

Mahipal



St. Francis Xavier
Patron of Ranchi Archdiocese

Monthly News Letter of Ranchi Archdiocese

April 2019

No. 8

Archbishop's Message

Various Aspects of the Passion of Lord Jesus

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Lord Jesus,

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ endured agonizing, incomparable and reprehensible Passion before laying down his life on the cross. His resurrection is the victorious flag over sin and death. The depth of Divine Mercy enshrined in the three events — His Passion, Death and Resurrection — cannot be fully grasped by our human mind unless aided by God-given special wisdom that comes through revelation. Even so, we wish to meditate over the Passion of Our Lord.

1. Judas Iscariot : Our Lord Jesus was distressed, because He knew from the outset that Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, would betray Him to the Scribes and Pharisees. The Lord also knew that Lucifer had incarnated in the form of Judas. Even then He chose to keep Judas with Himself, to love and protect him. Judas had hoped that Jesus would establish a powerful earthly kingdom and that he would occupy a high office therein. In the course of three years of the Lord's preaching, he inflicted abundant distress upon his Master. Fully aware of the destiny of Judas, Lord Jesus also endured immense anguish for his sake.

2. Hardness of the Scribes, Pharisees and Jews : Our Lord Jesus was distressed, because neither did the Scribes, Pharisees and Jews understand the reality of Him as the Messiah, nor did they comprehend what the "Kingdom of God" was. Moreover, even when grasped to a considerable extent, they stubbornly rejected these truths. On the other hand, the prophets had clearly declared that the promised messiah would not be a "messiah the king", but a "servant messiah"; that his kingdom would not be this worldly, but a "spiritual" one. Jealous of the popularity of Lord Jesus, the leaders of Jewish religion were afraid of losing their power. Infected by pride and worldliness, they became blind. Not only did they refrain from entering in the Kingdom of God, but they also prevented others from entering it. They did everything to oppose the Lord, conspire against Him, level false allegations on Him and, lastly, they got the Romans to crucify Him to death. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus was distressed that despite the salvation offered through His supreme sacrifice upon the cross, His killers refused to accept it.

3. His Mother's agony : Lord Jesus was troubled by the internal agony of His beloved Mother Mary. She was aware of the prophets' prediction, as in the scripture, regarding the Passion of Lord Jesus. Indeed, her agony had started from the time of Jesus' conception in her womb. She was well aware of

how dreadfully her Son would suffer. Not only did the Scribes, Pharisees and Jews reject Him, and the people of Nazareth and His own relatives disown Him as their Messiah, but also they vehemently opposed Him. Such mounting protests, attacks, conspiracies and offenses by the enemies of Lord Jesus greatly dismayed her. Eventually, the unimaginable Passion and most shameful death meted out to Him shattered her holy and affectionate heart and that she was drowned in an ocean of grief. As a true and beloved son with utmost respect and love for His mother, Lord Jesus also greatly suffered for her sake.

4. Prior knowledge of the dreadful Passion : After the last supper and particularly prior to falling into the hands of His captors in the Garden of Gethsemane, Lord Jesus was greatly distressed by the dreadful affliction that awaited Him. So intense was His anguish that his sweat became like great drops of blood dripping to the ground. Even as His spirit was fully disposed to obey God the Father, His human nature was weak. Amid intense spiritual gloom and psychological conflict, by his own admission to His disciples, he was on the verge of death.

5. Anguish of being forsaken by people : Being forsaken by His own people was yet another cause for the Lord's agony. All except a few people, including women, had deserted Him. Where were those whom Jesus had cured and did good to them? Except for Apostle John, the son of Zebedee, most disciples also deserted Him. The Scribes, Pharisees, Jews and Romans now encircling Lord Jesus will soon put Him to death. Jerusalem city was fully in the clutches of the Evil One. Indeed, everything was engulfed by darkness.

6. Forsaken also by the Father : While our Lord endured Passion, God the Father hid His face so as to allow full impact of suffering. Such was the ultimate extent to which our Lord had been abandoned in His spiritual ache.

7. Futility of Sacrifice for many : While Lord Jesus climbed Mount Calvary with the cross upon His shoulders and while He remained suspended on the cross, the face of every human being at all times was in front of his eyes. While on the one hand, many would receive forgiveness for sin on account of His High Priestly self sacrifice, the same self sacrifice for others would go in vain. He was distressed, as every soul is precious to Him.

8. Horrific physical suffering : The horrific physical suffering of our Lord is beyond human imagination. We may categorize the physical suffering at His Passion into four levels: agony at

Gethsemane, fierce flagellation, way of the Cross, His being nailed to the cross and His excruciating pain on the cross.

First : Agony at Gethsemane garden is marked by great drops of blood falling down from the body of our Lord Jesus. The severity of internal pain would almost suck the life out of His body.

Second : The culprits tied to pillars would be severely lashed by the Roman soldiers with lethal cords. A shroud preserved at Turin in Italy, allegedly that of Lord Jesus, bears the mark of at least 120 such blows. One may figure out the physical pain and blood flow such flagellation might cause to the victim.

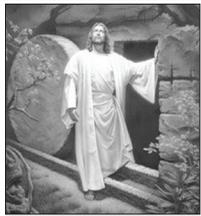
Third : The way of the cross might as well have been extremely ruthless. Having been already worn out by hunger, thirst and sleep loss, our Lord had also profusely bled on account of severe flagellation. To make the matters still worse, he had to carry a heavy cross up the Calvary in scorching sun. No wonder, He fell several times under the heavy cross.

Fourth : Neither was the act of being nailed to the cross any relenting to Lord Jesus. The soldiers threw him upon the cross. While his hands were separately nailed to the cross, his feet were nailed together.

Fifth : Our Lord Jesus remained suspended on the cross for three hours. In such a suspended state man can hardly breathe, as his body weight suppresses his lungs. For impaired blood circulation, his body hastens to turn blue. In his futile effort to breathe, the victim repeatedly struggles to push his body upwards. Consequently his bodily pain increases many fold. Severe thirst and afternoon sun also significantly added to our Lord's suffering.

Even as we ponder upon the Passion of our Lord, let us try to fathom His immense love for us. We may thus suitably participate in the Easter Mystery.

Your servant and friend,
+ Felix Toppo, S.J.



Solemnity of the Risen Lord Jesus, April 21, 2019

“God raised Lord Jesus from the dead; and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, and they are now his witnesses to the people.” (Acts 13:30-31)

May the joy and peace of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Happy Easter!

A Summary of the Pastoral Letter of Cardinal Oswald Gracias

In view of the approaching national elections, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, the CBCI President, has written a Pastoral Letter, dated March 14, 2019, to the Catholic Bishops of India. For want of space in this newsletter, we carry a synthesized version of its content. The Cardinal writes, “We wish to make it clear that the Catholic Church does not identify herself with or side any political party. This is the stated policy of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, as before every election, we feel called to give some general guidance to our people for the good of our country.”

The CBCI President takes note of the improved “infrastructure and public facilities” in the Nation. He also acknowledges that “every government has contributed to the great progress ... made over the years.” However, he enumerates “several areas of concern” that include the gap between the rich and the poor widening. “Many unorganized and casual labourers are barely able to survive with what they earn. Farmers and those in agricultural sector are under serious stress. Further, ethics is losing primacy as the guiding principle of society. Economics seems to be driving forces behind many decisions. India is a spiritual nation, and yet God is slowly being pushed to the periphery. It is in this context and at this moment of history that we are going into elections.”

“... We remind ourselves first of all of our duty to exercise our vote ... as sacred obligation,” says Cardinal Gracias adding that “all our Parish Priests are urged to impress on our people this obligation.” He exhorts that “every single vote” is an obligation “to ourselves, to our children and to our country,” as it contributes to “bettering the direction of our nation.” He urges the Church in India “to pray and to discern in prayer what is best for our country.” He continues,

“The Catholic Church hopes that the General Elections will give us leaders who listen to the people, understand their anxieties and their needs and respond effectively.”

Cardinal Gracias then enumerates 6-point “national” requirements in the leaders to be elected to represent the voters:

- (1) work for an economy that seeks specially to help the poor and under privileged, protecting their dignity, working for their uplift and enabling them to play a role in nation building.
- (2) ensure a totally safe environment for all people, particularly women and children.
- (3) safeguard the rights of tribals over land and forests.
- (4) take particular care of Dalits and ensure they are not discriminated against, granting equal rights to all Dalits.
- (5) promote communal harmony and a spirit of national integration through inter-religious dialogue and understanding.
- (6) take steps to protect the environment, preserving the riches of nature for future generations.

The CBCI President concludes with an ardent request to “our people to spend time in prayer in Church, and at home, so as to be able to discern what is best for India and for our common good.” He goes ahead to invoke from Holy Bible a thematic verse that defined the historic Asian Synod in 1999: “...that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” (Jn 10:10) A prayer to the Blessed Trinity and Mother Mary then appropriately concludes the timely Pastoral Letter.

(Full version of the letter may be accessed at
<https://www.cbci.in>)

JHAAN region youth leaders deliberate on self-motivation, communication

Ranchi, 5-8 March : Youth leaders from the JHAAN Region held a three-day Jharkhand Regional Youth Leadership Camp here. Issues pertaining to self-motivation, leadership, communication and challenges confronting the youth ministry were discussed.

The programme was opened by a Holy Eucharistic presided over by His Grace, Felix Toppo, SJ, Archbishop of Ranchi. In his message he insisted that staying firm in Faith was the foremost

challenge confronting the youth. He encouraged them to show full dedication in all areas. Regional Youth Commission Chairman, Bishop Paul Alois Lakra successively invited the youth, including the youth directors, to be the channels of change. He enlightened the participants on the challenges of youth ministry in the JHAAN Region. ICYM National Youth President, Vishal Francis conducted an interaction exercise so as to encourage the participants to actively participate in the sessions. Captain Jaison Thomas conducted a session on self-motivation and focus for achieving in life.

CBCI Secretary General, Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas presented a session on Leadership in the Bible and on communication. As for leadership, Bishop Mascarenhas clarified the concept by citing various Biblical personalities with their leadership styles. Speaking on the topic on communication, he expressed concerns regarding fake news.



He provided guidelines on how to understand and authenticate news. He additionally emphasised the role of responsible youth leaders on communicating authentic message. In the course of the session, Bishop Mascarenhas was congratulated on being



awarded the prestigious Bharath Seva Ratan Award instituted by a Ranchi based NGO.

A session on communication was taken by Rev. Fr. Cyprian Kullu, Regional Youth Director. He spoke on mediocracy, meaning of communication, process and elements of communication, nature and history of communication, types of communication, positive and negative impact of media and communications and the Church. Captain Jaison Thomas elaborated upon communication, practical tips and how to overcome fears.

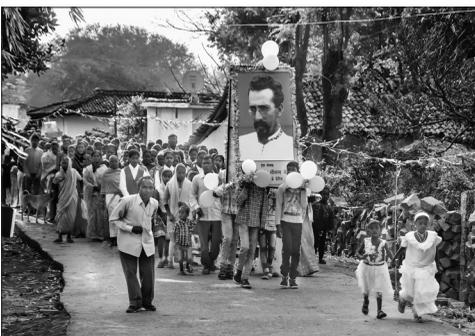
Jointly organised by the CBCI Council for Youth, the CBCI Secretariat and JHAAN Regional Bishops' Council, the Camp was participated by 60 youth leaders, 7 diocesan directors and 2 lady animators. Fr Jervis D'Souza (CBCI Deputy Secretary General) and Fr Deepak Thomas KJ, OCD (CBCI Youth Council Secretary) also participated in the programme.

Lievens' Anniversary held at Jamgain

Jamgain, 17 March, Sunday. Over five thousand pilgrims assembled at Jamgain this morning to commemorate the commencement of Gospel Witness in the region by Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens. The enthusiasm of people was striking as they commemorated the historic event. With the Sunday

by the "Apostle of Chhotanagpur", but also to be the messengers of liberation.

Jesuit Fr. Aurel Brys, Co-Postulator for the Cause of Fr. Lievens reiterated to the assembled faithful that Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome has approved the 6500-page request for granting Church's honour to the "Apostle of



Mass at Hulhundu Parish now relocated here, they assembled at a sprawling tamarind tree, a likely witness of Fr. Lievens' activities, to participate in a thanksgiving Mass officiated by His Lordship, Telesphore Bilung, SVD, Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi. While commenting on the disciples' effusive reaction to the transfiguration of Lord Jesus, as depicted in today's St. Luke's Gospel reading, he said the message of liberation proclaimed by Fr. Lievens and his companions also left our ancestors awestruck. "Abraham believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness." (Genesis 15:6) His Lordship encouraged the Faithful not only to fervently sustain the Gospel message initiated

Chhotanagpur", as Fr. Lievens is fondly remembered. Further work is in progress, he said. Notably, with such an official approval, the Holy See has assigned "Servant of God" status to Fr. Lievens. While ardently encouraging intercessory prayers of the faithful towards his Beatification, Fr. Brys commented that the present socio-economic situation of Chotanagpur is very similar to the then "do or die situation" to which Fr. Lievens and his companions had effectively responded. While conveying the Belgian Community's greetings, Fr. Brys informed the faithful that they are "actively praying (for Fr. Lievens' Beatification) like you here". It may be recalled that Lievens' 125th death anniversary

was solemnly observed at Moorselede (Belgium) in November last year.

Reminiscently, on the very next day of his arrival at Doranda on 18th March 1885, the indefatigable Fr. Lievens had started the expedition of Gospel proclamation and witness from Jamgain village. It may as well be recalled that following a declaration of Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo, the then Archbishop of Ranchi, the Church in Chhotanagpur and the Andamans had devoutly observed Lievens' Centenary (19th March 2016—18th March 2017) of the Gospel Proclamation concurrently with the universal Jubilee Year of Mercy. Starting at Jamgain, the celebration had concluded in St. Mary's Cathedral, Ranchi. Since then the Catholics have been annually converging at Jamgain to commemorate the great beginning of their multi dimensional liberation. Despite having spent a sleepless night of preparation, the local youth under the baton of Rev. Fr. Angelus Ekka effectively added to the choral solemnity at Mass. Rev. Fr. Hubertus Beck, the Parish Priest, and his collaborators deserve appreciation for hosting the celebration. All participants were served lunch at the venue.

Pilgrimage to Minor Basilica, Raja Ulhatu

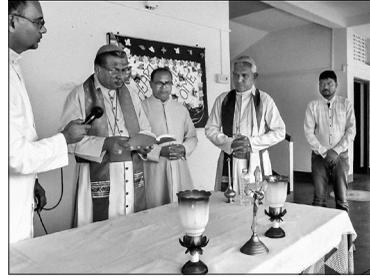
Raja Ulhatu. March 20, Wednesday. The priests of Ranchi Archdiocese in collaboration with CRI, held a combined pilgrimage to the Minor Basilica today. His Grace, Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, Auxiliary Bishop Telesphore Bilung, SVD, and His Eminence, Telesphore P. Cardinal Toppo, Archbishop Emeritus, joined the over 300 religious and priests to experience the outpouring of God's blessings interceded by Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and Seat of Wisdom. Fr. Mark Nedyakalayil, OCD, CRI-Ranchi Unit President and his team had meticulously planned the programme so that all may participate in the community expression of devotion. The programme started with Way of the Cross in the shrine's compound followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and celebration of the Sacrament of Confession. A solemn Mass presided over by the Archbishop culminated the day's programme. Rev. Fr. Maximus Toppo, Parish Priest cum In-charge of the shrine, and his collaborators at Ulhatu deserve a heartfelt appreciation for their generous cooperation. For convenience of the Sisters four buses were arranged to carry them back and forth from Ranchi.

A similar pilgrimage to Ulhatu for the Faithful of Ranchi Archdiocese was also separately organized on 24th March by Rev. Fr. Praful Tigga, Archdiocese In-charge for Faith Formation. Over a thousand devotees were estimated to have participated in it.

To,

Lievens' Academy, Dighia, Blessed & Inaugurated

Dighia. 23 March, Saturday. After Lohardaga and Simalia, the third English Medium school of the Ranchi Archdiocese to have been named



after the Servant of God, Fr. Constant Lievens, is now at Dighia. With official name, Lievens Academy, it was blessed and inaugurated by His Grace, Felix Toopo, SJ, Archbishop of Ranchi. After customary garlanding of Fr. Lievens' photo and lighting of the lamp by dignitaries, Fr. Thomas Powathil, Principal of Lievens Academy, Lohardaga, gave an introduction about the new school. Following a prayer service conducted by the staff of Lievens' Academy, Lohardaga, Rev. Fr. Vincent Minj, the parish priest, formally welcomed the guests. Archbishop and Auxiliary Bishop Telesphore Bilung, cut the ribbon to inaugurate the school and blessed the school building with holy water. In their subsequent address both of them solicited cooperation of all towards development of the newly inaugurated school. The School In-charge, Rev. Fr. Robert Minj and a host of priests, religious, guardians, students and well wishers witnessed the great stride. The students of Lievens' Academy, Lohardaga, presented a small cultural programme to add colour to the occasion.

Programme of Archbishop Felix Toppo, April 2019

Dt	Events	Time	Place
01	Return to Port Blair from Mayabander		Port Blair
02	Return from Port Blair to Ranchi via Kolkata	AM-PM	
04	Meeting with the SFX Provincial	10.00 am	ABH
07	Mass, Anniversary of the Church	07.00 am	Saparom
08	To Delhi	PM	
09	CBCI CARD GB Meeting at CBCI Centre	AM-PM	Delhi
10	Return to Ranchi	AM	
14	Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion in the Cathedral	06.30 am	RAN
16	Chrism Mass in the Cathedral	06.15 am	RAN
18	Maundy Thursday: Liturgy of the Last Supper of O. L. Jesus at Loyola Grounds	06.00 pm	RAN
19	Liturgy: Lord's Passion and Death at Loyola Grounds	04.30 pm	RAN
20	EASTER: The Resurrection of Our Lord. Mass at Loyola Grounds	10.30 pm	
28	Confirmation, All Saints Church	07.30 am	Doranda
30	Feast of Sisters of Sacred Heart, Mass, Cathedral	10.45 am	RAN

Bishop Telesphore Bilung's Programme, April 2019

3	GBM- Gram Guru	9.00am	ABH, Ranchi
6	Inauguration of Spirituality Seminar	6.30pm	OCD, Lapur
7	Holy Eucharist	9.00am	Lohardaga
8	Recollection – Diocesan Priests	9.00am to 2.00pm	Ulhatu
14	Palm Sunday		Muri
16	Chrism Mass	6.15am	Ranchi
18	Maundy Thursday		Lohardaga
19	Good Friday- Ursuline mass centre		Lohardaga
20	Easter Vigil		Kuru
21	Easter Sunday		Lohardaga
24	Diaconate – IMS	10.00 am	Kokar

Programme of Telesphore Bilung – May, 2019

5	Confirmation		Lalpur
12	Bargari- Village Chapel- Blessing		Mandar
14	Confirmation		Khalari
15-16	Rourkela		
18	First profession- SCJM	9.00am	Hulhundu
26	Confirmation	6.00am	Dighia