ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRES - INDIA
Know Lord Jesus

# NEWSLETTER

A C E C - I

@divyadeep01 @divine-scroll

APRIL 2026 | ISSUE#01-03

EDITORIAL

## HOLY WEEK-SERVE | REFLECT | RISE



Holy Week invites us into the deepest mystery of our faith—a sacred journey that moves from humble service to ultimate sacrifice, and finally to the joy of resurrection. It begins with the Washing of Feet, where Jesus teaches us the true meaning of priesthood, love, and the Eucharist: to serve others with humility and compassion. Good Friday draws us into the solemn reality of the Crucifixion, revealing the depth of God's love for humanity. Easter Sunday then bursts forth with hope, proclaiming Christ's victory over sin and death.

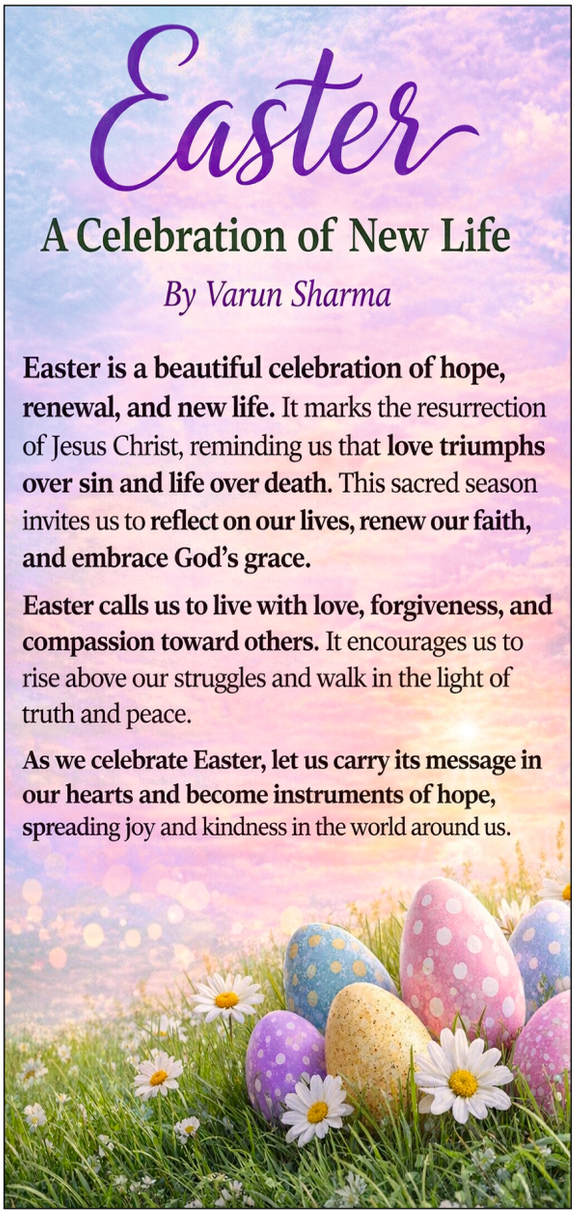
The message of Easter is profound: God has gifted us love, freedom, justice, peace, and serenity. After forty days of fasting, prayer, and communion with the Father, Jesus invites us to reflect on our own lives through His example. He came into the world to bring God's love to a suffering humanity, restoring dignity to all as children of God.

Through His life, Jesus showed us the way to the Kingdom of God. He revealed that God's Spirit lives within each of us, calling us to reconciliation and to build bridges of love, justice, and peace. In washing the feet of His disciples, He demonstrated that true greatness lies not in being served, but in serving others.

As Socrates wisely said, "the unreflected life is not worth living." Holy Week is a call to pause, reflect, and transform our lives. In Christ's crucifixion, we learn the way of the cross—sacrifice, truth, and faithful worship. In His resurrection, we are invited to live a new life filled with hope.

As St. Paul reminds us, our hearts are restless until they find rest in the Lord. This season calls us to a quiet, sincere search for a life rooted in love, justice, peace, and brotherhood.

May this Easter inspire us to live in harmony, respect one another, and serve humanity with humility. Let us remain faithful to God, promote the dignity of every human being, and become living witnesses of His transforming love.




## HIGHLIGHTS

- **Divya Deep**
  Hindi YouTube Channel *'@divyadeep01'* airing "Bible ki Kahaniyaan" with kids of different churches in Delhi.
- **Divine Scroll**
  English YouTube Channel *'@divine-scroll'* airing "Daily Dose of Faith" and "Sunday Reading's Reflections."

## NEW INITIATIVES

- **Holy Mass**
  Every Friday at 4:00 pm on our YouTube channel @divyadeep01.
- **Digital Books**
  "Meet Jesus" the book's third part 'Jesus Teacher and Shepherd', which will be available on our website.

# Hosanna!

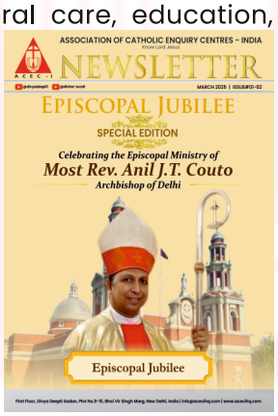
"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

— Matthew 21:9 —




The release of the special Jubilee edition of the ACEC-I Newsletter marked a memorable highlight in the celebrations honouring Archbishop Anil J. T. Couto's Episcopal Silver Jubilee at the Constitution Club of India. Unveiled by the Archbishop himself, the publication stands as a heartfelt tribute to 25 years of his dedicated episcopal ministry.

More than a commemorative issue, the newsletter brings together inspiring messages, reflections, and testimonies from Church leaders, collaborators, and well-wishers who have walked alongside him over the years. It beautifully captures the spirit of his leadership, highlighting his unwavering commitment to pastoral care, education, social justice, and interfaith harmony.




Portraying him as a shepherd devoted to unity, peace, and service, the publication reflects not only key milestones of his ministry but also the profound impact of his leadership on both the Church and society. Each page echoes gratitude, admiration, and inspiration.

The release of this special edition added depth and meaning to the Jubilee celebration, offering a lasting tribute to a life of service while reaffirming the mission of ACEC-I in fostering faith, dialogue, and community engagement.

## DILIGENCE AND DIALOGUE



**Fr. Maria Arockia Doss SDB**
President, Delhi CRI

On behalf of the Delhi CRI Unit, I extend our heartfelt congratulations to His Grace Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto as he celebrates the Silver Jubilee of his episcopal ordination. Over these twenty-five years of episcopal ministry, the Church in Delhi and Jalandhar have witnessed a shepherd whose stewardship has been marked by two deeply complementary virtues: diligence and dialogue.

With tireless dedication he has guided the Archdiocese through pastoral challenges and social realities, encouraging the faithful to remain steadfast in mission and service. His diligence is visible in his attentive pastoral visits, thoughtful guidance, and constant concern for the marginalized and vulnerable.

At the same time, Archbishop Couto has consistently nurtured a culture of dialogue—within the Church, among religious congregations, and with people of different faiths and traditions. In a diverse city like Delhi, his commitment to listening, mutual respect, and collaboration has strengthened bonds of fraternity and common purpose.

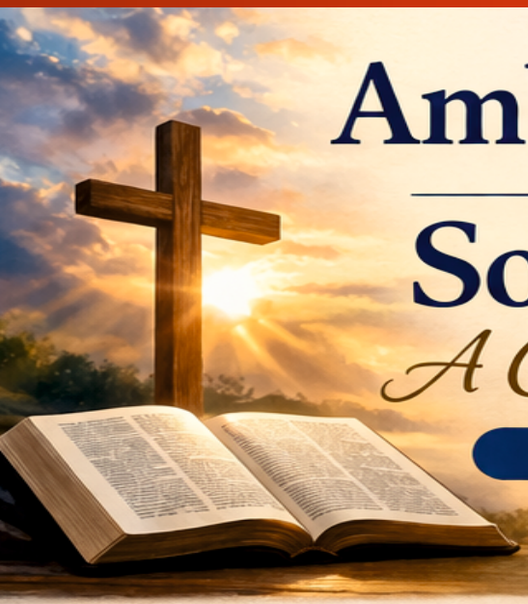
As religious in the Archdiocese, we gratefully acknowledge his fatherly guidance and pastoral accompaniment. May the Lord continue to bless him with wisdom, strength, and serenity as he shepherds God's people with diligence and dialogue in the years ahead. Our prayers remain with him and Archdiocese.

-Fr. Maria Arockia Doss SDB
President, Delhi CRI

# Ambedkar Jayanti and Social Justice:

## *A Christian Reflection*

By Adv. Sr. Rani Punnasseril HCM






14 APRIL

Ambedkar Jayanti, observed each year on **14 April**, invites the nation to remember the life and mission of B. R. Ambedkar, one of India's most influential thinkers and champions of social justice. His life story is not only about personal achievement but also about the transformation of society through equality, dignity, and constitutional rights.

For Christians reflecting on social responsibility, Ambedkar Jayanti provides an important opportunity to connect the ideals of justice in the Indian Constitution with the Gospel call to uphold the dignity of every human person.

B. R. Ambedkar consistently emphasized that true progress in society must be measured by how it treats its most vulnerable members. His well known observation, *"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved,"* highlights his commitment to inclusive development.

He also warned that political freedom alone would not sustain democracy unless society embraced deeper values of equality and fraternity. For Ambedkar, democracy was not merely a system of governance but a way of living together with mutual respect.

From a Christian perspective, the pursuit of social justice is deeply rooted in biblical faith. The prophets consistently called people to defend the oppressed and protect the dignity of the poor. The Bible urges believers: *"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression"* (Isaiah 1:17).

Several leaders have acknowledged Ambedkar's profound impact on India's moral and political landscape. **Jawaharlal Nehru** recognized him as a powerful force who challenged the injustices embedded in society and helped shape a democratic India through the Constitution. Nehru saw in Ambedkar a courageous intellectual who used his scholarship and leadership to defend the rights of the marginalized.

Similarly, K. R. **Narayanan** described Ambedkar as a symbol of the struggle for dignity and human rights. Narayanan often reflected on how Ambedkar's life demonstrated the strength of perseverance and the importance of social reform in building a just nation.

Ambedkar Jayanti, therefore, is not merely a celebration of a historic figure but a call to action. It encourages communities to reflect on the continuing realities of inequality and discrimination while renewing their commitment to **justice and fraternity**.

For Christians, honouring Ambedkar's legacy means actively promoting equality, respecting human dignity, and standing in solidarity with those who remain marginalized.

> *The life of B. R. Ambedkar reminds us that social justice requires courage, conviction, and compassion. When individuals and communities work together to uphold these values, the dream of a society built on equality and fraternity moves closer to reality.*



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# INTERNATIONAL EARTH DAY

As the International Earth Day is approaching on April 22, 2026, we; Christians are called to celebrate God's magnificent creation while embracing our role as faithful stewards.

In Genesis 1:28, Scripture reminds us that God tasked humanity with caring for the earth, subduing and ruling it responsibly as an act of worship to the Creator, not the creation itself. Psalm 24:1 declares, "*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it,*" urging believers to protect forests, waters, and wildlife out of reverence for Him. So, we are duty-bound to conserve the God's beautiful creation, "The Earth".

## Bible verses on caring for creation

Bible verses emphasize humanity's God-given responsibility to steward and care for this creation of God with great responsibly.

Genesis 2:15 states, "*The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it*" (ESV), establishing care for the earth as a divine command from the beginning.

Psalm 24:1 declares, "*The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein*" (ESV), reminding believers that all creation belongs to God and merits protection.

Genesis 1:26-28 grants humanity dominion over creation "*in our image, in our likeness,*" implying responsible rule rather than exploitation.

Job 12:7-10 urges, "*But ask the beasts, and they will teach you... In his hand is the life of every living thing*" (ESV), highlighting God's intimate care for all life.

Romans 8:19-22 describes creation "*groaning together in the pains of childbirth*" awaiting redemption, calling Christians to join in its restoration.

## What do these verses mean for modern environmental issues?

These verses call Christians to active, responsible stewardship amid modern environmental crises like climate change, pollution, and deforestation.

**Responsible Dominion Today**
Genesis 1:26-28's dominion mandate means exercising wise authority over resources, rejecting exploitation for profit and promoting sustainable practices such as renewable energy and conservation to honor God's image-

**Cultivating and Protecting**
Genesis 2:15 instructs "tilling and keeping" the earth, applying to reducing waste, protecting biodiversity, and combating soil degradation through ethical farming and anti-deforestation efforts.

**Reverence against Waste**
Psalm 24:1 affirms God's ownership, urging opposition to pollution and overconsumption by prioritizing recycling, clean energy, and policies that value creation's intrinsic worth beyond economic gain.

**Empathy for Creation's Groan**
Romans 8:19-22 views environmental disasters as symptoms of sin's curse, motivating advocacy for climate justice, disaster relief, and restoration projects as foretastes of Christ's redemption.

**Practical Witness**
Job 12:7-10 fosters learning from nature, encouraging evidence-based action like emission reductions and habitat preservation to reflect God's sustaining care in a groaning world.

## How does Romans 8 apply to climate change specifically?

Romans 8:19-22 portrays creation "groaning" under bondage to decay due to sin, awaiting liberation through believers' glorification, offering a theological lens for viewing climate change as part of this cosmic suffering.

**Groaning Amid Crisis**
The passage interprets rising temperatures, extreme weather, and ecosystem collapse as creation's "pains of childbirth," signaling distress from human-induced harm rather than mere natural cycles.

**Urgent Christian Response**
Christians are motivated to mitigate emissions, advocate for justice, and pursue restoration as faithful stewards, embodying hope that previews ultimate renewal without fatalistic neglect.

**Eschatological Hope**
Ultimate salvation includes creation's freedom from decay, framing climate action as partnering with God's redemptive plan, not salvation-by-works, amid warnings of tipping points.

## What practical steps does Romans 8 suggest for Christians tackling climate change?

Romans 8:19-22 inspires Christians to counter climate change through hopeful, Spirit-empowered actions that preview creation's liberation.

**1. Embrace Hopeful Activism**
Live "as if" the redeemed world is arriving—calculate and reduce personal/church carbon footprints, install solar panels, and divest from fossil fuels to embody patient hope amid groaning.

**2. Support Sustainable Practices**
Promote local, organic, and perennial agriculture to cut fossil fuels, chemicals, and monocrops, fostering biodiversity and mitigating emissions as vocational nurturing of life.

**3. Advocate and Protest**
Join protests, push for policy changes like Paris Accord implementation, and grieve tipping points publicly, aligning with the Spirit's intercession for systemic justice.

**4. Build Community Resilience**
Prepare for "deep adaptation" via education series, gratitude practices, and interconnected action—honoring

deepening bonds with creation, and acting despite uncertainty.

### How can churches organize climate advocacy efforts?

Churches can effectively organize climate advocacy by leveraging their communal spaces, spiritual authority, and networks to foster action inspired by Romans 8's vision of creation's renewal.

**1. Form Advocacy Teams**
Assemble a dedicated team of congregants to lead efforts, starting with Bible studies on Romans 8:19-22 to build theological motivation, then planning monthly prayer vigils for climate justice.

**2. Host Events and Education**
Organize workshops with guest speakers on reducing emissions, screen documentaries on climate impacts, and launch sermon series linking stewardship to modern crises like floods and heat waves.

**3. Partner Locally**
Collaborate with interfaith groups, NGOs, and Transition Towns for joint actions such as tree-planting drives, lobbying for green policies, and community carbon audits.

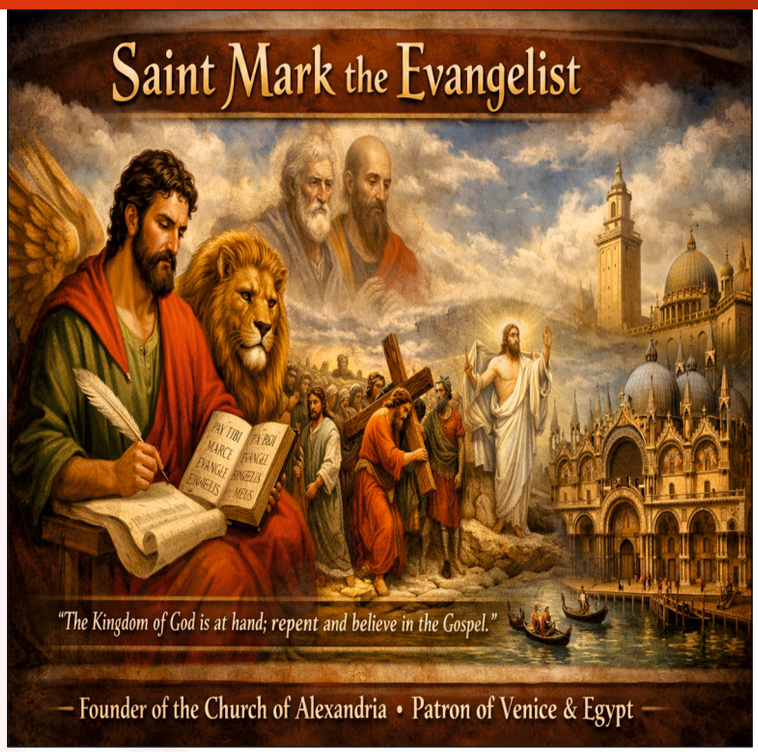
**4. Implement Church Actions**
Audit and green church operations—switch to renewables, cut waste, promote sustainable transport—while mobilizing members for petitions, protests, and divestment campaigns.

**Conclusion:**
The International Earth Day serves as a powerful reminder that environmental stewardship is not just a civic duty, but a divine mandate. Scripture—from the garden of Genesis to the "groaning" creation in Romans—clarifies that the earth belongs to the Lord, and we are its entrusted caretakers.

By transitioning from exploitation to responsible dominion, Christians can turn conservation into an act of worship. Whether through individual lifestyle changes, church-led advocacy, or community resilience, our efforts to heal the planet reflect a commitment to God's redemptive plan. Protecting the earth is a practical witness of our faith, honoring the Creator by Cherishing His creation.

– Anthony Joseph




## THE LION OF THE GOSPEL

Saint Mark the Evangelist is traditionally regarded as the author of the second of the Synoptic Gospels (the other two being Matthew and Luke) in the New Testament and one of the earliest proclaimers of the Christian message. Believed to be a Libyan and having lived in the first century CE, Mark was a close companion of apostles such as Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The early Christian tradition holds that he wrote his Gospel based largely on Peter's teachings, presenting a vivid and action-oriented account of Jesus Christ's life, ministry, death, and resurrection.

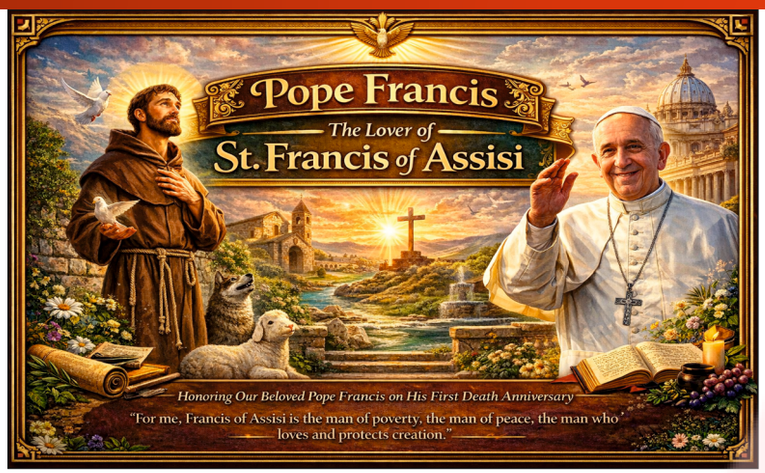
The Gospel of Mark emphasizes Jesus as the suffering servant and Son of God. A key verse that reflects this theme is Mark 10:45: "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Another significant passage is Mark 1:15, and (Jesus) saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." These verses highlight the urgency and transformative power of Christ's message.

According to tradition, Mark later travelled to Egypt and founded the Church of Alexandria, making him one of the most important figures in early African Christianity. He is therefore honored as the patron saint of Venice, where his relics are believed to be housed, as well as of Egypt, barristers, notaries, and prisoners.

Saint Mark's feast day is celebrated on April 25 in the Western Christian calendar. His symbol is the winged lion, which represents courage, resurrection, and the royal dignity of Christ. This imagery is derived from the vision in Ezekiel and the Book of Revelation, where four living creatures surround the divine throne.

Saint Mark's legacy continues through his Gospel, which remains a foundational text for Christian faith and theology.

– Rohan Anirudh Singh




# POPE FRANCIS

## INSPIRED BY ST. FRANCIS

Our beloved Pope Francis is the man to be honoured as we are celebrating his first death anniversary. We love his preaching - especially he preached peace and acceptance and reflected those values through his actions. He chose Francis as his papal name in honour of Saint Francis of Assisi. Throughout his papacy, Francis was note for his humility, emphasis on God's mercy.

Pope Francis has revealed that he was inspired and chose his papal name to honour St. Francis of Assisi, the guiding light representing a commitment to poverty, work for peace, and environmental stewardship. "The man of the poor, the man who loved and cared for creation", which emphasizes humility, simplicity, evangelical poverty.

He views St. Francis as a "wayfarer" who brings God's love to the marginalized Promoting a "poor Church for the poor" and a lifestyle centred on simplicity rather than material wealth.

Key Aspects of Pope Francis's Thoughts on St. Francis of Assisi:

**The "Poor Man" and Simplicity:** Pope Francis highlights St. Francis as a figure who stripped away worldliness, vanity, and pride. He advocates for a "Church of the poor" that avoids becoming a "pastry shop Church" which enjoys nice things but lacks true spiritual depth.

**Care for Creation ("Laudato Si"):** Inspired by St. Francis's "Canticle of the Creatures," Pope Francis highlights the saint's profound respect for nature and his call to protect the environment rather than greedily exploit it.

·**A "Wayfarer" for Peace:** Pope Francis sees St. Francis as a peacemaker who crossed borders and sought dialogue (like when he visited an Egyptian Sultan). He encourages a "culture of encounter" that builds bridges, similar to St. Francis's approach.

**A Living Gospel:** The Pope emphasizes that St. Francis teaches preaching through one's life and actions rather than just words, embodying a "life program".

**Ecological Conversion and Integral Ecology:** In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis draws heavily on St. Francis's "Canticle of the Creatures," which sees creation as a sister, a mother, and a mirror of God's love. He highlights that St. Francis was not merely a romantic lover of nature, but someone who understood the deep interconnection between caring for the environment and social justice—a concept he terms "integral ecology".

**A "Poor Church for the Poor":** Pope Francis emphasizes that St. Francis renounced wealth not for its own sake, but to fully imitate Christ and to depend entirely on God's providence. He echoes St. Francis's mission to rebuild the church, not through power, but through humility and service to the marginalized, including lepers, migrants, and the homeless.

**Instrument of Peace:** Pope Francis often notes that St. Francis was a man of peace, especially citing his peace mission during the Crusades. He argues that true Franciscan peace is not "saccharine" or purely a pantheistic harmony, but rather a "peace of Christ" rooted in love and the cross.

**"Fratelli Tutti" and Human Fraternity:** In his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis uses the example of St. Francis to advocate for universal brotherhood. The letter calls for social friendship and a rejection of the "throwaway culture" that discards the poor, elderly, and unborn.

·**A "New Creation":** Pope Francis has stated that St. Francis's journey began with the "gaze of the crucified Jesus" in the Church of San Damiano, which transformed him. He calls on Christians to be "re-created" by this same love.

**Who is Saint Francis for Pope Francis**

"For me, Francis of Assisi is the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation."

- "Francis is also the man of peace."
- "Francis of Assisi gives us this spirit of peace."
- "The poor man who wanted a poor Church."
- "Then right away, thinking of the poor, I thought of Francis of Assisi."
- "Small yet strong in the love of God, like Saint Francis of Assisi, all of us as Christians are called to watch over and protect the fragile world in which we live."
- "Francis of Assisi represents poverty, peace, and the love of creation."
- "St. Francis of Assisi still urges the Church to live its fidelity to Christ and its mission in our time."
- "One must put oneself in the school of the Poverello."
- "In his evangelical life we find the way to follow in the footsteps of Jesus."
- Those who follow St Francis must learn to be steadfast and walking."
- "Steadfast in contemplation, in prayer; and then moving forward, walking in witness."
- Saint Francis listened to Jesus speaking to him and responded generously."
- Francis of Assisi was a wayfarer who drew close to the people."
- "He reduced the distance between the Church and the people."
- "Francis of Assisi is the man who loved and cared for creation."
- "The name Francis came into my heart thinking of the poor."
- "How I would love a Church which is poor and for the

poor!"

- "Francis of Assisi reveals the essence of Christianity.
- "St. Francis continues to inspire us to care for our common home."

Pope Francis often presents St. Francis of Assisi as the ultimate model of simplicity and humility. He highlights how Francis embraced a life of poverty not as a deprivation but as a path to spiritual freedom and closeness to God, showing that holiness is grounded in living simply and serving others. The Pope emphasizes that St. Francis is a man of peace. He repeatedly points out that Francis approached all people—including enemies and outcasts—with respect and reconciliation, showing that Christian faith is inseparable from the work of peace and justice.

Francis of Assisi, according to Pope Francis, is a protector of creation. The Pope often references how Francis loved animals, cared for the environment, and saw nature as a reflection of God, inspiring modern ecological responsibility as expressed in Laudato Si'. Pope Francis admires St. Francis's ability to live the Gospel radically. For him, Francis is an example of someone who fully followed Christ, letting the teachings of the Gospel shape every aspect of his life, from poverty to humility to compassion. The Pope stresses that St. Francis embodies joyful service to others. Francis's joy did not come from material comforts but from generosity, helping the poor, and forming authentic human relationships, showing that happiness is tied to selfless love.

Pope Francis sees in St. Francis a figure who bridges the gap between the Church and the people. He presents him as someone who brought the message of Christ out of the walls of institutions and into the daily lives of ordinary people through example and presence. According to the Pope, St. Francis models faith expressed in action. Prayer and contemplation are inseparable from practical love for neighbours, especially the marginalized, demonstrating that true faith is lived, not just professed.

Francis of Assisi is described by Pope Francis as a voice of courage and witness. By rejecting worldly power and wealth, he challenged the Church and society to reconsider priorities, urging a focus on what truly matters: love, justice, and peace. Pope Francis often highlights that St. Francis was inclusive and compassionate. He welcomed those who were marginalized, sick, or poor, showing that the Christian mission is to love without distinction and to care for the vulnerable.

Finally, Pope Francis presents St. Francis as a source of inspiration for the modern world. His life, focused on simplicity, care for creation, peace, and joyful service, continues to challenge and guide contemporary Christians toward a more authentic, faithful, and compassionate life.

– Rev. Sr. Cathelina, FBS
Directress, CEC-Bangalore



# SAINT OF THE MONTH



Saint John Baptist de La Salle (1651–1719) was a pioneer of Christian education and a devoted servant of the poor. Born in Reims, he responded to God's call by dedicating his life to the education of children, especially the underprivileged.

At a time when schooling was limited to the wealthy, he worked tirelessly to make education accessible to all.

He founded the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, forming a community committed to teaching with faith and excellence. His innovative methods, including teaching in the local language and training lay teachers, transformed education.

Despite many challenges and sacrifices, he remained faithful to his mission. Canonized in 1900 and named patron saint of teachers, his legacy continues to inspire educators to serve with faith, compassion, and dedication.

Feast Day: April 7
Patron Saint of Educators




# PRAYER CORNER

Heavenly Father, fill us with courage and hope this month. When we are weak, be our strength; when we are unsure, be our guide. Lord Jesus, help us trust in You and walk each day with faith and love. Holy Spirit, renew our hearts with peace. We place this month in Your hands. Amen.

# SUPPORT & DONATIONS

Your support helps us form faith-filled individuals, strengthen Catholic enquiry centres, empower youth leadership, and bring the light of the Gospel to seekers across India through education, media, and outreach initiatives.

**With Gratitude**

We sincerely thank all our benefactors, partners, and well-wishers whose prayers and generosity make this mission possible. Your support is not just a contribution—it is a shared commitment to building God's Kingdom.Your generous support enables us to continue faith formation, outreach, and evangelization across India.

**Ways You Can Support**

- Sponsor faith formation and enquiry programs
- Support youth leadership and evangelization initiatives
- Contribute towards media, publications, and digital outreach
- Help train volunteers and catechists for mission

**A Prayer for Our Benefactors**

Loving God, bless all those who support this mission with their prayers, resources, and goodwill. Grant them peace, joy, and abundance, and reward them for their generosity. Amen (Optional – if space allows)All donations are used solely for ministry, outreach, and faith formation purposes.

**How to Support**

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