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News Bulletin Diocese of Sultanpet

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Bishop Speaks...

Dear Rev. Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and Lay Faithful,



Friend of Sinners!

Almost every page of the Bible speaks about sin, meaning rebellion, injustice or disobedience and the sinner is the one who does evil in the eyes of God. The first sin, narrated in the Bible (Gen 3) is for human beings to substitute themselves (*Adam and Eve*) for God in deciding good and evil and claiming to be the master of themselves, thus perverting the relationship between creator and creatures. It is not just disobedience to the Almighty, but denial of God with utmost arrogant use of their freedom (cf. Deut 9:7). The sinners, according to the Bible, are the sepulchre of lust and greedy. The condemnation and fierce denunciation against sinners are very frequently seen in the Bible: "I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them my enemies" (Ps 139:22). However, we meet Jesus in the Gospels with a different approach towards sinners, so much so that he was called a friend of sinners.

Who is Jesus?

Due to the first sin of Adam, "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen 6:5). God, out of His abundant mercy decided to rectify this pitiable situation of the human being and took initiatives of the promise of rebirth (Gen 12:1-3), the election of personalities, like Abraham, Jacob, Moses and the prophets, who carry this redemptive hope and finally the realization of this hope in the person of Jesus: "you shall call his name Jesus" (Lk 1:31) which means "Yahweh is Saviour." The early Christianity added "Christ," meaning, the anointed (*for salvation*: cf. Lk 4:18). In his name itself it is clear who Jesus is in the world: "I came to call the sinners" (Mk 2:17). Thus, Jesus proclaimed, not a reform, not a revolution, but a fulfilment the imminent fulfilment of God's promise to Israel, that is, "I create new heavens and a new earth" (Isa 65:17) and because of this "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox" (v. 25).

Who are Sinners?

The sinner is the one who lives in disorder and who is rebellious towards himself and to others. The Greek word that suits very well to this person is 'awon' which means deviation or distortion in thought, expression and action which cause pain in body and mind (Gen 4:13). In such a case, sin is the breakdown of the individual and the society. Besides this, the Jews of Jesus' time considered Judaism the only gateway to holiness and that the gentiles are sinners since they are not in fellowship with the holy God, Yahweh, as mediated by the Law. The Rabbis said that the Jews are by nature holy and the gentiles are by nature sinners. For the Pharisees all people who do not abide by the pharisaic law are sinners. In their view even Jesus and his disciples are sinners since they do not observe the pharisaic law (cf. Mt 12:1; 15:2; Mk 7:5; Lk 11:37ff; Jn 9:16).


Jesus' View of Sinners!

The mission of Jesus is the proclamation of divine mercy to the 'poor' and the despised (Lk 4:18). He never gave his disciples any doctrine of sin, nor did he engage in profound speculations concerning sin. Indeed, the attitude of Jesus to sin is closely linked with his attitude to sinners. In the Jewish world of his time there were two categories of sinners: People of individual weakness, and who are offenders of personal and social order and selfish destroyers of harmony in the family and society, these people are basically against the will of God and thus they are considered sinners (cf. *David's sin against Uriah and Bathsheba, 2 Sam 11*). This outlook is universally accepted one. The other category of 'sinners' in the Jewish society are the gentiles, the sick, the poor, the Samaritans and the tax collectors (Lk 18:13); besides these, some on account of their trade and livelihood are despised as sinners (*Ass and Camel drivers, sailors, carter, herdsmen, shopkeeper, physician, and butcher*). They are the social outcasts who are to be hated (J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the time of Jesus*, 304).

Jesus' mission is to bring back these people who are lost in society. Very vividly is seen this saving approach of Him in the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15), the draught of fishes (Lk 5) and the Zacchaeus incident (Lk 19). He took people in their totality as he found them. He shows himself to be the one who helps his people to come out of their sins (Mt 1:21). They are frustrated, troubled with guilt and anxiety and lacked public recognition. They needed to be healed. This is the reason He is the friend of sinners.

The Sinner and the Healer!

St. Paul understood this Jesus very well. Hence he could boast of his weaknesses (2 Cor 12), but remain hopeful of Jesus' healing (Rom 7). He relied on the mercy of God at every moment of his life (Gal 1:15; 1 Cor 15:9). This sincere acknowledgement of our sins and weaknesses brings us hope and confidence that Jesus will not let us down. If we turn away from the petty gods of money, power, prestige or self we, like Zacchaeus, shall find our God in Jesus who stands for/with us. Jesus chose to be identified with all people, especially the oppressed and the downtrodden, in a spirit of solidarity and compassion. If we live the same Jesus (Gal 2:19), we become healers of the whole creation. The true followers of Jesus, though human and weak, are holistic healers of society.


+ Antony *Antony* Peter Abir
Bishop of Sultanpet

Bishop's Appointments

Date	Time	Programme	Place
27	10.00 am	Meeting of the Regional Chairmen-	
		Bishops of CCBI Commission for Bible	NBCLC, Bangalore
	05.00 pm	Inauguration of the Research Seminar on Bible	Bangalore
28	05.30 am	Jubilee Mass: St. Joseph's College	Trichy
29	08.00 am	Confirmation Mass	Menonpara

From Vicar General Desk

The next **Recollection for priests** will be held at 10.30 am on Monday 16 September 2019 at Bishop's House, Sultanpet.

Annual Retreat!

The annual retreat for the Diocesan priests will be held at Seerapallyam on 21-25 October 2019. If any religious priest is planning to join the retreat let him inform the Procurator. Rev. Fr. A. Louis, Director, Anjali Ashram, Mysore, will be the preacher. The programme starts at 10 am on Monday 21st and will be over by lunch on Friday 25 October. Please note these dates in your programme and attend this without fail.

Rev. Msgr. A. S. Madalaimuthu,
Vicar General

From the Procurator's Desk

Reminder:

Special collections to be remitted for September month will be Communication Sunday.

Medical Help

We distributed medical help of Rs. 15000/- to parishioners of Kovilpalayam (1 x 5000), Menonpara (1 x 5000), and Palakkad (1 x 5000) in the month of August 2019.

Rev. Fr. Lorange L.,
Financial Administrator

Blessing of New Church



A new Church, dedicated to Our Lady of Carmel was blessed and inaugurated by our Bishop at Irumbagacholai, 15 km from Mannarkad and 50 Kms from Palakkad. This church was built by the Manjumaal province of OCD, at moment as a substation to the parish of Mannarkad and later as the monastery chapel of their monastery. A large number of priests, religious and lay people attended this hill-side beautiful Church. This church will cater to the spiritual, pastoral and social need of the Latin Catholics living in and around Irumbagacholai. It is a new mission of our Diocese.

Rev. Fr. Arularasan,
Secretary.

SMSSS News

Kolping Office and Pastoral center Foundation stone Blessing



The foundation stones for the Kolping office and Pastoral Animation Center was laid and blessed at 10 am on 26 August 2019. The foundation stones were blessed by our Bishop Most Rev. Antonysamy Peter



Abir and the foundation stone for the Kolping office laid by Rev. Fr. Antoniraj, National Director of Kolping India and for the Pastoral Animation Center by Very. Rev. Fr. Madalaimuthu, V.G of our Diocese. Many priests, sisters and lay people were present in the function.

Rev. Fr. Antony Xavier Pious
Director, SMSSS

Vatican News



Pope Francis: Mary helps Christians enter heaven through the 'narrow gate'

Aug 25, 2019 - 06:10 am .- The way to heaven is difficult and the gate to enter small, but Jesus' mother, Mary, who herself entered through the narrow gate, will help those who ask, Pope Francis said Sunday.

Pope Francis: Self-interest and hypocrisy destroy the Church

Aug 21, 2019 - 06:00 am .- Pope Francis decried hypocrisy and self-interest Wednesday, saying that Christian community should always be characterized by generosity and solidarity.

Vatican 'acknowledges the court's decision' to dismiss Cardinal George Pell's appeal

Aug 21, 2019 - 04:18 am .- The Vatican said Wednesday it acknowledges the decision by the Court of Appeals in Victoria to uphold the conviction of Cardinal George Pell, while recalling Pell's insistence of his innocence throughout the judicial process.

Pope Francis: Discover the beauty of prayer in adoration

Aug 18, 2019 - 05:25 am .- Pope Francis said Sunday that prayer in adoration of God and service to others spreads the fire of God's love, changing the world one heart at a time.

Pope Francis gives thousands of rosaries to Christians in Syria

Aug 15, 2019 - 05:30 am .- Pope Francis announced Thursday that he is giving 6,000 blessed rosaries to Catholic communities in Syria as a sign of his closeness on the Marian Feast of the Assumption.

Pope Francis: In times of suffering, know that you are never alone

Aug 13, 2019 - 10:45 am .- Pope Francis wrote a heartfelt letter Tuesday to an Italian community still suffering one year after a bridge collapse. His message: "Know that you are not alone."

Pope Francis: Ordination of married men 'absolutely not' main theme of Amazon synod

Aug 9, 2019 - 06:38 am .- The ordination to the priesthood of mature, married men, sometimes called viriprobati, is among the topics to be addressed at October's Amazon synod but is "absolutely not" one of the principle themes of the meeting, Pope Francis said.

True wealth is found in Jesus Christ, not money, Pope Francis says

Aug 7, 2019 - 04:26 am .- Pope Francis Wednesday criticized those who give more consideration to money than the sacraments or helping others find true wealth a relationship with Jesus Christ.

BIRTH DAY

14 Fr. Antony PitchaiMuthu SDB
17 Fr. Francis Thottamkara OCD
24 Fr. Amal Charles CPPS

SNL wish you a Happy Birth Day

FEAST DAY

8 Fr. VimalArokiaraj
27 Fr. K.P. Vincent

SNL wish you a Happy Feast Day

ORDINATION DAY

9 Fr. A.S. Madalaimuthu

SNL wish you a Happy Ordination Day