

તપઋતુ સંદેશ : મહાધર્મધ્યક્ષ

શ્રદ્ધાવર્ષમાં, તપઋતુ એ આપણા પ્રેમસ્વરૂપ પરમપિતા તરફથી આપણી આ જીવનયાત્રા વધુ ઉત્કટ બનાવવાની હાકલ છે. પિતાએ પ્રેમની ભેટરૂપે આપણને ઈસુ આપ્યા છે. પિતાના પ્રેમને પ્રગટ કરી ઈસુ તેમના દુઃખ, મરણ અને પુનરુત્થાન દ્વારા આપણા માટે જીવનની પૂર્ણતાના દ્વાર ખોલી આપે છે. તપઋતુના આ દિવસોમાં જ્યારે આપણે પવિત્ર શાસ્ત્રનું ભક્તિભાવથી પઠન અને મનન કરીએ ત્યારે, ગુલાબમાળામાં ઈસુના જીવન રહસ્યો પર ચિંતન કરીએ ત્યારે, ક્રૂસના માર્ગમાં ઈસુના પગલે ચાલીએ ત્યારે, તેમજ અન્ય ભક્તિઓમાં વિશેષ કરીને ખ્રિસ્તયજ્ઞમાં આપણે એ જીવનની નવીનતા તરફ પ્રયાણ કરીએ છીએ.

ધર્મ નિષ્ઠા, ભક્તિભાવ અને આત્મસંયમના આપણા કાર્યો, ખ્રિસ્તી જીવનના વિકાસમાં વ્યક્તિગત પવિત્રતા તરફ અને આપણા પાડોશીનું ભલું કરવા તરફ પ્રેરે છે. તપઋતુ અને શ્રદ્ધાવર્ષનો સમય ખ્રિસ્તી જીવનને વધુ ઉત્કટ બનાવે છે કે જેમાં આપણે માનવજાત પ્રત્યેના ઈશ્વરના પ્રેમના સાક્ષીઓ બની, માત્ર શબ્દોમાં જ નહીં બલકે કાર્યોમાં પણ એકબીજા પર પ્રેમ રાખવાનો છે. (એફેસસ ૧:૪ યોહાન ૧૪:૩૪-૩૫)

આપણા વડા ધર્મગુરુ બેનેદીક્ત સોળમાં, શ્રદ્ધાવર્ષ જાહેર કરતાં લખે છે કે “આ શ્રદ્ધાવર્ષ ઈસુ સાથેનો આપણો સંબંધ દ્રઢ કરે” આ હાકલ ઈસુને વધુ નજીકથી ઓળખવા અને ઈસુએ જેની ઘોષણા અને સાક્ષી પુરી છે. તેવા પ્રેમ-સંદેશ સહભાગીતા સેવા અને માફીના ફેલાવા તરફ જવા આપણને પ્રેરે છે.

અલગ-અલગ ધર્મ વિભાગોમાં, નાના ખ્રિસ્તી સમુદાયોનું ઘડતર થાય એ દિશા તરફ ભારતની ધર્મસભા કામ કરી રહી છે. આવા સમુદાયોમાં બધા ભાગ લે એ માટે પ્રોત્સાહીત કરવામાં આવી છે. આવા સમુદાયોનું સભ્યપદ સ્વીકારીને આપણે ઈશ્વરની વાણીથી પ્રેરીત મન અને હૃદયથી વિશ્વાસપાત્ર અને સંસ્કારસંપન્ન સાક્ષીઓ બની રહીએ. આ તપઋતુના આવનાર દિવસો આપણને ઈસુની વધુ નજીક જવા માટે આકર્ષિત કરે અને તેમના દિલોજાન પ્રેમનો આપણને અનુભવ કરાવે કે જેથી કરીને આપણે પ્રમાણભૂત ઈસુમય જીવનના જીવંત સાક્ષીઓ બની રહીએ.

Unity Octave Meeting

Affirming and celebrating their oneness in Christ, the Christians of Gandhinagar town with their Pastors held a 'Unity Meet' at the CNI church in Sector 20.

The event on the 20th January was marked by a well prepared prayer meet with a Gospel sharing session. The meeting concluded with a fellowship meal.

Sr. Montserrat passed away

Sr. Montserrat of the Congregation of Christ Jesus, who was a missionary at Nana Kantharia Mission for many years, passed away in Spain, after a prolonged illness.

Day of Consecrated Life and blessing of Archbishop's House

The Archdiocese of Gandhinagar celebrated the Day of Consecrated Life on the 3rd February. Priests and Religious from the Archdiocese gathered at the Pastoral Centre in the afternoon to re-affirm the commitment and dedication they had promised to the Lord. Fr. Joel Pais, Vicar General of Baroda Diocese, helped the gathering to reflect on the theme of Faith and Commitment to the mission of the Church. That same evening the 'Dharmacharya Niwas' (Archbishop's House) was blessed by Archbishop S. Fernandes on 'Shantivan' campus where the Socio-Pastoral Centre already stands, in the presence of the Priests, Religious and some invited guests. Everyone appreciated the hard work put in by the engineers, contractors, workers and Fr. Jeba, who toiled day and night to complete the work in time.



CCBI, Vailankanni Basilica and Release of the Catholic Directory of India 2013

His Eminence Fernando Cardinal Filoni, Prefect of the Congregation for The Evangelization of Peoples, was the special Legate of the Holy Father at the Silver Jubilee of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India and the Golden Jubilee of the raising of the Shrine of Our Lady of Vailankanni to the status of Minor Basilica. The two jubilees were celebrated at Vailankanni (Diocese of Thanjavur) where nearly 120 Bishops had gathered. The meeting of the CCBI (Latin Church) was to prepare a Pastoral Plan for India. The final message of the Bishops to the Catholics of India has been forwarded by email to all our parishes and convents.

From Vailankanni, Cardinal Filoni made a stop-over in Delhi where he released the new edition of the Catholic Directory of India (CDI) 2013. The first copy was presented to His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, at the CBCI office in New Delhi on February 15, 2013. Cardinal Filoni described the CDI as 'an invaluable source book' of information about the Church in India. (The Directory may be ordered from Claretian Publications : claretsales@gmail.com)

Youth-Fest: Sabarkantha Denary

"Natal Parva" was the theme of the Youth-Festival organized by Sabarkantha Deanery. The aim of the festival was to deepen the experience of one's faith in this Year of Faith. The program was held at Mankroda-Bhiloda on the 12th of January. Fr. Rocky D'Silva, Vicar General, Fr. Lawrence (Archdiocesan Youth Director) and other youth coordinators inaugurated the Festival by lighting the lamp. A good number of youth from the deanery took part in the competitions of solo singing, group singing and drama.

First Holy Communion and Parish Feast at NK

On 25th December, Christmas day, 28 children of Nana Kantharia Parish received their First Holy Communion. The same day witnessed a well organized cultural program in which boarding children, youth and women from the villages of the Mission participated



On New Year's Day, Nana Kantharia parish celebrated the feast of Infant Jesus. During the Eucharist the Archbishop confirmed 20 youth in the Faith. Soon after the Holy Mass the Archbishop met the Parish Council and then all joined in the 'samuh bhojan'. That evening, Archbishop blessed the renovated Jyotighar Convent building of the Vedruna Sisters (Br. Dominic)

Priests' Council Meet

Archbishop Stanislaus Fernandes convened Archdiocesan Council of Priests on the 25th January at Sector 8, Gandhingar. An important matter for further reflection was our ministry with children and youth in our parishes, schools and hostels. The decision to spend the morning of the Chrism Mass reflecting on this concern was accepted by all.

Siddhpur Samachar

27th January 2013, was a special day for the Siddhpur Mission. Five youth were administered the Sacrament of Confirmation and a couple were married. Fr. James had prepared the candidates since weeks ahead. The double event was celebrated under a colorful mandap at the site of the future mission centre in Umru village. The main celebrant, Archbishop Stanislaus Fernandes, was joined by Father Xavier James, and Fathers, Sisters and some Catholics from the neighboring parishes. Both the Sacraments were administered for the first time since the beginning of the new Mission centre. Srs. Neeta and Jerusa of Siddhpur Mission took care to synchronize the liturgical celebration and lead the choir. Since the groom's family has long standing connections in Siddhpur, many well-wishers of other faiths were present. The local Catholic families pooled their resources and attended to all the celebrations to make the day memorable especially for the newly married couple. (Fr. James)

The dramas presented took everyone by surprise. They were staged with much creativity that entailed reflection on the initial hurdles to establish the mission. The story from Vijaynagar Parish stood out as it dramatically depicted the growth of the seed of faith planted by the late missionary Fr. Espasa. The dialogue in the Adivasi Bhili boli made a deep impression on the audience. Fr. Charles Kispotta led the group of youth who conducted the event with great success. (Sr. Pushpa)

Brothers' Gathering at JVK

On 28th of December, Seminarians of the Archdiocese of Gandhinagar came together for their Christmas celebration at Pethapur. The day began with the Holy Eucharist presided over by



Archbishop Stanislaus. During their sharing, the brothers reflected on their 'Christmas ministry-experiences' in their places of mission. This Christmas celebration became more meaningful with the participation of the more than 30 workers engaged in the building under construction at 'Shantivan'. All joined in the party games and danced the Garba. There were prizes for the winners as well as for all the participants who were given a Christmas gift. The sharing of the Christmas meal brought joy and happiness to all. (br. Julian)

ADG Spoken English Course

Fr. Xavier James has been appointed in-charge of the ADG Spoken English Course Program, which will be held from the 1st to the 19th (morning) of April, 2013, at Jivan Vikas Kendra, Pethapur. The information has been sent via e-mail to all Parishes and Convents.

Events Ahead

1. SCC Meeting, 3rd March, 2013
2. Women's Day Celebration, 10th March, 2013
3. Reflection for Priests and Religious and Chrism Mass, 23rd March, 2013
4. Visit of the representatives of Church in Need, from 5th - 7th April, 2013