

# Mahipal

Monthly News Letter of Ranchi Archdiocese



St. Francis Xavier,  
Patron of Ranchi Archdiocese

September 2018

No. 1



## Archbishop's Message

My beloved Christian Brothers and Sisters,

You are aware that Holy Father, Pope Francis, has appointed me as the Archbishop of Ranchi. He declared the same on 24th June 2018. Then on 6th August 2018, I was installed at the Immaculate Conception of Mary Cathedral as the Archbishop of Ranchi. My predecessor, Telesphore P. Cardinal Toppo entrusted the responsibilities of the Ranchi Archdiocese to me. In addition to a large number of priests, religious brothers and sisters, and the Laity, the occasion drew participation of 4 Archbishops and 19 Bishops. Presently, getting personally acquainted with all priests of the Archdiocese is a must for me. Keeping the same in mind, I will visit all the five Deaneries. After that I will make efforts to visit all parishes individually. I believe that the Laity meanwhile will also be acquainted with me.

I encourage all of you to remain firm in the faith, trust and love in God. May you strive to lead your lives in keeping with the Gospel values. As far as possible, participate with devotion in religious celebrations, particularly in the Holy Mass. Engage yourselves in the service of Mother Church as also in helping the needy neighbours. In the meantime recognize the signs of times so as to take the most conducive steps in the service of others.

On 8th September our Church celebrates the feast of Blessed Virgin Mary, who holds a special place in the lives of Catholic believers. Although Mother Mary was the daughter of St. Joachim and St. Anna, yet God created her even prior to creating the universe. He created her most beautiful, holy and blameless, because according to His plan she was to be the

mother of His Son. Mary the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ is both the Mother of God and our Mother. She is ready to help us at every moment. Through her apparitions at Lourdes, Fatima, Guadalupe, Garabandal and other places she asks us to stay away from sins and faithfully observe the commandments of God. Let us display appropriate devotion to her and glorify her. In the course of political changes in our country, wide ranging negative effects are visible on cultural, religious, social values, constitutionally guaranteed human rights and so on. Safeguarding the God given human dignity and freedom is utmost responsibility of each one of us. In order to preserve our very existence, we also need to conserve land, water and forests. It is essential that we stay vigilant and active in this regard. Having ignored the good works of the Church, blatant lies are being heaped upon her for narrow political gains. On the charges of religious conversion, the administration is forcibly taking the property and finance related documents allegedly for scrutiny. Print media on the other hand are persistently publishing false and defamatory contents regarding the Church. Concerted attempts are being made to divide the Christians from their Sarna brethren.

It is crucial, therefore, that for the good of society and the country we remain united, take right decisions and take concrete steps. Additionally, we need to offer prayers at the personal, family and community levels for the resolution of problems.

Your servant and friend,

✚ Felix Toppo, S.J.

(For private circulation only)

## Election of Priests' Council/Senate, Ranchi Archdiocese

To: All the Diocesan and Religious Priests  
Archdiocese of Ranchi

Dear and Rev. Fathers,

According to the Canon Law we need to elect and establish a council of priests, that is, a group of priests who represent the presbyterium and who are to be, as it were, the Bishop's senate (cf. Can. 495.1) Please read the following operational norms of the Council/Senate of Priests (cf. Cans.495-501) before working on the "secret ballot pages".

- 1) The Council/Senate of Priests is to assist the Bishop, in accordance with the law, so that the pastoral welfare of the people of God may be more effectively promoted.
- 2) The Council/Senate of Priests has a consultative voice. The Bishop requires its consent only in those cases expressly defined by the Code.
- 3) The Bishop convenes the meeting of the Council/Senate of Priests, presides over it and determines the matters to be discussed in it. The Council/Senate of Priests will normally meet about twice a year.
- 4) The total number of all the members of the Council/Senate should be approximately one tenth of the total number of Priests in the Diocese. About half the numbers are freely elected by the priests. The Bishop nominates the rest of the members to take care of special needs, areas and ministries.
- 5) 'All secular priests incardinated in the diocese and priests who are living in the diocese and exercise any office for the benefit of the diocese, whether they be secular priests not incardinated in the diocese, or priest members of religious institutes or society of apostolic life have the right to both an active and a passive voice', i.e. they can elect and can be elected. In this regard Can. 498. 1.2 has been followed. Some will be ex-officio members.
- 6) Apart from these priests, Can 498.2 states that 'In so far as the statues so provide, the same right of election may be given to other priests who have a domicile or quasi-domicile in the diocese'. So we have decided that All Major Superiors and some Rectors of communities with domicile or quasi-domicile in the diocese' and one priest from some of the Clerical Congregations in the Archdiocese who have a domicile or quasi-domicile will be given the same right of election. The Major Superiors or Local Superior has to recommend the name of the priest.
- 7) The members of the Council/Senate of Priests are designated for a five year term.
- 8) In electing the members of the Council/Senate care should be taken about their personal qualities, experience and sound judgment. At the same time the diversities of ministries and various regions of the Diocese should be taken into consideration.
- 9) The mode of election will be as follows: You will find enclosed a secret ballot-sheets listing the names of the priests, with active and passive voice. Kindly put a circle around the number corresponding to names of only 10 priests included in the list. The 10 priests with the highest number of votes will be considered elected. I will nominate the rest. The secret ballot sheets should reach, "The Secretary, Archbishop's House, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi-834 001 (JH) as soon as possible, but not later than October 1, 2018. Since the post services are not reliable, kindly personally hand deliver it.

With prayerful wishes,  
Sincerely Yours in the Lord,

September 1, 2018

+Felix Toppo, S.J.  
Archbishop of Ranchi

## News & Views

### Vianney Day

**August 4, Saturday:** His Eminence, Telesphore P. Cardinal Toppo was the main celebrant with a score of concelebrants, religious and the faithful in St. Mary's Cathedral, Ranchi, at the 6.30 AM Mass in honour of St. John Mary Vianney. The Parish choir melodiously supported the solemnity of the great 18th century Patron Saint of parish priests, popularly known as Curé d'Ars (Parish Priest of Ars). After a short felicitation, festive breakfast was served at the Presbytery for all celebrants and associations of the Catholic laity. In the evening a football match was played between priests and the students of St. Albert's Seminary. The match went in favour of the latter.

### Installation of the New Archbishop

**August 6, Monday.** Most Rev. Felix Toppo, SJ, was installed this morning as the new Archbishop of Ranchi at St. Mary's Cathedral, Ranchi. Monsignor Javier D. Fernandez G., the Apostolic Nuncio's delegate, formally displayed the concerning Papal Bull to the congregation before reading it out in Latin. A Hindi translation of the



same was then read out by Rev. Fr. Theodore Toppo, Parish Priest of the Cathedral. Notably, the Bull requires all the Faithful to understand its content. His Eminence, Telesphore P. Cardinal Toppo, formally handed over the crosier (the Shepherd's Staff) to Most Rev. Felix Toppo, SJ, signifying the latter's assumption to the Episcopal See of Ranchi. The two Auxiliary Bishops (Most Rev. Telesphore Bilung, SVD, and Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas, SFX) and a delegation of diocesan and religious priests, religious sisters and brothers, and the lay people came forward to kiss the Episcopal ring of the newly installed Archbishop. The gesture symbolizes submission of the entire believing community to the newly appointed Archbishop. The usual Eucharistic procedure, coordinated by Rev. Fr. Sebastian Tirkey, Vicar General, then proceeded.

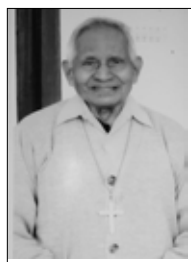
A total of 5 Archbishops, 19 Bishops, 150 priests, a large number of religious men and women and the faithful witnessed the installation ceremony. The liturgical celebration was befitting to the occasion. Earlier, the youth ushered the new Archbishop elect and Archbishop Emeritus to St. Mary's Cathedral with traditional devotional song and dance. Rev. Fr. Sebastian Tirkey introduced all the Archbishops and Bishops to the congregation.

## Independence Day celebrations across the Archdiocese

**August 15, Wednesday.** Archbishop Felix Toppo was the main celebrant in St. Mary's Cathedral, Ranchi, at 6.30 A.M. Mass that commemorated Our Lady's Assumption and the country's Independence Day. After the Mass, the national flag was hoisted by His Grace along with the faithful at the cathedral's quadrangle. Similar celebrations were held in all the institutions in the Archdiocese. Bishop Telesphore Bilung went to Lievens' School, Similia, for the flag hoisting. In some of the parishes football tournaments were reportedly organized. Divya Jyothi Club, Hulhundu, hosted the Fr. Noas Memorial Tournament. The event, now considerably popular, is being held from 1980 on. Hailed as one of the best tournaments in the City, it draws leading teams as contenders. This year 18 teams participated and SERSA Club won the tournament via tie-breaker. The organizing Club also seeks to draw people together across religion, caste and ethnicity in order to address social evils like substance additions, child labour, witch-craft and other superstitions.

## Bishop Joseph Minj laid to rest

**August 17, Friday.** Most Rev. Joseph Minj, Bishop Emeritus of Simdega Diocese, breathed his last at Shanti Bhavan Medical Centre, Biru, after a prolonged illness at 7.30 AM yesterday. He was 86. Ordained as priest on August 10, 1960, he was consecrated as Bishop on August 24, 1993. He had retired as Bishop in 2008. His funeral ceremony was held at St. Anne's Cathedral, Simdega today. Along with the six prelates and several priests and the religious, the mourners filled the Church to capacity. As per the wish of the



Local Ordinary, Bishop Vincent Barwa, the funeral Mass was presided over by Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, while Bishop Paul Lakra of Gumla officiated at the funeral rite. Mortal remains of the Late Bishop Minj were interred in the Parish premises adjacent to the Cathedral. The entire ceremony was suitably marked by devotion and prayer.

## Christian NGOs Decry FCRA Breach Allegation

(with updates and inputs)

**August 19, Sunday.** An aggrieved delegation of the Christian community led by Archbishop Felix Toppo today submitted a signed memorandum to the Chief Secretary of Jharkhand Government (with a copy to the Principal Home Secretary and Director General of Police) against the alleged FCRA violation by Christian NGOs. The memorandum noted that in the last 25 days "nearly 62 Catholic NGOs have been receiving notices" alleging them of such a violation. "In almost all cases information/documents were asked" to be submitted "within 24 hours or two days," the memorandum said. Similar notices were reinforced by the district police, Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) and Crime Investigation Department (CID), it noted. "Even though the time provided for reply was too short, we abided by the order and in most of the cases provided information/documents in the given time," the memorandum confirmed. Significantly, even though the matter is related to foreign funding under FCRA, three different Government arms are enquiring into it.

Additionally, concerted media campaign in the last 7-8 months falsely implicates the Church of diverting foreign funds for fraudulent religious conversion. An isolated incident of Kochang, Khunti, where five ladies were allegedly gang-raped, was maliciously linked to the controversial Pathalgadi, which by strange logic the Christian missionaries were made to have espoused. A Catholic priest has been summarily arrested and put behind bars for 11 counts of serious offenses he has not committed. Ever since traditional Pathalgadi that involves commemorative stone slab erected in tribal villages displayed certain Constitutional provisions safeguarding the tribals' identity and land rights, some sections of the media have been implicating the ancient tribal custom as an affront to the Nation. Neither public critique nor legal guideline in this regard, however, has surfaced as yet.

**The Case of Shishu Niketan Children :** Of the 22 children from the Sisters of Charity run Nirmala Shishu



Niketan, Hinoo, who were forcibly shifted elsewhere on July 6 by the Jharkhand Government's Child Welfare Committee (CWC), three have succumbed allegedly to dehydration and malnutrition, independent sources said. Prior to this, "generalised" media reporting evidently had sought to malign the widely acclaimed humanitarian efforts of the Sisters of Charity thereby paving the way for CWC to swoop on the shelter homes. The delegation led by Archbishop Toppo to the Jharkhand

Chief Secretary categorically declared an unfortunately implicated Charity Sister as “innocent”. It may be recalled that shortly before this episode, an impressed Chairperson of the State Women’s Commission, Mrs. Kalyani Sharan had officially declared the Sisters’ work at Nirmal Hirday as “सभी कुछ अच्छा” (all things good) in the visitors’ book. Similarly the Executive Magistrate of Ranchi, Mrs Shweta Kumari Gupta had declared Nirmal Shishu Niketan as having an “excellent environment for the care of the children.”

As regards the adoption of infants allegedly in connivance with some shelter home workers, the identity of the adopting persons, names of the unwed mothers, their whereabouts and information pertaining to infants were unscrupulously published by the media. Such an action is totally unethical and unlawful, the delegation said. Even before the actual enquiry was started by Anti-Terrorist Squad, District Police Thanas and EOW CID, newspapers were freely publishing baseless, defamatory and incriminating reports regarding the Christian missionaries. The so called “raids” on 47 missionary NGOs, as reported in the media, were in fact only the second or third round of notices seeking information/documents, the delegation clarified.

It must be noted that contrary to what may amount to muckraking by the media, we have been fully complying with the orders/directions under FCRA by submitting the required reports and putting them in the website as well, the delegation insisted. “Prejudice, bias and intentional harassment” must immediately stop so as not to prejudice the requested “independent enquiry”, the memorandum concluded.

**Kandhamal Incident Remembered Bhubaneshwar. August 25, Saturday.** Tenth anniversary of the ill famed Kandhamal



massacre of Christians was held at St. Joseph’s School compound today with

thanksgiving, reconciliation and grace as its theme. The solemn Eucharist was presided over by His Grace, John Barwa, SVD, the Archbishop of Katak-Bhubaneshwar along with 13 bishops, 90 priests as concelebrants and a large congregation of believers. Archbishop Felix Toppo was present at the altar to express prayerful solidarity of the Chotanagpur Church. Decree of the opening of the Process of Beatification of SVD Father Marian Zelazek, a Polish survivor of the Nazi holocaust and a tireless missionary who dedicated himself to works of kindness in the Katak-Bhubaneshwar Archdiocese, was announced on the occasion.

## Forthcoming Events

- Clergy meeting for all Archdiocesan priests on 3rd September 2018 in SDC.
- Retreat for Priests of the Archdiocese: first batch during 17 to 22 September 2018 and the second batch from 24 to 29 September 2018 at **Upasna**, Jamshedpur.
- Parish Priests meeting on 12th September 2018 at 8.00am in Archbishop’s House

### Programme of Archbishop Felix September 2018

Dates	Events	Time	Place
2	Holy Eucharist with Mahila Sangh	7.00am	St. Mary’s Cathedral
3	Clergy Meeting	9.00am	SDC
5	Meeting with Marriage Encounter Group	4.00pm	ABH, Ranchi
9	SCJM Final Vows at Nirmala College	9.00am	Doranda, Ranchi
12	Parish Priest Meeting	9.00am	ABH, Ranchi
13-14	Governing Board Meeting & AGBM of CBCICARD		Delhi
15	Final Vows of OSU Srs.		Kanke Road.
16	Feast of Robert Bellarmine, Diamond Jubilee of the Parish and Golden Jubilee of the School		Parsudih, Jamshedpur
26 -28	Standing Committee Meeting		Bangalore

### Bishop Telesphore Bilung’s Programme September 2018

Dates	Events	Time	Place
3	Clergy Meeting	9.00am	SDC
9	Confirmation	6.30am	Banhora
12	Parish Priest Meeting	9.00am	ABH, Ranchi
16-21	SCC Seminar		Pune