

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Director and Members of ASC TIDINGS wish all our readers a Very Happy New Year! May God Almighty bless you all abundantly on the New Year Day and on every day of the New Year 2019! May you be blessed with good health, happiness and peace throughout the coming year! May your life be one of great success, prosperity and joy! This is our prayer for you today and every day of this New Year! God bless you all!

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ASC TIDINGS

"Live Jesus and give Jesus to the World"

(Bl. James Alberione)

Look
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EDITORIAL

JESUS KEEPS COMING TO US EVERY DAY!!

We have just celebrated Christmas, the birthday of our Saviour Jesus Christ which is for us an important and annual celebration. The unfortunate thing which can possibly occur and which often occurs at our Christmas celebrations is that we miss Jesus whose birthday we celebrate. If our main focus is on celebrations alone we can easily miss Him and his presence among us even during the Christmas season.

Do we not know that Christ is born every day of the year! He is born in the slums, in the little and humble cottages of the poor each day. Even amidst the shouts of joy and singings of carols on the cause of Christ, the new-born Lord suffers, suffers miserably in His "little ones" who undergo injustice, persecution, hunger and thirst. Whom do we honour and worship through the celebration of Christmas?

At the first coming of the Lord into this world, the people of his time, at the advice of St. John the Baptist, prepared themselves to receive Him, through a change of heart. St. John called the attention of the people of Israel to its fidelity. The call is addressed also to us who live today. We hear it especially during the Christmas season. As a community we are called to a change of heart. We are all aware of areas in our own lives that need to be changed and be touched by the power of God's forgiveness. We all need to be recalled into the fidelity of our own religious profession; we all need to be challenged again by the word of the Lord. This is the way how

we can continue to receive Him every day into our hearts, into our lives, into our homes and into our world.

Christmas should be a celebration of our faith in Jesus. We need to celebrate light in the midst of darkness, we must celebrate the new hope that Jesus has generated in people down through the centuries. He is our Light; he is our Hope. With the birth of Jesus, a new adventure in faith has begun. A new approach to God has been opened up for us, a new way of relating to each other has been asked of us; because this Child became for all of us the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Jesus continues to come to us each day. Let us now, therefore, remove the obstacles to his coming. We need to correct what is wrong, stir sorrow for our sins, and confess them. We need to pray more, attend to the Mass with more fervour and have the loving appreciation for one another in community. We shall then be able to be on our way to that glorious day of joy, the day we shall begin to celebrate and rejoice in His Kingdom.

Man has today split the atom, has conquered a portion of space, has harnessed nuclear energy, and he plays with new kinds of life in test tubes. But he has failed to realize his need for the revelation of Jesus. Christ who was born for our salvation should appear to the whole world through us and in us. The mystery of Christmas lays upon us all a debt to God and an obligation to the rest of mankind. Bethlehem is no longer a hillside cave. It is rather every place where we create justice, freedom and love. We do this not only by preaching the Good News, but by living it and thus revealing Jesus to the world.

Jesus keeps coming in many ways. Jesus visits us through life's events, through prayer, and through sacraments. At the Mass, he rends the heavens and comes down to us. He presents himself

to us in the Holy Eucharist. Through his presence in the Blessed Sacrament, earth is made a vestibule of heaven. According to the Prophet Ezechiel, the name of the new holy city of heaven and the name of the Church on earth shall be: "The Lord is there!" (Ezech. 48:35). Christmas season is meant to make us more sensitive to the many ways, especially through the Holy Eucharist the Lord keeps coming into our lives.

– Fr Joseph Vincent Gnarackatt, SSP

BLESSED JAMES ALBERIONE SPEAKS

Those who do not put prayer in the very first place do not deserve the name of religious, and in fact are not.

Our prayers place all of our being before God: mind, will, heart, body. They come from the basic sources of the Church and are meant to form the religious-apostle while retaining their strong and devout sentiment. One who is familiar with them and is faithful to them will gradually be illumined, fortified and guided in the spirituality of St Paul.

The first and foremost duty of man, of the Christian, of the religious and priest, is prayer. We can give no greater contribution to the Congregation than prayer. No work is more useful for us than prayer. No priestly work is more profitable for the Church than prayer. Therefore, prayer must be before all, above all, and the life of all.

The temptation may come: I have much work to do, too much work. But the primary work for you, the supreme mandate of the priest, the main contribution to be made to the Congregation, is that of prayer.

It is an illusion for some to excuse their lack of prayer on the pretext that they are too busy.

Is this really the reason? Or is it that we find our work-load heavy because it is not preceded by prayer? Prayer makes it easier to get many things done.

Too busy? But the Church, the Congregation, our own souls beg prayer – after which attending to whatever is possible.”

CHRISTMAS AMIDST TUMULT AND TURMOIL

Christmas marks a turning point both in the Church's Liturgical Calendar and in the universal civil calendar in that it stands as the junction of all that was, is and is to come! Against this backdrop, looking back at the year since last Christmas is like looking at oneself in a broken mirror that reflects nothing but the brokenness of human life, **Christmas heralding the possibility of mending that brokenness.** Willy-nilly, the issue of rape [the criminal act involving majors and minors alike] that dominated the news scene, was overshadowed by developments that had the Church reeling under scandals, shattering the myth of the holiness of the ordained both domestically and internationally, whereby even the Sacrament of Reconciliation came in for brazen scrutiny. Allegations and counter allegations have seen the light of day like never before, no less a personage than the Pope himself being accused of a cover-up. The esteem Pakistan earned from the international community when its Supreme Court acquitted Asia Bibi of the wild, unfounded charge of blasphemy and ordered her release, instantly dropped several notches with the kind of protests that erupted, the government buckling under pressure from fanatics and declaring its readiness to prevent the mother-of-five from leaving the country and allowing for a review petition, in effect signing her death warrant. India struck down Article 377 of the Constitution, decriminalizing gay sex and Article 497, decriminalizing adultery. Several countries have some despot at the helm of affairs playing spoilsport. **What message then does Christmas hold for modern man amidst the turmoil that seems to show no signs of abating?** Does Christmas have a place in our world at all?

The Nativity - Birth of the 'new man'!

Saint Paul has an amazing explanation for the reason and purpose of the coming of Christ that we celebrate at Christmas: "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in Heaven and on Earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him" (Col 1:15-16). He further states that "then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority, and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet" (1 Cor 15:24-25).

Interestingly, the Nativity, an event of cosmic significance, brought forth the "new man" who undid the damage caused by the fall of the first man. Just as the Johannine view of Jesus as the incarnate Logos (Jn 1:14a) proclaims the universal relevance of his birth, the Pauline perspective highlights the birth of a new man and a new world in the Nativity. In Paul's eschatological view, Jesus, in contrast to Adam, the *old man* given to sin, is the *new man* of morality, fortitude and obedience who ushers in a world of immortality in salvation. Saint Irenaeus [2nd century] wrote: "When he became incarnate and was made man, he commenced afresh the long line of human beings, and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner, with salvation; so that what we had lost in Adam – namely, to be according to the image and likeness of God - we might recover in Christ Jesus."

Christmas, sign and celebration of fulfilment

Understanding the link of all this to the coming of Jesus at Christmas would depend on the depth of our individual perception of Jesus in relation to our redemption. The Father sent his Son to redeem fallen humankind; the Son fulfilled his mission and regained for us the sonship that we had lost with the sin of our First Parents.

Though Redemption has been achieved, the effect of the sin of disobedience continues to be evident in the various happenings both in our own country and in the world at large exposing so clearly the multifaceted nature of sin—denial of basic human rights in terms of the choice of food and religion, infidelity to marital and religious vows, lack of common sense in relation to the observance of the First Commandment, legalization of adultery and same-sex unions and so much else. **To subdue all these enemies of humanity the Lord needs the hands and feet of the adherents of the religion of his love to help him. He needs us to evangelize widely!** And this, not so that our numbers might trounce other religions but precisely so that multitudes might know the difference between a God who is real and one that doesn't exist and that, so knowing, may reap the benefit of sharing eternal glory with the Trinity!

Deus natus est

For Saint Ephrem of 4th century Syria, the uniqueness of the Nativity of Jesus was supplemented with the sign of the Majesty of the Creator through the ability of a powerful God to enter the world as a powerless infant. “Venerate the Nativity, through which you are freed from the bonds of an earthly nativity,” urges Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Paul adding: “Just as in Adam all of us died, so too in Christ all of us will be brought to life” (1 Cor 15:22). Jesus, as an obedient Son, fulfilled the divine will and was therefore free from sin, thus revealing the righteousness of the Father in the salvation he wrought for us.

All said and done, amidst the tumult surrounding us, “each day, according to the spirit of the Church, we can celebrate a new Christmas. There is the eternal birth of the divine Son of the Father, and there is the temporal birth of the Son of God by the Virgin Mary; and there is the real and mystical birth of Jesus Christ in the reception

of the Eucharist,” avers Blessed James Alberione. And from the Eucharist flows every grace that can enable us to both celebrate and wish the world around a truly joyful and hope-filled Christmas, singing “Glory to God in the highest and peace to people of goodwill!” (Lk 2:14)

– **Ladislaus Louis D’Souza, CP**

ONE WHO KILLS TIME COMMITS SUICIDE!

When the ill-fated “Titanic” steamed majestically through the darkness on her maiden voyage to New York, on 14th April, 1912, there were more than two thousand people enjoying the liner’s snug comforts. One of the tragic incidents of that night is recalled by the American Washington Post: “In the wheelroom, a nattily uniformed Officer hummed at his task as he directed the destinies of an ocean greyhound that even then was setting a speed record. The phone rang. A minute passed! Another minute! The Officer was busy! The third precious minute passed! The Officer, his trivial task completed, stepped to the phone. From the “crow’s nest” – “Iceberg dead ahead! Reverse engines!” But it was too late. As he rushed to the controls, the “pride of the sea” crashed into the iceberg amid a deafening roar. Three precious minutes! Attention to trivial details and sixteen hundred people paid with their lives”.

Next to grace, time is the most precious gift of God. Yet how much of these—grace and time—we waste. We say that time does many things. It teaches us many lessons, weans us from many follies, strengthens us in good resolves, and heals many wounds. Yet, it does none of these things! Time does nothing. But time is the condition of all these things which God does in time. As we use it so shall we be. Every day has its opportunities for constructive use of it, and every hour offers chances of growth without which life is dull and not worth living. The voice of Time cries to man, “ADANCE!” Time is for his advancement and improvement, for his greater worth, his greater happiness, his better life. As we are about to begin yet another year—2019—from the lived experience of the past life let us realise that one who kills time commits suicide—growth is stunted and the purpose of life is ignored.

An Irish saying goes thus:

“Take time to work, it is the price of success. Take time to think, it is the source of power. Take time to play, it is the secret of perpetual youth. Take time to read, it is the foundation of wisdom. Take time to be friendly, it is the road to happiness. Take time to look around, the day will be too short to be selfish. Take time to laugh, it is the music of the soul. Take time to pray, it is the deposit in the Bank of God, the interest is Eternal life. Take time to love and be loved, it is the privilege of being the children of God!”

– **Fr George Chathanatt, SSP**

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS

From the Words of Blessed James Alberione

The Instrumentum Laboris or Working Document of the Synod of Bishops 2018 asserts that holiness is the most attractive face of the Church. It also declares that holiness is beauty. As baptized Christians, we are called to holiness and to live in beauty and grace. Physical beauty is not my attribute, but God has instilled in me a deep yearning for true beauty, which is holiness. I feel blessed that God has called me to the PDDM congregation and to the Pauline Family whose true face is holiness. Delving into the meditations of Blessed James Alberione to the PDDM Sisters on the liturgical year, I realize even more that the liturgical year is a means to sanctification and spiritual beauty. Our beloved Founder considers the liturgical year as the “sacrament” or “sacred sign” of the presence of Christ in time. The liturgical year is the actualization of Christ’s work of redemption. This saving event should be celebrated and lived in our lives so that Christ may be formed in us.

Christmas season is a “forceful” and privileged season for sanctification or “christification”. Blessed Alberione underlines the importance of the historical event of the birth of Jesus Savior. He remarks: “That historical fact was the principal event of human history because it initiated the Christian era. And so we count the years from that day. Indeed, that was the greatest event for humanity and for all history and is represented so in the Christmas crib.”

The Immaculate Virgin Mary plays a very important role in the mystery of Christmas. Blessed Alberione remarks: “The Holy Spirit – the Father’s power – overshadowed the Virgin and, remaining a virgin, she bore the Son of God made man. When Mary said Verbum caro

factus est – ‘Be it done to me according to your word’, the child was conceived and grew in her womb till it was born. Mary celebrated a novena of nine months, from the annunciation – March 25 – to December 25. Hence, through Mary and of Mary the Child was born.”

In the mind of Blessed Alberione the dynamic element of the Christmas mystery is “christification” – to grow in Christ. He states: “We should make a step ahead every Christmas. We should let Jesus Christ grow in us through piety, good works, all that we do during the day ... Christmas is to grow, grow; it is to grow always ... It is Christ’s growth in the crib of our hearts ... Reach out for that sanctity willed for us by God, that is, the growth of Christ in us. At what level of growth is Jesus Christ in you? ... Jesus Christ living in us – he who replaces our mind, will, heart with his own: vivit vero in me Christus – ‘Christ lives in me’ (Gal 2:20).”

In the teachings of Blessed Alberione and in the tradition of the Pauline Family, the incarnation of the Lord has a tremendous apostolic goal: the glory of God and the salvation of all. We can glean this from the chaplet to the Divine Master composed by Primo Maestro: “Jesus, Divine Master, we adore you with the angels who sang the reasons for your Incarnation: ‘Glory to God and peace to all people’. We thank you for having called us to share in your own apostolate. Enkindle in us your own flame of zeal for God and for souls.”

***Sr. Mary Margaret Tapang, PDDM
Fresno, CA-USA.***

NEWS FLASH

Paulines Take Part in Charism Course in Rome

As the course on the Pauline charism started at Ariccia on 24th September, 2018 we students of the course send you all our fellow Paulines our warmest greetings of love and joy. The course started with the Eucharistic Celebration in the Sottocripta of the Regina Apostolorum Shrine.



Participants of the Charism Course

These were days of celebration of knowing each other, sharing and fellowship among us. In fact they were special days of grace to hear the testimonies of our brothers and Sisters of the first hours who lived with our Founder Blessed Giacomo Alberione.

With Sr. Micaela Monetti, Superior General of the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master, we were immersed in the “Unitary Project of the Pauline Family - Giving the world Jesus Christ Way and Truth and Life”.

Furthermore, our presentations of the reality of every nation were very enriching and how we work together as a Pauline Family. Coming down from the mountain of Ariccia with our already full luggage, we stopped in our “school”, in the shadow of the Church of Jesus Master and started our study program with the inaugural lecture: “Study and Studies for the Pauline Family” from Don Valdir José de Castro, Superior General of the SSP. His paternal presence and his invitation to study to understand and live in a changing world at any time, have been an incentive for us to begin this year of grace and deepening with open mind and heart.

As the seventh successor of the Founder, Blessed James Alberione, Don Valdir welcomed us to the Course and expressed his joy because we responded to a call from God, to dedicate a year of study on the charism. His fatherly words reminded us that studying is entering the school of Jesus Master; He echoed the words of the Primo Maestro: “the study is for life, life is for eternity.” Moreover, he added that every Pauline study is for the mission.

In October 2018 we were immersed in the history of the Pauline Family. Prof. Don Giancarlo Rocca ssp, presented us the historical and chronological order of the Pauline Family. Sr. Joseph Ober-to pddm, presented us with the life of Don Alberione with novelty, emotion and lived experiences which touched all of us. Sr. Grazia Loparco fma, presented us the History of the Church in the 1800-1900 context, in detail, emphasizing the aspects that have influenced the life, intuition and mission of our Founder.

As our course continues more vibrantly we ask your prayers and be

in communion with us as we journey along the path of our Blessed Founder knowing and experiencing him alive in hearts together with Jesus Master Way, Truth and Life.

– **Bro. Arockiam, SSP**

SISTER DISCIPLES OF DIVINE MASTER IN BANGALORE

Celebrate the Solemn Feast of Jesus the Divine Master!!

It was on a lovely day of October 28th 2018, the Community of Sister Disciples of Divine Master gathered together in the beautiful Chapel of their Provincial House in Bangalore along with the mem-



Fr. Sebastian Ampattukuzhiyil, the Superior of the Society of St. Paul, Bangalore presiding over the Feast Day holy Mass with several other Concelebrants

bers of the Society of St. Paul and Daughters of St. Paul to celebrate the Feast of Jesus the Divine Master.

Present for the occasion were also other priests both religious and Diocesan, Brothers of different Congregations, Sisters of various Religious Congregations working in Bangalore and around, Friends of the Divine Master, Benefactors and Well Wishers of the Sister Disciples.

The solemn Mass in honour of Jesus the Divine Master began at 10.00 a.m. Fr. Sebastian Ampattukuzhiyil, the Superior of the So-



Participants in the Feast Day Mass

ciety of St. Paul, during his homily, mentioned that the services rendered by the Pious Disciples through out the world are praiseworthy.

The holy Mass was made more solemn and devotional with the melodious singing and music by Sr. Gracelet, pddm and choir. Immediately after the holy Mass the Congregation was led to the dining hall where all were welcomed for a short cultural programme organized by the Postulants.

After the cultural programme, as a fitting finale a delicious feast day meal was served to the great satisfaction of all.

4th National Convention of Pauline Cooperators in India

The 4th NATIONAL CONVENTION of Pauline Cooperators in India got off to a delightful start with the young Formees of the Daughters of Saint Paul at Bandra dancing their way into the Alberione Hall, leading the participants group wise in alphabetical order, the names of the cities they came from emblazoned on stoles!

Welcoming the 57 delegates from across the Indian Province of the Daughters of Saint Paul, Sister Arul Mary Susai, Provincial Superior, dwelt on the need for a sense of belonging and commitment. Grate-



Inauguration Ceremony of the National Convention

fully acknowledging what she termed as “valuable collaboration” on the part of the Cooperators, Sister Arul declared the Convention open! The various sessions that followed after the short Prayer Service and the lighting of the Deepa constituted a huge eye-opener to all and sundry as to the beauty of the mission entrusted to the Pauline Cooperator by our Founder, Blessed James Alberione!

Closing Mass – The piece de resistance was the closing Mass presided over by the **Right Reverend Bosco Penha**, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Bombay. In his Introduction to the Mass bringing the **4th National Convention of Pauline Cooperators in India** to a close, Ladislaus averred that Bishop Bosco’s presence was significant in that it was precisely he who celebrated the Mass launching the Cooperators’ Apostolate in India in November 2003.

– **Ladislaus Louis D’Souza, PC**

Golden Jubilee of the Bangalore Community

It was with joy and gratitude to God that the members of St Pauls Community Bangalore celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the house on 4 December 2018 in ST PAULS CAMPUS, Bangalore. This celebration was combined with the feast of Blessed James Alberione, the founder of the Pauline Family. It was fifty years ago, on 25th December 1968, two of the pioneers, Fr Gabriel Colosanto and Br Basil Chennamkulathu, began the Bangalore mission with a spirit of determination and great trust in the Lord. They were soon joined by Br Thomas Cornelio and Fr Vincent Gnarackatt. The Jubilee Celebrations were solemnized by the presence of Most Rev. Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bangalore, who presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. In his homily the Archbishop expressed his



Most Rev. Peter Machado, the Archbishop of Bangalore presiding over the Jubilee Mass. Concelebrants: Rev. Fr. Varghese Gnalian SSP, the Provincial, Rev. Fr. Joe Mathias, Rector of St. Peter's Seminary, Rev. Msgr C. Francis, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Bangalore and several other Priests, both Diocesan and Religious

appreciation for the hard work and perseverance of the Pauline pioneers who dedicated their life for the establishment and growth of the Society of St Paul in Bangalore. He emphasized the power of the media in influencing the life of the people of today and underlined the contribution of the members of Society of St Paul in the area of mass media.

After the meaningful liturgical celebrations, the assembly came together for a short felicitation programme to commemorate the 50 years of Pauline presence in Bangalore and to felicitate the pioneers. Fr Varghese Gnalian, the Provincial Superior, felicitated Br Thomas Cornelio and Fr Vincent Gnarackatt who had rendered yeoman's service to the community of Bangalore in its initial years. Three sisters of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master, namely, Sr Cornelia, Sr Norberta and Sr Helen, who had rendered their service in

the community of Bangalore in the early years also were felicitated by Fr Sebastian Ampattukuzhiyil, Superior of the community. The highlight of the programme was a documentary titled ST PAULS BANGALORE @ 50 which traced the journey of Society of St Paul from Italy upto Bangalore in the last fifty years. The documentary was produced under the leadership of Fr Plavendran, the Principal of ST PAULS COLLEGE, Bangalore, assisted by the faculty and stu-



The Concelebrants of the Jubilee Mass along with the Most Rev. Peter Machado, the Archbishop of Bangalore.

dents of SPICE, Bangalore. The documentary won appreciation of one and all present. A delicious dinner which was held in the open grounds capped the Golden Jubilee celebrations. During the dinner the heavens opened and light shower descended upon the guests who interpreted it as "showers of blessing".

While thanking the Almighty for the manifold blessings bestowed upon it, the community of Bangalore salutes the undying spirit and diligence of every member who toiled hard during the last 50 years to make the community what it is today.

– Dr Plavendran Irudayas, SSP

8 Golden Jubilarians of Daughters of St. Paul, Mumbai Felicitated!

8th of December was a memorable day in the life of our sisters Anne Plathara, Ancilla Plathara, Rosaria Lobo, Biaca D'Silva, Patricia Pottanani, Vincent Padinjaredath, Virginia D'Mello and Carmel Joseph of the Indian Province as they celebrated the golden jubilee of their religious profession. (Sr Carmel had to leave for Nigeria as she had an important meeting of the delegation)

The celebration reminded the jubilarians of God's fidelity for the past 50 years and the commitment they made 50 years ago. Counting the many blessing that came along in the cradle of the congregation wherein they have grown, nourished, matured and seasoned through the on-going accompaniment of God's presence, the sup-



The Golden Jubilarians on their jubilee day

port of our sisters, superiors and formators they gratefully recall to their mind countless blessings from the Lord. Indeed it was a day to sing the magnificat in the life of these jubilarians.



Most Rev. Dominic Savio Fernandes, Auxiliary Bishop of Mumbai and Concelebrants after the Jubilee Mass along with the Jubilarians.

The thanksgiving Eucharist at St Theresa's church was presided over by Most Rev. Dominic Savio Fernandes, the auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Bombay and concelebrated by the relatives of the jubilarians, Priests from Society of St Paul and SVD house. The celebration came to a conclusion with a felicitation programme and a solemn lunch served nearly 300 people who were present. As a fitting finale to the entire celebrations a cultural evening was organised in honour of the Jubilarians.

- Sr Jessy dsp