through increasing export commodities as to raise the much-needed foreign exchange. In like manner, the idea of importing everything consumed in the country should be discontinued and in place of it, industries should be built to manufacture those basic goods and services consumed locally. This will conserve the hard-earned foreign exchange in the country. Again, if capital is obtained, it should be properly utilized. Equally, there is the need for proper economic planning at government level. Such planning should take cognizance of the nation's priorities, avoiding white elephant projects for mere prestige and patronage. Only projects that aim at raising the living standard of the population and consolidating the country's development efforts should be targeted.

The development of The Gambia majorly lies in its industrialization. At the moment the country has no industries that can produce basic commodities. Virtually, all products, as insignificant as candles, tooth picks, eggs, matches, soap, rice, butter, etc are all imported. This is made worse by the fact that the country does not seem to have an industrial policy. A major structural weakness of the industrial sector has been the neglect of intermediate and capital goods industries and of industries for large consumption. While the first category is essential to increased agricultural production and productivity, the second is necessary for satisfying the potential demand resulting from the increase of rural income. Indeed, Agro Industry for Food Security is appropriate for the economy of The Gambia. In order to enhance food security, it is essential that investments in agriculture go beyond improvements of on-farm productivity. Greater efforts and investments need to be devoted to development of post-production segments of agriculture value chains. Accelerated development of agro-industries will be an indispensable part of such a strategy.

The private sector can also play a role in boosting the economy of the country by driving innovations and economic activity in under-exploited sectors. It can, for instance, invest in Research and Development (R&D) for new activities. Moreover, private companies often stand at the frontier of new sectors and bring innovations to the economy. But many enterprises in The Gambia are informal, small-scale, and lack access to capital, thereby making it difficult for them to fully exploit business opportunities. In this case, the Government should find ways of boosting entrepreneurship, by creating favourable industrial and trade policies and eliminating bureaucratic obstacles to starting businesses in the country. Governments should be sensitive to the needs of the private sector, such as improving the business climate through

“outreach” for constructive partnerships with the private sector. Conversely, the private sector should reciprocate by engaging with government initiatives and take the lead in driving the agenda for diversifying the economy. There is no shortage of business opportunities in The Gambia but there are bureaucratic and policy barriers. The private sector is best placed to exploit them if the barriers are eliminated.

Intensive Research and Development (R&D) are apparently lacking in The Gambia and there could be no meaningful economic development without emphasis on R&D. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a three-pronged policy for Science and Technology (S&T) development with clearly distinguished support mechanisms for basic science, applied science, extension services and education. Basic science has the fundamental role to play in enhancing the quality of higher education for scientists, engineers and the society at large. The universities must be empowered to develop explicit links between their graduate and undergraduate programmes, support intellectual and financial investments for the development of materials for science teaching as well as research work. Fellowship and Scholarship programmes abroad should be revitalized and strengthened. Fellowships should be awarded with a clear perspective of returning to productive work in The Gambia and not to stay overseas after graduation, as it does not help the country in manpower development.

On the other hand, applied research should be strongly supported and evaluated in terms of its short-term scientific and medium or long-term practical results. Lack of appropriate evaluation procedures and strategies makes applied R&D run the risk of being expensive and of doubtful technical and commercial viability.

The Gambian government should not be an island in its development efforts and programmes. Working in

collegiality with other stronger economies like Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Ghana etc within the sub-region will accelerate her economic growth and development and consequently, improve the lives of its citizenry. Knowledge sharing should be more actively promoted in all the priority sectors of the economy to promote best practices and scaling up of successful demonstration projects. Capacity development and policy advisory technical assistance can be complemented by an Analytical Advisory Committee that would be charged with the responsibility of finding out areas of collaboration with other countries of the world in order to augment government’s efforts in the country.

Finally, the Gambian government should have a ‘New Growth Path and a National Development Plan’ to support its long-term goal of building a harmonious and prosperous society through livelihood improvement and regionally balanced and environmentally sustainable growth. Reforms should be carried out to stem rising income inequality, address structural imbalances and further open up the economy for further development. Public expenditure should be geared towards livelihood improvement, and strong support should be provided to education, healthcare, social security and public housing. Infrastructure should remain a high priority with an emphasis on promoting rural development and emerging strategic industries, in particular modern clean energy and environment-friendly technologies, while piloting development of green and low carbon cities. Depending on financial assistance, grants and aid from donors is not sustainable at all, we have the brain and the brawn to live outside handouts from developed climes. *Foreign aid goes from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries – Rand Paul.*

The author works in International Development / Development Cooperation spanning over a decade.

October & November

Gambian Christian Anniversaries

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 Dutchess 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.

The Pope's Prayer Intentions 2023

October - For the Synod

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

November - For the Pope

We pray for the Holy Father, as he fulfills his mission: May he continue to accompany the flock entrusted to him, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

KAADU DUNDA GI - The Living Word

Every Sunday at 12:00hrs on GRTS. Keep up-to-date with your Diocese!

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DIOCESAN NEWS

IN AND AROUND THE DIOCESE

PARISH FEASTS

Many parishes have during the year and in the most recent past celebrated feast days. The feast day celebrations are dated in the parish calendar and the feast celebrated together with well-wishers. You will notice that the months of September and October are very eventful in the Diocese of Banjul. Concerts, Parish Feasts, Gala Dinner etc fill these two months and many onlookers have questioned the why and how of the feast day celebrations. In the text of the Acts 4:32-37, the moral and background of the feast day celebration is referred. The early Christian community who embraced their new life and faith, felt that their unity was in gathering their resources where there would be a common fund to help them in their needs. Every one according to the text, brought whatever they had to the apostles and these sold them raised funds for their needs (Acts 4:38). The spirit and heart of the new community of the Resurrection did not decide to keep their belongings to themselves but rather shared among themselves.

BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH MUSICAL CONCERT

The Blessed Sacrament parish takes the lead this year with their 10th Annual Musical Concert with the theme ‘Better Together and Building on Interdenominational Unity’. They will be staging their concert on Friday 29th September 2023 at the Pencha Mi Hall, Paradise Suites Hotel with the Trinity Methodist Youth Fellowship Choir. This is a mark of ecumenism that has been the trademark of Christians in this country.

ST. THERESE’S PARISH FEAST

The parish feast celebration cannot be carried out devoid of the three aspects of worship, entertainment and fundraising. If one sees it as mere entertainment and eating and drinking then one has failed to see its value and meaning. So also for fundraising only, money is important for the needs of the Church but it cannot be the sole reason for the parish feast celebration. The first day of October falls on a Sunday and is the

Feast day of St. Therese’s parish. This year marks their 75th anniversary since the official opening of the first church opened on the 9th April 1948 with Fr. Francis Farrell as the its first parish priest. The anniversary will be celebrated in a grand style beginning with Holy Mass at 9am with Fr. Peter S. Lopez as the principal celebrant. A lot of activities are lineup after mass to continue the celebrations.

As part the 75th anniversary celebrations the St. Therese senior choir will be staging a musical concert on Friday 27th October 2023 at the Pencha Mi hall Paradise Suites Hotel. The senior choir has been in existence from the very beginning of the church and has contributed immensely to the lively and participatory liturgies of the parish.

LEGION OF MARY TRAVELS TO POPENGUINE-SENEGAL FOR A SPIRITUAL ENCOUNTER: Friday 6th- 9th October 2023.

The Legion of Mary is a lay apostolic association of Catholics, who with the sanction of the Church and under the powerful leadership of Mary Immaculate, Mediatrix of All Graces, serve the Church and their neighbor on a voluntary basis in about 170 countries. In the Diocese of Banjul the Legion of Mary of late has been spreading like wild fire with new members in almost all the parishes in the Diocese. They will be travelling to Popenguine on Friday 6th to 9th October, 2023 for a prayer weekend.

The objective of the Legion of Mary is the glory of God through the holiness of its members developed by prayer and active cooperation in Mary’s and the Church’s work. The unit of the Legion of Mary is called a praesidium, which holds a weekly meeting, where prayer is intermingled with reports and discussion. Persons who wish to join the Legion must apply for membership in a Praesidium. The Legion sees as its priority the spiritual and social welfare of each individual. The members participate in the life of the parish through visitation of families, the sick, both in their homes and in hospitals and through collaboration in every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by the parish. Every legionary is required to carry out a weekly apostolic work in the spirit of faith and in union with Mary.

REV. FR. ANGEL FERNANDEZ SDB RECTOR MAJOR OF THE SALESIANS OF DON BOSCO WILL VISIT THE GAMBIA

This is Rev. Father Angel Fernandez, the 10th Successor of Don Bosco, the Rector Major (General Superior) of the Salesians of Don Bosco.

He created Cardinal on the 30th September 2023 by Pope Francis and newly appointed as a member of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life.

Father Angel Cardinal Fernández, will visit The Gambia from the 16th to 18th November 2023. He is coming to visit the members of Salesian Family and the local Church of the Diocese of Banjul. The program of this visit will be published very soon.

RECTOR MAJOR’S VISIT
Don Angel Cardinal Fernandez SDB
10th Successor of Don Bosco

Thursday 16th November 2023
Arrival at Banjul Airport / Welcoming Ceremony
Friday, 17th November 2023

- 7:00am : Morning Prayer
- 7:30am : Breakfast
- 8:30am : Welcoming: the premises of the Church (Kunkujang)
- 9:00am: School Mass
- 10:30am: Encounter and dialogue with students and teachers
- 12:00pm: Free time
- 1:30pm: Lunch with SDB Community

Daily Mass Readings

October & November

**1 October, 2023 – Sunday**

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Ezekiel 18](#): 25-28Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 25](#): 4-5, 6-7, 8-9Second Reading: [Philippians 2](#): 1-11Alleluia: [John 10](#): 27Gospel: [Matthew 21](#): 28-32**2 October, 2023 – Monday**

The Guardian Angels Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Zechariah 8](#): 1-8Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 102](#): 16-18, 19-21, 29&22-23Alleluia: [Psalm 103](#): 21Gospel: [Matthew 18](#): 1-5, 10**3 October, 2023 – Tuesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Zechariah 8](#): 20-23Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 87](#): 1b-3, 4-5, 6-7Alleluia: [Mark 10](#): 45Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 51-56**4 October, 2023 – Wednesday**

Francis of Assisi, Religious Founder Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Nehemiah 2](#): 1-8Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 137](#): 1-2, 3, 4-5, 6Alleluia: [Philippians 3](#): 8-9Gospel: [Luke 9](#): 57-62**5 October, 2023 – Thursday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Nehemiah 8](#): 1-4a, 5-6, 7b-12Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 19](#): 8, 9, 10, 11Alleluia: [Mark 1](#): 15Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 1-12**6 October, 2023 – Friday**Ordinary Weekday/ Bruno, Priest, Hermit, Religious Founder/
Blessed Marie-Rose Durocher, Virgin, Religious FounderFirst Reading: [Baruch 1](#): 15-22Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 79](#): 1b-2, 3-5, 8, 9Alleluia: [Psalm 95](#): 8Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 13-16**7 October, 2023 – Saturday**

Our Lady of the Rosary Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Baruch 4](#): 5-12, 27-29Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 69](#): 33-35, 36-37Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 25Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 17-24**8 October, 2023 – Sunday**

Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Isaiah 5](#): 1-7Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 80](#): 9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20Second Reading: [Philippians 4](#): 6-9Alleluia: [John 15](#): 16Gospel: [Matthew 21](#): 33-43**9 October, 2023 – Monday**Ordinary Weekday/ Denis, Bishop, Martyr, &
Companions, Martyrs/ John Leonardi, PriestFirst Reading: [Jonah 1](#): 1 – 2: 1-2, 11Responsorial Psalm: [Jonah 2](#): 3, 4, 5, 8Alleluia: [John 13](#): 34Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 25-37**10 October, 2023 – Tuesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Jonah 3](#): 1-10Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 130](#): 1b-2, 3-4ab, 7-8Alleluia: [Luke 11](#): 28Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 38-42**11 October, 2023 – Wednesday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Jonah 4](#): 1-11Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 86](#): 3-4, 5-6, 9-10Alleluia: [Romans 8](#): 15bcGospel: [Luke 11](#): 1-4**12 October 2023 – Thursday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Malachi 3](#): 13-20bResponsorial Psalm: [Psalm 1](#): 1-2, 3, 4 and 6Alleluia: [Acts 16](#): 14bGospel: [Luke 11](#): 5-13**13 October, 2023 – Friday**

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Joel 1](#): 13-15; 2: 1-2Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 9](#): 2-3, 6 and 16, 8-9Alleluia: [John 12](#): 31b-32Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 15-26**14 October, 2023 – Saturday**Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed
Virgin Mary/ Callistus I, Pope, MartyrFirst Reading: [Joel 4](#): 12-21Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 97](#): 1-2, 5-6, 11-12Alleluia: [Luke 11](#): 28Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 27-28**15 October, 2023 – Sunday**

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Isaiah 25](#): 6-10aResponsorial Psalm: [Psalm 23](#): 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6Second Reading: [Philippians 4](#): 12-14, 19-20Alleluia: [Ephesians 1](#): 17-18Gospel: [Matthew 22](#): 1-14**16 October, 2023 – Monday**Ordinary Weekday / Hedwig, Religious/ Margaret
Mary Alacoque, VirginFirst Reading: [Romans 1](#): 1-7Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 98](#): 1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4Alleluia: [Psalm 95](#): 8Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 29-32**17 October, 2023 – Tuesday**

Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop, Martyr Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Romans 1](#): 16-25Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 19](#): 2-3, 4-5Alleluia: [Hebrews 4](#): 12Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 37-41**18 October, 2023 – Wednesday**

Luke, Evangelist Feast

First Reading: [Second Timothy 4](#): 10-17b

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Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 145](#): 10-11, 12-13, 17-18

Alleluia: [John 15](#): 16

Gospel: [Luke 10](#): 1-9

19 October, 2023 – Thursday

Isaac Jogues & John De Brébeuf, Priests, Religious, Missionaries', Martyrs & Companions, Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Romans 3](#): 21-30

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 130](#): 1b-2, 3-4, 5-6ab

Alleluia: [John 14](#): 6

Gospel: [Luke 11](#): 47-54

20 October, 2023 – Friday

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

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

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 32](#): 1b-2, 5, 11

Alleluia: [Psalm 33](#): 22

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 1-7

21 October, 2023 – Saturday

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary

First Reading: [Romans 4](#): 13, 16-18

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 105](#): 6-7, 8-9, 42-43

Alleluia: [John 15](#): 26b, 27a

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 8-12

22 October, 2023 – Sunday

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Isaiah 45](#): 1, 4-6

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 96](#): 1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10

Second Reading: [First Thessalonians 1](#): 1-5b

Alleluia: [Philippians 2](#): 15d, 16a

Gospel: [Matthew 22](#): 15-21

23 October, 2023 – Monday

Ordinary Weekday/ John of Capistrano, Priest

First Reading: [Romans 4](#): 20-25

Responsorial Psalm: [Luke 1](#): 69-70, 71-72, 73-75

Alleluia: [Matthew 5](#): 3

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

24 October, 2023 – Tuesday

Ordinary Weekday/ Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop, Religious Founder

First Reading: [Romans 5](#): 12, 15b, 17-19, 20b-21

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 40](#): 7-8a, 8b-9, 10, 17

Alleluia: [Luke 21](#): 36

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 35-38

25 October, 2023 – Wednesday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 6](#): 12-18

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 124](#): 1b-3, 4-6, 7-8

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

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 39-48

26 October, 2023 – Thursday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 6](#): 19-23

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 1](#): 1-2, 3, 4 and 6

Alleluia: [Philippians 3](#): 8-9

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

27 October, 2023 – Friday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 7](#): 18-25a

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 119](#): 66, 68, 76, 77, 93, 94

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 25

Gospel: [Luke 12](#): 54-59

28 October, 2023 – Saturday

Simon and Jude, Apostles Feast

First Reading: [Ephesians 2](#): 19-22

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 19](#): 2-3, 4-5

Gospel: [Luke 6](#): 12-16

29 October, 2023 – Sunday

Thirtieth Sunday in ordinary Time

First Reading: [Exodus 22](#): 20-26

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

Second Reading: [First Thessalonians 1](#): 5c-10

Alleluia: [John 14](#): 23

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

30 October, 2023 – Monday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 8](#): 12-17

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 68](#): 2 and 4, 6-7ab, 20-21

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

Gospel: [Luke 13](#): 10-17

31 October, 2023 – Tuesday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 8](#): 18-25

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 126](#): 1b-2ab, 2cd-3, 4-5, 6

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 25

Gospel: [Luke 13](#): 18-21

1 November, 2023 – Wednesday

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

2 November, 2023 – Thursday

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

3 November, 2023 – Friday

Ordinary Weekday/ Martin De Porres, Religious

First Reading: [Romans 9](#): 1-5

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

Alleluia: [John 10](#): 27

Gospel: [Luke 14](#): 1-6

4 November, 2023 – Saturday

Charles Borromeo, Bishop Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Romans 11](#): 1-2a, 11-12, 25-29

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 94](#): 12-13a, 14-15, 17-18

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

Gospel: [Luke 14](#): 1, 7-11

5 November, 2023 – Sunday

Thirty-First Sunday in ordinary Time

First Reading: [Malachi 1](#): 14b – [2](#): 2b, 8-10

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 131](#): 1, 2, 3

Second Reading: [First Thessalonians 2](#): 7b-9, 13

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

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

6 November, 2023 – Monday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 11](#): 29-36

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 69](#): 30-31, 33-34, 36

Alleluia: [John 8](#): 31b-32

Gospel: [Luke 14](#): 12-14

7 November, 2023 – Tuesday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 12](#): 5-16ab

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 131](#): 1bcde, 2, 3

Alleluia: [Matthew 11](#): 28

Gospel: [Luke 14](#): 15-24

8 November, 2023 – Wednesday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Romans 13](#): 8-10

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 112](#): 1b-2, 4-5, 9

Alleluia: [First Peter 4](#): 14

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

9 November, 2023 – Thursday

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

10 November, 2023 – Friday

Leo the Great, Pope, Doctor Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Romans 15](#): 14-21

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 98](#): 1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4

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

Gospel: [Luke 16](#): 1-8

11 November, 2023 – Saturday

Martin of Tours, Bishop Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Romans 16](#): 3-9, 16, 22-27

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 145](#): 2-3, 4-5, 10-11

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

Gospel: [Luke 16](#): 9-15

12 November, 2023 – Sunday

Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Wisdom 6](#): 12-16

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 63](#): 2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

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

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

Gospel: [Matthew 25](#): 1-13

13 November, 2023 – Monday

Frances Xavier Cabrini, Virgin, Religious Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Wisdom 1](#): 1-7

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 139](#): 1b-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10

Alleluia: [Philippians 2](#): 15d, 16a

Gospel: [Luke 17](#): 1-6

14 November, 2023 – Tuesday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [Wisdom 2](#): 23 – 3: 9

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 34](#): 2-3, 16-17, 18-19

Alleluia: [John 14](#): 23

Gospel: [Luke 17](#): 7-10

15 November, 2023 – Wednesday

Ordinary Weekday/ Albert the Great, Bishop, Religious, Doctor

First Reading: [Wisdom 6](#): 1-11

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 82](#): 3-4, 6-7

Alleluia: [First Thessalonians 5](#): 18

Gospel: [Luke 17](#): 11-19

16 November, 2023 – Thursday

Ordinary Weekday/ Margaret of Scotland, Married Woman/ Gertrude the Great, Virgin, Religious

First Reading: [Wisdom 7](#): 22b – 8: 1

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 119](#): 89, 90, 91, 130, 135, 175

Alleluia: [John 15](#): 5

Gospel: [Luke 17](#): 20-25

17 November, 2023 – Friday

Elizabeth of Hungary, Married Woman, Religious Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Wisdom 13](#): 1-9

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 19](#): 2-3, 4-5ab

Alleluia: [Luke 21](#): 28

Gospel: [Luke 17](#): 26-37

18 November, 2023 – Saturday – Ordinary

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin

Mary/ Dedication of the Churches of Peter and Paul/ Rose Philippine Duchesne, Virgin, Religious, Missionary/ Ordinary

First Reading: [Wisdom 18](#): 14-16; 19: 6-9

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 105](#): 2-3, 36-37, 42-43

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

Gospel: [Luke 18](#): 1-8

18 November, 2023 – Saturday – Proper

Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin

Mary/ 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

19 November, 2023 – Sunday

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: [Proverbs 31](#): 10-13, 19-20, 30-31

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

Second Reading: [First Thessalonians 5](#): 1-6

Alleluia: [John 15](#): 4a, 5b

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

20 November, 2023 – Monday

Ordinary Weekday

First Reading: [First Maccabees 1](#): 10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 119](#): 53, 61, 134, 150, 155, 158

Alleluia: [John 8](#): 12

Gospel: [Luke 18](#): 35-43

21 November, 2023 – Tuesday

Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Second Maccabees 6](#): 18-31

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

Alleluia: [First John 4](#): 10b

Gospel: [Luke 19](#): 1-10

22 November, 2023 – Wednesday

Cecilia, Virgin, Martyr Obligatory Memorial

First Reading: [Second Maccabees 7](#): 1, 20-31

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 17](#): 1bcd, 5-6, 8b and 15

Alleluia: [John 15](#): 16
Gospel: [Luke 19](#): 11-28

23 November, 2023 – Thursday – Ordinary
Ordinary Weekday/ Thanksgiving Day/ Clement I, Pope, Martyr/ Columban, Abbot, Missionary/ Blessed Miguel Augustín Pro, Priest, Religious, Martyr/ Ordinary
First Reading: [First Maccabees 2](#): 15-29
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 50](#): 1b-2, 5-6, 14-15
Alleluia: [Psalm 95](#):8
Gospel: [Luke 19](#): 41-44

23 November, 2023 – Thursday – Proper
Ordinary Weekday/ Thanksgiving Day/ Clement I, Pope, Martyr/ Columban, Abbot, Missionary/ Blessed Miguel Augustín Pro, Priest, Religious, Martyr/ 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

24 November, 2023 – Friday
Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest, Martyr, & Companions, Martyrs Obligatory Memorial
First Reading: [First Maccabees 4](#): 3-37, 52-59
Responsorial Psalm: [First Chronicles 29](#): 10bcd, 11abc, 11d-12a, 12bcd
Alleluia: [John 10](#): 27
Gospel: [Luke 19](#): 45-48

25 November, 2023 – Saturday
Ordinary Weekday/ Optional Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary/ Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin, Martyr
First Reading: [First Maccabees 6](#): 1-13
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 9](#): 2-3, 4 and 6, 16 and 19
Alleluia: [Second Timothy 1](#): 10
Gospel: [Luke 20](#): 27-40

26 November, 2023 – Sunday
Christ the King Solemnity (Thirty-Fourth and Last Sunday in Ordinary Time)
First Reading: [Ezekiel 34](#): 11-12, 15-17
Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 23](#): 1-2a, 2b-3, 5, 6
Second Reading: [First Corinthians 15](#): 20-26, 28
Alleluia: [Mark 11](#): 9, 10
Gospel: [Matthew 25](#): 31-46

27 November, 2023 – Monday
Ordinary Weekday
First Reading: [Daniel 1](#): 1-6, 8-20
Responsorial Psalm: [Daniel 3](#): 52, 53, 54, 55, 56
Alleluia: [Matthew 24](#): 42a, 44
Gospel: [Luke 21](#): 1-4

28 November, 2023 – Tuesday
Ordinary Weekday
First Reading: [Daniel 2](#): 31-45
Responsorial Psalm: [Daniel 3](#): 57, 58, 59, 60, 61
Alleluia: [Revelation 2](#): 10c
Gospel: [Luke 21](#): 5-11

29 November, 2023 – Wednesday
Ordinary Weekday
First Reading: [Daniel 5](#): 1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28
Responsorial Psalm: [Daniel 3](#): 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67
Alleluia: [Revelation 2](#): 10c
Gospel: [Luke 21](#): 12-19

30 November 2023 – Thursday
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

Cont'd From Page 12

5:00pm: Courtois visit to the Bishop of Banjul (Fajara / Westfield)
6:30pm: Solemn Vespers: Priest and religious. (G.P.I)
7:00pm: Good evening talk with priest and religious (G.P.I).
8:00pm: Dinner / Reception (G.P.I)

Saturday, 18th November 2023

7:00am : Morning Prayer
7:30am: Breakfast with the SDB community and talk
9:30am: Meeting with Animators and Friends of Don Bosco (Kunkujang)
11:00am: Blessing of “Don Bosco Garden” (Kunkujang)
12:00pm: Solemn Eucharist / Procession to Our Lady grotto (Kunkujang)
1:30pm: Lunch (Salesian family, Parishioners, diocesans groups). Entertainments (Kunkujang)
4:30pm: End of the program and dismissal.
Departure to Banjul Airport

COMMITTEE OF PREPARATION OF RECTOR MAJOR'S VISIT

**Don Angel Cardinal Fernandez SDB
16th to 18th November, 2023**

EXECUTIVE: Fr. Carlos 1, Fr. Peace, Mr Paul Odemiwa, Bishop Office.
LUTURGY: Fr. Carlos 1, Mr. Joh L. R. Mendy, PM Sisters,

Miss Joyce Marietou Mendy, Mr Pierre Brasil Mendy.
PROTOCOL: Fr. Carlos 1, Mr. Paul Odemiwa, Bishop Office, Mr Pierre Sarr
COMMUNICATION: Fr. Carlos 2, Fr. Peter Lopez, Simon Gomez
FOOD: Fr. Peace, Mr Antoinette Gomez, Mrs Augustina,
LOGISTICS: Fr. Peace, Sang Marie Correa, Mr David Awany Mendy, Mr. Alphonse Mendy
BUDGET: Mr Peace and Mr David Mendy

COAT OF ARMS
His Most Reverend Eminence Cardinal **ÁNGEL FERNÁNDEZ ARTIME SDB**

SALESIAN PROVINCE OF BANGALORE
www.dbbangalore.org

THE FIGURES

- MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS**
It was Mary, sent by Jesus, who inspired and sustained Don Bosco in all his endeavours
- THE ANCHOR**
The anchor promised stability and security and therefore a symbol of faith and hope
- JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD**
Jesus is the Good the shepherd who leads his people to life

SUFFICIT TIBI GRATIA MEA

MOTTO
MY GRACE IS ENOUGH FOR YOU

Weekday Celebrations

October & November



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

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 is 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.

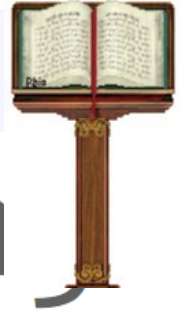
Praying for the dead is an ancient Christian tradition, but it was Odilo, Abbot of Cluny, in France, who in AD998 designated a specific day for remembering and praying for those in the process of purification. This started as a local feast in his monasteries and gradually spread throughout the Catholic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

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

Our Sunday Reading

1st October, 2023*Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A*

1st Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
2nd Reading: Philippians 2:1-11 or Philippians 2:1-5
Alleluia: John 10:27
Gospel: Matthew 21:28-32

Homily Theme: Tax Collectors and Prostitutes Will Enter the Kingdom of God Before You – Matthew 21:28-32

Verse of the Day Reflection: These words of Jesus are spoken to the chief priests and elders of the people. They are very direct and condemning words. They are also words spoken, so as to awaken the consciences of these religious leaders. These religious leaders were full of pride and self-righteousness. They held to their own opinions which were wrong. For that reason, Jesus makes it clear that tax collectors and prostitutes were on the path to holiness, whereas these religious leaders were not. This would have been hard for them to accept.

In which category do you find yourself? Sometimes, those who are considered “religious” or “pious” struggle with a similar pride and judge others as the chief priests and elders of Jesus’ time. This is a dangerous sin because it leads a person into much obstinacy. It is for this reason that Jesus was so direct and so harsh. He was attempting to break them free from their obstinacy and prideful ways. The most important lesson we can take from this passage is to seek the humility, openness, and genuineness of the tax collectors and prostitutes. They were praised by our Lord because they could see and accept the honest truth. Sure, they were sinners, but God can forgive sin when we are aware of our sin. If we are not willing to see our sin, then it’s impossible for God’s grace to enter in and heal. Reflect, today, upon how open you are to seeing the truth of God and, especially, to seeing your own fallen and sinful state. Do not be afraid to humble yourself before God, admitting your faults and failures. Embracing this level of humility will open the doors of God’s mercy toward you.

Prayer: Lord, help me to always humble myself before You. When pride and self-righteousness enter in, help me to hear Your strong words and to repent of my obstinate ways. I am a sinner, dear Lord. I beg for Your perfect mercy. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.

8th October, 2023*Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A*

1st Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20
2nd Reading: Philippians 4:6-9
Alleluia: John 15:16
Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43

Homily Theme: The Stone That The Builders Rejected Has Become The Cornerstone – Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-12

Verse of the Day Reflection: Jesus had nothing other than pure and perfect love in His Heart. He wanted the absolute best for everyone He encountered. And He was willing to offer the gift of His life to whoever would accept it. Though many have accepted it, many have also rejected it. It’s important to understand that the rejection Jesus experienced left deep pain and suffering. Certainly, the actual Crucifixion was extraordinarily painful. But the wound He experienced in His Heart from the rejection of so many, was His greatest pain and caused the greatest of suffering. Suffering in this sense was an act of love, not an act of weakness. Jesus didn’t suffer interiorly because of pride or a poor self-image. Rather, His Heart hurt because He loved so deeply. And when that love was rejected, it filled Him with the holy sorrow spoken of in the Beatitudes (“Blessed are they who mourn...” Matthew 5:4). This sort of sorrow was not a form of despair; rather, it was a deep experience of the loss of the love of another. It was holy, and a result of His burning love for all. When we experience rejection, it is hard to sort out the pain we feel. It’s very hard to let the hurt and anger we feel turn into a “holy sorrow”, which has the effect of motivating us toward a deeper love of those whom we mourn over. This is difficult to do, but is what our Lord did.

The result of Jesus doing this was the salvation of the world. Imagine if Jesus would have simply given up? What if, at the time of His arrest, Jesus had called on the myriads of angels to come to His rescue? What if He would have done this thinking, “These people are not worth it”? The result would have been that we would have never received the eternal gift of salvation through His Death and Resurrection. Suffering would not have been transformed into love. Reflect, today, upon the deep truth that rejection is potentially one of the greatest gifts we have to fight against evil. It’s “potentially” one of the greatest gifts because it all depends on how we ultimately respond.

Prayer: Lord, help me to be that cornerstone. Help me not only to forgive every time I’m hurt, but let me also offer love and mercy in return. You are the divine and perfect example of this love. May I share in this same love,

crying out with You, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” Jesus, I trust in You. Amen

15th October, 2023

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1st Reading: Isaiah 25:6-10A

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 23:1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6

2nd Reading: Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20

Alleluia: Ephesians 1:17-18

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14 or Matthew 22:1-10

Homily Theme: Parable of the Wedding Feast/Banquet – Matthew 22:1-14

Verse of the Day Reflection: In this parable of the wedding feast, the banquet is the Kingdom of Heaven where there is God, who is the King, the attendants are the righteous people, who have prepared themselves to be in the presence of God and the man without the wedding garment symbolizes the sinners. In the earlier verses, we see how Jesus explains how God sent His prophets to preach to the people of Israel, but they were mistreated and killed. God got angry and burnt their towns and their cities. God then decided to also invite to the Kingdom of Heaven all the other nations, besides the people of Israel. These other nations are, in this parable, the people on the main roads. These are the Christians who have heard about the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now, the main focus comes to this man without a wedding garment. What is the wedding garment? The wedding garment symbolizes the state of being prepared in our hearts to know, love, serve, praise, and glorify God all the days of our lives. It is being a repentant sinner, who is ready to be in the holy presence of God. On the last day, we will be assembled in front of God, who will pinpoint all those not prepared to be in His presence; those who have not repented of their sins; those who do not even know Him; or those who are just lukewarm Christians, and throw them into the fiery Gehennah, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. Let us, therefore, be prepared always for the last day, when Jesus Christ the King will come to gather those of us who are worthy of His presence and join Him in the Kingdom of Heaven, while those who do not have the ‘wedding garment’, will be thrown into the fires of Hell.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for always reminding us of our destiny and fate here on earth. Help us to always stick to our core mandate which is to know, love, serve, praise, and glorify the Lord, all the days of our lives. Amen.

22nd October, 2023

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1st Reading: Isaiah 45:1, 4-6

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 96:1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5B

Alleluia: Philippians 2:15D, 16A

Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21

Homily Theme: Give to Caesar What Belongs to Caesar and to God What Belongs to God – Mark 12:13-17, Matthew 22:15-21

Verse of the Day Reflection: They say two things that highlight Jesus’ virtues of humility and sincerity: “You are not concerned with anyone’s opinion;” “You do not regard a person’s status.” Of course, they went on to their trick Him into breaking Roman law. Jesus does not fall for their trick and outsmarts them in the end. However, these virtues are good for us to reflect upon, because we should strive to have them alive in our own lives. First, we should not be concerned with others’ opinions. But this must be properly understood. It’s important to listen to and consult others and to be open-minded. Other people’s insights can be crucial to making good decisions in life. But what we should avoid is the danger of allowing others to dictate our actions, out of fear. Sometimes the “opinions” of others are negative and wrong. We can all experience peer pressure in various ways. Jesus never gave in to the false opinions of others, nor did He allow the pressure of those opinions to change how He acted. Secondly, they point out that Jesus does not allow the “status” of another to influence Him. Again, this is a virtue. What we have to know is that all people are equal in the mind of God.

Reflect, today, upon whether these words could also be said about you. Strive to learn from the statements of these Pharisees and Herodians; strive to live a life of integrity and humility. If you do so, you will also be given a share of the wisdom of Jesus, so as to navigate the most difficult snares of life.

Prayer: Lord, I do want to be a person of honesty and integrity. I want to listen to the good advice of others, but not be influenced by the errors or pressures that may also come my way. Help me to always seek You and Your truth in all things. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen

29th October, 2023

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1st Reading: Exodus 22:20-26

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 18:2-3, 3-4, 47, 51

2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:5C-10

Alleluia: John 14:23

Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40

Homily Theme: Which Commandment is the Greatest? – Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-34

Verse of the Day Reflection: The commandment of love is the most important in this world because the lack of it causes us to start writing other small earthly laws to micro-manage what would have been handled well by embracing love in the first place. All the evils of this world are brought about by lack of love for God and for our neighbours. Earthly laws are enacted to prevent a person from hurting another person or the environment around them. If we love God, we would take care of the environment, and all that lives on the land and in the sea, just as He commanded man during creation. If we love our neighbours, we wouldn’t hurt them physically, socially or psychologically. We would be living in perfect harmony, just the way God intended for us. But, because we do not

have love in our hearts, everything else in us and around us falls apart. Therefore, let us start loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, all our soul and all our mind and loving our neighbours as ourselves, and we will start seeing the world around us changing for the better, with less crimes, murders, plunder of public resources, corruption and other evils brought about by lack of love.

Prayer: Lord God, we love You with all our hearts, mind and soul. We ask You to give us the strength and will to continue loving our neighbours as ourselves, despite all the brutality, persecution, hatred, jealousy and malice that we receive from them on a daily basis. May we not seek revenge because we place all these burdens unto Your able hands. Amen.

5th November, 2023

Thirty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1st Reading: Malachi 1:14B-2:2B, 8-10
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 131:1, 2, 3
2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 2:7B-9, 13
Alleluia: Matthew 23:9B, 10B
Gospel: Matthew 23:1-12

Homily Theme: Whoever Humbles Himself Will Be Exalted – Matthew 23:1-12, Luke 14:11

Verse of the Day Reflection: Humility seems like such a contradiction. We are easily tempted to think that the way to greatness involves letting everyone know all that we do well. There is a constant temptation for most people to put forward their best face and to hope others will see that and admire it. We want to be noticed and praised. And we often try to make that happen by the little things we do and say. And often we tend to exaggerate who we are.

On the flip side, if someone criticizes us and thinks ill of us it has the potential of being devastating. If we hear that someone said something negative about us we may go home and be depressed or angry about it the rest of the day, or even the rest of the week. Why? Because our pride is wounded and that wound can hurt. It can hurt unless we have discovered the incredible gift of humility. Humility is a virtue that enables us to be real. It enables us to cut through any false persona we may have and simply be who we are. It enables us to be comfortable with our good qualities, as well as our failures. Humility is nothing other than being honest and true about our lives and being comfortable with that person. Jesus gives us a wonderful lesson in the Gospel passage above that is very hard to live, but is absolutely key to living a happy life. Humility is sincerity and genuineness. And when people see this quality in us, they are impressed. Not so much in a worldly way, but in an authentic human way. They will not look at us and be envious, rather, they will look at us and see the true qualities we have and enjoy them, admire them and want to imitate them. Humility enables the real you to shine through. And, believe it or not, the real you is someone who others want to meet and get to know. Reflect, today, on how genuine you are. Let God strip away every false image of yourself, so that the true you can shine forth. Humble yourself in this way and God will take you and exalt you in His way, so that your heart can be seen and loved by those around you.

Prayer: Lord, make me humble. Help me to be sincere and honest about who I am. And in that honesty, help me to let Your Heart, living in mine, shine through for others to see. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.

12th November, 2023

Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1st Reading: Wisdom 6:12-16
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
 or 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14
Alleluia: Matthew 24:42A, 44
Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

Homily Theme: Parable of the Ten Virgins – Matthew 25:1-13

Verse of the Day Reflection: Jesus explains to us what going to the Kingdom of Heaven will be like in this parable of the ten virgins. So let us give some flesh to the bone. The ten virgins are all of us who are alive and live in this world. The wise virgins are those of us who have heard, understood, and practiced the teachings of Christ, while the foolish virgins are those who heard but did not understand the teachings of Christ or understood but did not practice them.

The lamps are our hearts, while the oil for our lamps is the good values and good deeds that Jesus Christ, the bridegroom, teaches us to have and to do. The merchants are our pastors, priests, or our fellow faithful, who we go to for confessions, prayers, and good counsel. Midnight is the unknown day or the hour when Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, will come again to take the righteous ones to Heaven for the everlasting wedding feast, while closing the door of Heaven on the wicked ones, who will be thrown into the fiery Gehennah. Jesus uses this parable to enlighten us about how going to the Kingdom of Heaven will be very unpredictable. He instructs us that since no one knows the day or the hour when He will come to judge the living and the dead, we should be prepared all the time, by always doing God’s work and loving Him with all our hearts, souls, minds and loving our neighbours as ourselves. Therefore, let us not be caught unawares when Jesus comes back to gather His harvest back to Heaven, because He has already warned us about it. Let Jesus never say to us, “I do not know you.”

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, we want to join You in the everlasting wedding feast in Heaven. You have told us that no one knows the day or the hour when You will come for us on the last day. Therefore, be with us always, so that we can resist all evils that can deplete the oil reserve in our hearts. Help us to always do the will of God by loving the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls and minds and loving our neighbours as ourselves. Amen.

19th November, 2023

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

1st Reading: Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31
Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5
2nd Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

Alleluia: John 15:4A, 5B

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30 or Matthew 25:14-15, 19-21

Homily Theme: Parable of the Talents: To Everyone Who Has, More Will Be Added and He Will Become Rich – Matthew 25:14-30, Matthew 13:12, Luke 19:11-28

Verse of the Day Reflection: This parable of the talents is a perfect example of our lives here on earth. God created each and every one of us and placed us here on earth for a purpose. He put into each of us different talents, so that we can use them to work on His behalf here on earth. There is so much work here on earth to be done and God cannot do it on His own, so He creates us and gives us different strengths to accomplish specific assignments for Him. Now, how do we identify that specific assignment that God has given us? We know our talents by identifying those passions and hobbies that we find ourselves doing effortlessly, with self-drive, and also which benefit positively those around us. For example, you may have a passion for helping the needy and the orphans, therefore, you use any coin or time you have at your disposal to be of service to them. That is one of the talents Jesus is talking about. Others may have passions, knowledge, or training in medicine. Now, Jesus tells us that, that is a talent that has been given to you by God. You know, it's God's work to heal but He has delegated that work to you as a doctor to take care of the sick by treating them. And treat them the best you can, with all the knowledge and ability given to you by God. This example applies to all other professions, occupations, and skills in the labour market. We were given different capabilities to make sure we take care of everything around us, including the environment, animals and fellow human beings. Now, at the end of time, God will ask you, "How did you use that talent or knowledge or skills or expertise that I gave you to serve Me and your neighbour?" He will also ask a doctor, "Why did you send away a sick widow without treatment just because she did not have enough for the consultation fee?" These questions will be asked to each one of us by God if we failed to be of service to other people when we had the opportunity, capacity, and capability to do so. Therefore, let us use our skills, passions, expertise, knowledge etc, to serve those around us, in the best way possible, with all the love we have and with utmost justice and by doing this, we will be doing the work God created us for.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, help me to identify my talent, so that I may work for You in the best way possible by being of service to other people who require my services. Give me enough graces, so that I may never despise my talent, and may I never use my talent to hurt, injure, harm, or inflict pain on those who come to me for service. Amen.

26th November, 2023
Feast of Christ the King 2023

1st Reading: Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28

Alleluia: Mark 11:9, 10

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

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

Verse of the Day Reflection: Happy Solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe! 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 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. The difficulty with this is that it's very easy for us to reject this kind of kingship.

As King, Jesus desires to lead every aspect of our lives and in all things. He desires to become the absolute ruler and monarch of our souls. He wants us to come to Him for everything and to become dependent upon Him always. But, He will not impose this sort of kingship upon us. We must accept it freely and without reservation. Jesus will only govern our lives if we freely surrender ourselves to Him. When that happens, though, His Kingdom begins to become established within us! And through us in the world. 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. We know Jesus requires this of us for the good of our souls, but it must still be embraced freely. However, there are some things that we must "impose" upon others. The protection of the unborn, poor and vulnerable must be "imposed." The freedom of conscience must be written into our laws. The freedom to practice our faith openly (religious liberty) within any institution must be "imposed" also. And there are many other things we could list here.

What's important to point out is that, at the end of time, Jesus will be returning to Earth in all His glory and He will then establish His permanent and unending Kingdom. At that time, all people will see God as He is, and His law will become one with "civil" law. Every knee will bend before the great King and all will know the truth. At that time, true justice will reign and every evil will be corrected. What a glorious day that will be! 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.

Go to *Universalis* website for Morning and Evening Prayer, Mass & Vespers every day as you wish, in company with priests and lay-people throughout the world?

Continued from back page

Theologically, it is important to note that Matthew was influenced by Mark in connecting the “son of David” title and miracle stories (Mark 10:47-48) with *evlee,w* (have mercy [Mt 9:27-31; 20:29-34]), and most likely in the formulation of his introduction to the fulfillment quotations: *πληρουσθαι* (fulfilling) the scriptures (Mk 14:49).

Other noteworthy features include the genealogy (1:1-17), which leads the keen reader from an exclusive Jewish perspective to a wider, all-inclusive and universal perspective. But the universality of Matthew’s Gospel goes beyond the genealogy. In Matthew, there is a strong tendency towards integration, both inwardly and outwardly. Jesus shares some basic convictions of Judaism: covenantal nomism, the importance of the Torah, etc. The formulation of these convictions had to be done in the age of Hellenism. Against this background of an over-powerful Hellenistic culture, Jesus and his renewal movement attempted to preserve Jewish identity or to redefine it. Unlike other renewal movements (e.g., the movement of the Zealots) which had tendencies toward segregation, in the case of Jesus, this identity is defined in a comparatively “open” way. Relevant to this position are the following points:

Jesus activates the universalistic Jewish tradition of the pilgrimage of the nations to Zion (Mt 8:10ff), and in his tradition the rule of God is open to the influx of pagans (8:11; 15:21-28; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19).

The Jesus movement demonstrates a deliberate approach to all those who do not correspond to the traditional norms and stand on the periphery. Here Jesus activates the Jewish belief in a merciful and gracious God against other tendencies (9:10-13).

Apart from some polemical dialogues with the Jewish authorities, Jesus and his movement avoid a direct/violent protest against both Jewish and foreign leaders/rulers (26:51-53). The movement formulates Jewish identity in such a way that, in principle, it avoids clashing with the legions.

Whereas other renewal movements usually intensify specifically Jewish norms, in the Jesus movement intensification of the Torah is in the case of universal ethical norms; at the same time, we find a relaxation of norms which bring segregation. Examples include Jesus’ teachings on the Sabbath commandment and the laws relating to cleanness (12:1-8, 9-14; 15:1-3, 10-11).

To be added to this is the strong literary characteristic found in the constant polemic between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders of his time.

Some scholars classify the Gospel as a biography, one that originated at the intersection of two cultures (Jewish and gentile/Greek). Representatives of this position call attention to the numerous similarities between Gospels and ancient biographies: among them the chronological framework, the episodic style, the partially thematic-systematic structure (as we find in Matthew), and the parenetic purpose. The genealogy, birth and infancy narratives are also biographical. In response to skeptics and critics, they explain that the only difference between Gospels and ancient biographies is that one is about instructions and the other about faith.

Others, in more recent times, have designated a genre based on the *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel. These describe Matthew’s Gospel as a lectionary or a catechism.²

(b) Peter Ellis, among many, notes that the tone and content of the gospel indicate that Matthew’s audience or readers were as Semitic as himself. According to him,

Matthew takes for granted their acquaintance with the text of the Old Testament, with the haggadic and apocalyptic literature, with Jewish customs and expressions, with the oral tradition of the Jews, and with the teaching authority of the Pharisees. But there are others who argue in favor of a Greek audience. Their argument is supported by the text itself (e.g. 1:23; 27:48) which presupposes that the readers speak Greek; Aramaic or Hebrew is not presupposed.

(c) Despite some debate amongst scholars as to whether the author of the Gospel was a Jewish Christian or Gentile Christian, the best part of both internal and external evidences declare that the Matthew to whom the Gospel is attributed was a member of the Jewish people. Although nowhere in the book does it say who wrote it, tradition attributes it directly or indirectly to the Apostle Matthew.

(d) The exact date of the composition of this Gospel is equally disputed. There are two views. According to R. France, a minority of scholars give the Gospel a pre-70 A.D. date of composition. The majority view is that the Gospel was written in the fourth quarter of the first century. Although there is difficulty in establishing the exact date of the composition of the Gospel, there are indications that the author wrote after the fall of Jerusalem (cf. Mt 22:7) when Christians were being compelled to dissociate themselves from Judaism and become completely independent of the synagogue. It was about this same time that the Pharisees of the Jamnian Synod took overt action against Jewish Christians. Before 85 A.D., the Pharisees had tried to preserve Jewish life against the disruption caused by the Roman invasion and conquest of 66-71 A.D. This effort made for the survival of Judaism began in a Jamnian school. Jamnia did more than ensure the survival of Judaism; it also set up defenses against the growing influence of its offshoot – Christianity. “Matthew’s Gospel has all the characteristics of a Jewish-Christian reaction to the Judaism of Jamnia that Jews followed after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.” Whatever these discrepancies may posit, there is a consensus that the gospel emerged after Mark’s Gospel.

(e) In the socio-political perspective, Israel was a vassal nation under the yoke of Roman imperialism. While most Jews ignored the messiah and were centered on the Torah, some of them harbored the prospect of a messiah-king. Young Christianity already celebrated this messiah. Matthew’s Gospel makes marked effort to confirm Jesus of Nazareth as the long awaited messiah, and to redefine the nature and object of his kingship.

(f) The actual geographical location in which the Gospel was written remains a matter of debate. However, many scholars conclude that it was somewhere in Syria or Palestine (the latter being generally assumed in patristic accounts). U. Luz gives four arguments in favor of Syria: (1) The mention of Syria in 4:24. (2) The curious title of “Nazarene” in 2:23, which only makes sense if one knows that the Syrian Christians also called themselves Nazarenes. (3) The reference, in 15:22, to the Syro-Phoenician woman as “chananaia,” a term less likely to be a biblicalism for “Canaanite woman” than the self designation of the local Phoenician population. (4) Early references are made by Ignatius of Antioch and the author of the Didache to the Gospel of Matthew in Syria. The exact place in Syria is, however, uncertain. Antioch has also been suggested as a possible location, by a few scholars.

(To be continued)

STUDY THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, FOR IT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.

KNOWING THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW IN CONTEXT

By Rev. Fr. Gabou Secka

The Gospel of Matthew stands at the beginning of the New Testament canon and occupies a primary place in it. It is not, however, the first work of the gospel genre to appear. Many scholars, like Luz, agree that the author of the Gospel depended on two main sources. On the one hand he depended on the already existing Gospel of Mark which, it is presumed, had a place in the matthean community; on the other hand, the Sayings Source or “Q.”

This does not, in any way, reduce the author of this gospel to a mere collector of sources or traditions. Alongside these two main sources, Matthew offers a great deal of material of its own which stems not only from oral tradition, but also includes redactional formation. Stendahl was the first to state that the Gospel must not be seen solely as the monumental work of a single individual, but also as coming from the tradition of a community – a “school.” The Gospel is not just a haphazard collection of sayings and deeds of Jesus, but a well-structured, highly articulated, and deeply theological opus. Matthew has a methodology, and our understanding of the Gospel will depend, to a large degree, on our ability to analyze that methodology, according to the accepted principles of redaction criticism. Therefore, it suffices to say that, to a considerable extent, the author of the gospel of Matthew is responsible for its final form.

Basically, the Gospel of Matthew has been described as the Gospel of the kingdom. The phrase $\eta \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\iota\alpha \tau\omicron \nu \sigma\upsilon\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omega\nu$ (the kingdom of heaven) appears 20 times in the Gospel, and in 17 verses. It is the central theme of the Gospel. With some degree of verisimilitude, the great discourses of the Gospel can be seen as built around this theme:

Chapters 5-7 describe the conditions for entry into the kingdom.

In chapter 10, we read about messengers heralding the kingdom.

From chapters 13 onward, the Gospel presents different imageries of “the kingdom of heaven” (13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47:18:23; 20:1; 22:2; 25:1).

Chapter 18 focuses on mutual relationships within the kingdom.

Chapters 24-25 deal with final manifestations of the kingdom.

Even though there are other themes to be discovered in the Gospel of Matthew, they may be seen in subordination to this central theme.

Matthew’s christological presentation is clear. Jesus, the Christ, is the herald of the kingdom. Matthew is not concerned about giving an intensely “human” picture of Jesus; rather, he gives an image of a Jesus, whose divine power constantly shines through. To be added to this christological dimension is the fact that, teaching on the church plays an important role in the “Gospel of the kingdom.” At the center of this teaching stands the proclamation that Christ is present in his church (cf. 1:23; 18:20; 28:20).

Other points worthy of note in these introductory remarks include authorship, Matthew’s audience, genre, and the date and place of composition of the Gospel. In some instances, scholarly discussions regarding these literary features have not led to a consensus. The most widespread views are:

One important literary feature of the Gospel of Matthew is its relation to the Old Testament. Matthew takes a lot from this source, particularly the Law and the Prophets, but acts on the premise that they are not complete till the time of Jesus.

It also appears that the evangelist did not create many of the words of the matthean preferred vocabulary. They are suggested by his sources. Examples of the influence of the Sayings Source include $\sigma\pi\lambda\iota\gamma\omicron, \pi\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\phi$, which has been translated as “little faith” (Q 12:281 = Mt 6:30), and $\alpha \pi\nu\omicron\mu\iota, \alpha$, which is translated as “lawlessness” (Q = Mt 7:23). The influence of the Gospel of Mark on Matthew’s language was even greater. For example, the following matthean words come from Mk: $\alpha\pi\nu\alpha\chi\omega\rho\epsilon, \omega$ (“depart,” Mk 3:7); $\pi\alpha, \nu\tau\alpha \tau\alpha. \epsilon;\theta\nu\eta$ (“all the nations,” Mk 13:10).

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