

MISSION | SOLIDARITY | PRAYER

MARCH 2022



A CCBI Initiative  
to assist the Church  
in rural India.



# HIS EMINENCE SPEAKS...

## HIS EMINENCE OSWALD CARDINAL GRACIAS

Archbishop of Bombay



**Communio**  
The journey so far

### Communio A call for Solidarity

It is with great joy that I introduce to you the second issue of the Communio Newsletter. The CCBI introduced 'Communio' in 2017 with the aim of providing assistance to the local Churches that are in need across India. In the early Church, the different domestic churches supported each other and that is how the Church grew into what it is today. It is my heartfelt desire that Communio becomes a household name so that all Catholics in India know about and are involved in and contribute towards it and towards the growth of the Church. When we support each other, the Church in India will also grow.

Supporting each other may not sound like it will produce the desired fruit in the early stages. But it does go a long way and we shall see abundant fruit a few years down the line. Communio began five years ago and today we see many projects being undertaken to reach out to Churches in remote areas of our country. It is important that we all understand that Communio arose out of an urgent requirement to fulfil the 'needs' of the Church. God uses us to reach out to those in need and when we share, as the early Church did, we will certainly be blessed.

This newsletter is in itself a fruit of the growth of this ministry. One way of bringing awareness to all Catholics in India is through this newsletter. I encourage each one of you who reads this to share it with those in your Parishes and Diocese so that the whole Church is involved in this noble cause.

I have seen Communio grow by leaps and bounds from the time I was the President of the CCBI and it gives me immense happiness and a sense of peace to see the development and progress that has been made since its inception.

I would like to congratulate the entire team involved in giving Communio its direction as an organ of the CCBI - Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão and his team along with the volunteers who are tirelessly working towards making this initiative a fruitful endeavour.

Once again, I would like to re-iterate my request to all the faithful in India to contribute in whatever way possible towards this mission: by volunteering, supporting the ministry financially and above all, by praying for all those involved and for the growth of the Church in India.

May God bless India; may God bless the Church.



An idea is like a tiny seed with huge potential! Communio was born as a **humble idea** in the minds of our clergy



Communio was **inaugurated** during the 29th Plenary Assembly held in Bhopal from 31 January to 8 February, 2017



Communio **starts accepting project proposals** from November 6, 2021! This is a huge milestone!



Communio is growing and we could not have come this far **without your support!** Contact us if you feel led to **serve Communio** in a deeper way!

# SAINT IN THE MAKING...

## THE EUCHARISTIC LIFE OF A SAINT IN THE MAKING



We've all heard of Bl. Carlo Acutis. But how about Ajna George? She may well be a future saint from India and has already gained quite a following.

### WHO IS SHE?

Ajna was from Kochi in Kerala and was an active member of the church. An assistant professor, excellent student and member and coordinator of the Jesus Youth Movement, she was well-known in faith circles. But what really stood out was her devotion to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and her fortitude in suffering mightily for the love of her Lord and the salvation of souls.

### WHY IS SHE IN THE NEWS?

Ajna was only 27 when she left this world on January 21st this year, but the way in which she left is what has inspired many and caused people to take notice of her. Having contracted cancer in her mandible bone around four years prior to her demise, her intense love for Jesus made her brave the pain and go so far as to accept it willingly and call the suffering 'valuable'. When she was offered help by means of a vehicle to go to church to receive Holy Communion, which she never missed even a single day, she vehemently refused, asking instead to be allowed to walk so as to endure the pain for the love of Christ.

Her love for the Eucharist was so great that even during the lockdown and her final days in hospital, she demanded that she be given Holy Communion. Her spiritual director, Fr Jean Kattassery even braved interrogation by the police to visit her house to give her the Sacrament. During her last days, the cancer spread all over her face resulting in a loss of hearing and vision and even rendered her incapable of consuming the Eucharistic Lord. However, in order to fulfil her ardent desire, the Eucharist was given to her dissolved in water and fed through a tube. When in the hospital, she would only receive Jesus after spending an hour in adoration. Her hospital room had literally become a Chapel!

Her final moments were filled with love. Receiving the Holy Viaticum, she prayed "Jesus, Mary, Joseph" for half an hour and gave up her spirit at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, following in the footsteps of her savior.

Ajna proves to us the power of the Eucharist and the undeniable fact that it is truly Jesus present with us physically. Let us learn to love the Lord the way she did and carry our Cross cheerfully.



### Important Dates



Ash Wednesday  
March 2



St Joseph - March 19



Feast of the Annunciation  
March 25



Holy Week April 10-16



Easter Sunday - April 17



## WE ASKED SOME YOUTH WHAT TOUCHED THEM FROM AJNA'S STORY

### VALENIE LOPES (VASAI, MAHARASHTRA)

I felt a sense of wonder after reading about Ajna. It was a jaw-dropping moment. What will remain with me is how she was so zealous in receiving Christ and how she truly walked hand-in-hand with him. She is more than an inspiration and has inspired me to go beyond the natural with Christ.



### KAVITHA MARIA K (BENGALURU, KARNATAKA)

Wow! This is very inspiring! Even in her sickness and on her deathbed she yearned for Jesus. Her story motivates me to attend Mass more devoutly and to avoid missing Mass because I overslept or faced some obstacle. She is truly an inspiration.

### HITTARY REBECCA (IMPHAL, MANIPUR)

When she became unable to open her mouth to receive the Communion seven months ago, she started to receive the Eucharist dissolved in water through a gastronomy feeding tube. Anja showed us that the greatest Love is to offer our suffering in prayer, joined to the suffering of Jesus for the ones we Love through the Holy Eucharist. The most painful Cancer couldn't stop her from receiving the Love of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. This really touched me. If the whole world offers their suffering in union with the Holy Eucharist for the conversion of sinners Heaven will be filled with Saints.



## MILESTONES

### Web portal

[www.communio.in](http://www.communio.in)

An exciting web portal to bring Communio to you in a better way!

### Team is growing

A national network of Communio patrons is formed. **Please contact us to join the Communio network**

### Project Applications Open

We have 40 ongoing projects in India, which helps our missionaries.

**Ready to help more**

### Multi-Lingual Videos

We have started videos in 12 Indian languages. To receive them in your preferred language contact us on this number:

**+91 9901033435**





# Communio Ongoing Projects

## PARISHES IN PORT BLAIR DIOCESE BENEFIT FROM FINANCIAL AID



WIMBERLYGUNJ CHAPEL - SIDE VIEW

When Communio India was initiated to share resources within the Church – following in the footsteps of the early Church – it was hoped that aid would reach even the remotest dioceses of the country. This is gradually growing into a reality, as the Church in Port Blair Diocese is willing to testify.

The Diocese of Port Blair (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) was extended financial support for:

### Purchase of two motorbikes

- conveyance by public transport is always tedious because of shortage of vehicles in operation and the overcrowding
- Parish Priests have to travel long distances to reach sub-stations. **Some sub-stations are situated 35 kms away from the Village Chapel** (the Parish Church)
- The motorbikes will ease pastoral work.

### The roofing material for two village chapels in the diocese.

- The materials are yet to reach the designated places.

### Support is requested in other ways:

- Financial aid for roofing sheets: The diocese has adopted a policy to provide roofing sheets to anyone who builds a semi-permanent or permanent structure. Roofing sheets are also required for Village Chapels.
- Help with pastoral programmes to run Small Christian Communities (SCC).
- Faith formation programmes for the children.

(Inputs by Fr. Cyprian Xalxo)



## TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THESE PROJECTS:

Account Name: CCBI, Communio India  
Bank Account Number: 0231053000025877  
IFSC/NEFT Code: SIBL0000231  
Name of the Bank: The South India Bank Ltd,  
M. S. Nagar Branch, Bangalore.  
[www.communio.in](http://www.communio.in)





## Blessed Devashayam Pillai

**Pope Francis will canonise Bl. Devasahayam Pillai on 15th May.** Devasahayam is the first Indian Saint to be martyred on home soil and will be the first lay person from our country to be canonised.

His life took a dramatic turn when he met Eustachius de Lannoy, a Dutch Military Officer. When he narrated a series of sorrowful events that took place in his life, Lannoy comforted him and narrated the story of Job, a good man, who was tested by God to strengthen his faith. This encouraged Devasahayam and he was soon baptised.

### Let's take a look at his life in brief:

- Born on 23rd April, 1712 in Nattalam, Kingdom of Travancore
- Named Neelakanta, he took the name Devasahayam upon Baptism
- **(Devasahayam is the equivalent of Lazarus which means 'God has helped')**
- Worked as a palace official in King Marthanda Varma's treasury
- Did not regard caste differences and mingled with everyone
- Angered by his actions, the upper caste accused him of the crime of betrayal
- In prison, he spent each morning in contemplative prayer
- Fasted on Fridays and Saturdays in honour of the death of Jesus and the Sorrows of Mother Mary
- Many visited him in prison and his fame grew because of his holiness

**When he was to be executed, the soldiers who tried to shoot him, could not, because their guns did not fire. Devasahayam took the guns, blessed them and gave them back to them, asking them to shoot if they wished.** The soldiers did not show mercy and he was martyred.



**Trivia: One rock at the site of his martyrdom makes bell-like sounds when hit with a stone.**

**TO STAY TUNED WITH LATEST UPDATES SCAN CODE & FOLLOW OUR WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES!** <https://linktr.ee/communiolndia>



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