



Conference of Catholic Bishops of India

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Communio India Sunday

29 November, 2020 (First Sunday of Advent)

"Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13: 34)

To All Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Religious, Catechists and Lay Faithful of the Latin Catholic Church in India

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

1. This year we observe *Communio India Sunday* amidst the suffering and the challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the missionary journey of the whole Church continues, despite all the challenges facing us, because the Risen Lord accompanies us on our way.

2. In his unforgettable *Urbi et Orbi* message on the evening of March 27, 2020 Pope Francis poignantly summarized the situation we are in: "We find ourselves afraid and lost. Like the disciples in the Gospel (Mk 4: 35-38) we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other."

3. The apostles and the disciples "went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word through accompanying signs" (Mk 16: 20). Sharing the joy of the Gospel in season and out of season is the fundamental responsibility of each and every baptized Christian. Faith means bearing witness to the Easter joy the Risen Lord has given us. A joy such as this cannot be the result of our own efforts. It issues from our encounter with the Risen Lord (cf. Mt 28: 8-10). It is also the source of our confidence and the fullness of our consolation.

4. There are many places in our country where Catholics cannot celebrate the Sunday Eucharist regularly because of the lack of a proper church building. *Communio India* will enable us to extend a helping hand to all such communities in building a house of worship, so that they are not deprived of the Eucharist every Sunday and in turn become communities that do not cease to proclaim the Gospel of God's kingdom.

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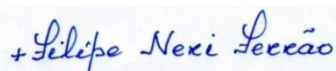
5. The CCBI launched *Communio India* in 2018 with the following purposes: (1) to establish a missionary organization (like *Missio* and *Aid to the Church in Need* in Germany) in order to build a culture of sharing and caring, in solidarity with our needy brothers and sisters in our own country; (2) to encourage our faithful to pray and help the missions and the missionaries and, more importantly, to promote missionary vocations; (3) to encourage and inspire our faithful to be lay missionaries.

6. Expressing our solidarity with those who suffer due to the menace of COVID-19, *Communio India Sunday* should be observed faithfully and meaningfully in all the parishes and institutions in our country, with a proper commentary at the Holy Mass, special Prayers of the Faithful and conscientization regarding our baptismal call to become missionary disciples. It is a Sunday to pray for the mission of the Church in India and to gratefully remember all our missionaries, who work gladly and generously in various parts of our country to proclaim the joy of the Gospel.

7. The Church in India acknowledges with gratitude the generous contributions of the People of God to the noble cause of *Communio India* and appeals to all our faithful to be generous once again in sharing their resources to help our brothers and sisters in the remote regions of our country, so that they can experience the love of God through the generosity of fellow Indian Catholics.

8. May Jesus the Good Shepherd guide and help us in the power of His Spirit to carry out His work of evangelization in all earnest.

Secretariat of the CCBI, Bangalore, 3 July, 2020, Solemnity of St. Thomas, the Apostle of India.

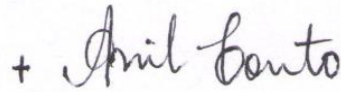


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This Circular should be read and explained on "Communio India Sunday" in all parishes, religious communities and institutions of the 132 dioceses of the Latin Catholic Church in India.