

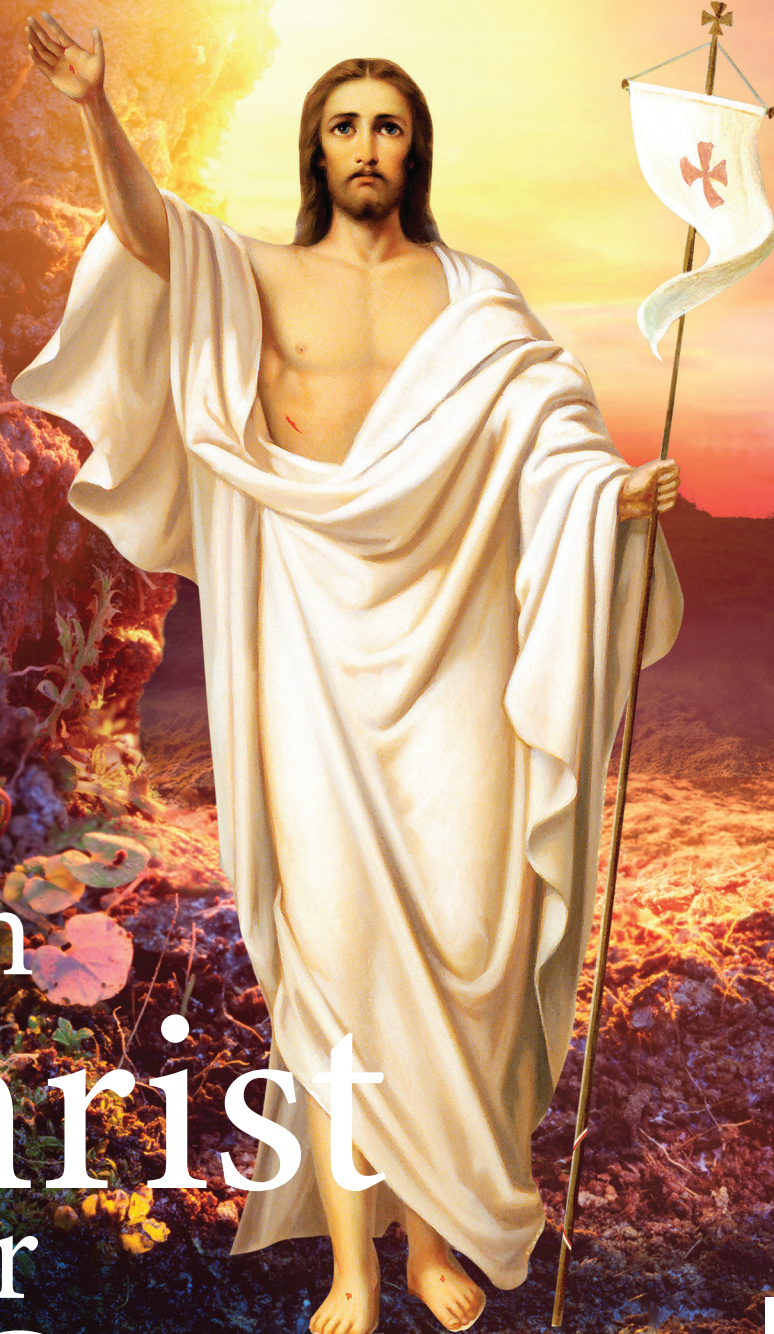
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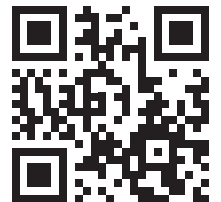
MISSIO-AVONA
THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

SOWER

MAGAZINE 2025



Risen
Christ
is our
HOPE





SOWER



We have “SOWER” the title of the digital magazine of the MISSIO-AVONA based on inspiration from the Parable of the Sower (Gospel of Mathew chapter 13). The Sower went to sow the seeds in the field. Likewise, through this magazine we too would like to become the Sowers of the Gospel values of Joy, Love, Hope, Faith, Compassion, Mercy and Inspiration in the minds and hearts of its readers.



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H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi, O.S.T.
Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia



HAPPY
Easter



النيابة الرسولية لشمال شبه الجزيرة العربية
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE OF NORTHERN ARABIA
BAHRAIN . KUWAIT . QATAR . SAUDI ARABIA

EASTER 2025

Message

With joy, we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ.

If we are Christians today, it is because Christ is risen. Our life, our community, our Church were born from this major event in our history. The Resurrection enlightens our lives and gives meaning to our faith. We are full of hope and dynamism because Christ's victory is assured. It has immersed us in the love of the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit. If Christ's passion and death have afflicted us, his Resurrection has revitalized us to open new horizons and spread love in the world. The Good News is not kept, it is shared. Joy cannot be kept, it spreads. Life does not die out, it is eternal.

We want to proclaim this news to the whole world and give hope to all peoples, to every human being who is loved by God. Our mission is clear:

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Mat 28: 18-20)

That is why the disciples traveled all over the world and proclaimed this fundamental truth. He is risen. The Father of Jesus Christ has done wonders and the power of the Spirit accompanies us. What a great mission! It is up to us to proclaim loud and clear that Christ is truly risen. I invite you to the mission, to express with your life the joy of the Risen Lord and to proclaim with your words and deeds the victory of Christ.

May our Church be missionary and open to all peoples, for we are all brothers and sisters in Jesus. May our Vicariate be a wonderful expression of the light of the Resurrection in this land. May we shine in every moment of our life.

Happy Easter

Bp Aldo Berardi, O.S.S.T.





EDITORIAL



“Where there is life, there is hope”. We are in the season of Easter and it speaks about life after death. It narrates about the resurrected life. Jesus is risen, to die no more. This is the highest form of hope that motivates a Christian to take up his daily life. During the time of Jesus’ passion and death, all His followers were heartbroken and everything seemed hopeless. The Emmaus disciples were an example of dejection, but the Risen Jesus opened their senses: their ears to listen, heart to ponder, eyes to see, and enlightened their mind to recollect, Yes! He said, “He will rise on the third day”.

St. Paul writes, “If Jesus was not risen from the dead then our faith is in vain and our preaching is in vain”. Our Vicar Apostolic, H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi through his Easter message reminds the faithful that “The Resurrection enlightens our lives and gives meaning to our faith. We want to proclaim this news to the whole world and give hope to all peoples”. Therefore, the Theological Virtue of Hope explains that Christians should endeavor everything in faith to gain heavenly glory.

Missio-Avona had organized an essay and drawing competition for the AVONA children under the theme: Children are Missionaries of Hope. In their essays, they all had a common understanding, that is children can also spread the hope. The Pontifical Holy Childhood Society inspires children to become young missionaries of hope by practicing the three mottos: Praying, Helping and Sharing the Gospel.

The Jubilee Year 2025 reminds us to become Pilgrims of Hope. Abraham is the model of a journey toward God in trust, perseverance, faith, and hope. We, on this pilgrim journey in AVONA, reflect on the charism of the Trinitarians (O.SS.T), a mendicant order of the Catholic Church (1198). They worked for the redemption of the captives. It is a huge example of compassion for those burdened in captivity. Today the Sacrament of Confession is a sacrament of redemption, mercy, and hope. The Hand of God or the Finger of God can help us to write a new story of our life. Hope in Christ, the Redeemer can inspire us to be free from the unwanted burdens of life and to be hopeful while embracing a new way of life. Where there is life, there is hope, and when we believe in the resurrected life we have double the hope, both here on earth and in heaven. Happy Easter-He is Risen.

NB: This Magazine SOWER is divided into three parts: The first part reflects more on the messages during the Season of Easter, covering the aspect of Hope. The second focuses on PMS and MISSIO-AVONA's activities. Lastly, the third section deals with the Jubilee Year and the Charism of the Trinitarian Religious Order.

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With the permission and Approved by

H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi O.SS.T

Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM Cap.

Delegate of Missio Avona

Theological Virtue of **HOPE**



*(St. Stephen, Deacon endures death
with living hope)*

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary the meaning of hope is to cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen or be true. For example I am hoping for a promotion. It is more synonymous with wish or to desire – “I hope you have a good day” “I hope to win a lottery” – but that is not how Christians understand hope. Our hope is an eager, confident expectation (cf. Hebrew chapter 11: Faith and Hope of forefathers).

Basis of our Hope is Eternal life in Jesus

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines (1817), “Hope is the virtue by which we desire and seek our ultimate good and happiness which is eternal life in the kingdom of heaven”. 1 Peter 1:4 explains it as, “an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading kept in heaven for you. When everything else is going wrong all around us here on earth, it is hope that keeps us focused on the eternal goal beyond this life. St. Paul confirms it in his second Letter to Corinthians 11:16-33 while boasting about his suffering. These sufferings are nothing in comparison to eternal glory (cf. Romans 8:18)

The Resurrection of Jesus is our Living Hope

Hope makes us to trust in Christ’s promises. As we work to perfect our lives in holiness as He directed us, we do so because of the virtue of hope which promis-

es us there is something better ahead for us. It is the virtue of hope that propels us in our practice of fortitude as we persevere through the obstacles and trials in living out our Christian faith. 1 Peter says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”. This living hope is anchored in the resurrection of Jesus. Hope gives us the ability to do God’s will even when it is hard because we know we will be rewarded for doing so. We have an example of Deacon Stephen from the Acts of the Apostle (Acts 6-7)

Hope is a weapon against suffering

When circumstances or sufferings tempt us toward despair, it is the virtue of hope that help us fight against our temptations. Hope is a weapon that protects us in the struggle of salvation (CCC No.1820). We were not made to suffer or despair because those are not of God or His goodness. So, hope changes us and gives us a new perspective. Our end is not here on this earth but is, instead in heaven where there is no suffering or despair. It is a perfection of the virtue of hope which caused the Saints to express sheer joy amidst their sufferings and it is what we are called to do as well.

Hopeful prayer of a soul

Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and turns a very short time into a long one. Dream that the more you struggle, the more you prove the love that you bear for your God, and the more you will rejoice one day with your Beloved, in a happiness and rapture that can never end (CCC.1821).

In the prayer Lord make me an instrument of Peace of St. Francis of Assisi, we pray, "Where there is despair- hope". Our reward is Eternal life, hang on to the Hope- like Christ on the Cross. (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church 1817-1821)

Courtesy...

TESTIMONIAL

One day I received a phone call from a hospital, asking me to administer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick to a woman who was in the final stages of cancer. When I arrived, I told her, "I have come to give you Jesus." In her distress, she shouted back, "I don't want your Jesus! What has He done for me? Take Him away."

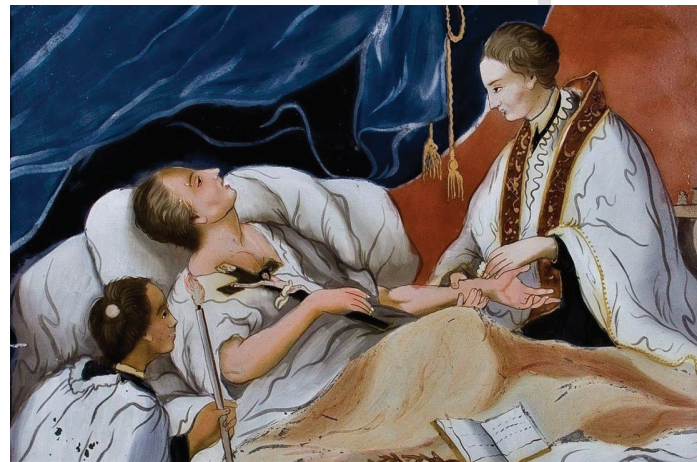
She cried as she continued, "I am 33 years old, and I have two small children, aged 5 and 7. I am sick, and the doctors say I have only a few days to live. Does your God care about me and my small children?" At that moment, it felt like the silent presence of Jesus with the woman caught in adultery, as described in John 8. I remained silent while she lamented, which was both human and normal.

Next to her bed, I noticed a table with a crucifix on it. I picked it up and said, "This crucified Jesus was also 33 years old. He suffered to love and save us. He is our Savior and our Risen Hope. If you deny Him, where will you go?"

There was pin-drop silence between us in the hospital room...suddenly she started sobbing and said to me, "I am sorry". She requested me to give her the Sacraments as she vowed to spend her remaining days happily with her children. I saw that smile on her frail face. She lived for more than 6 months, hoping in the Lord and passed away peacefully.

Hope in God promises eternal life, which gives us strength to face all the obstacles of life with serenity.

Priest gives **HOPE** through Sacraments



Hope gives us strength

The Sacrament of **CONFESSION**

A Ministry of **MERCY** and **HOPE**

In the heart of the Catholic Church's mission lies the sacrament of confession, a profound encounter with God's infinite mercy and a wellspring of hope for all who seek forgiveness. Also known as the sacrament of reconciliation, confession is a sacred ministry through which the Church extends Christ's healing touch to wounded souls, restoring them to grace and strengthening their journey toward holiness.



Fr. Michael Fernandes OFM.Cap



A Ministry of Mercy

The sacrament of confession embodies the essence of God's mercy. In John 20:21-23, Jesus entrusted this ministry to the Church, saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." Through the priest, who acts in persona Christi (in the person of Christ), the penitent experiences the tender embrace of a loving Father, who always welcomes His children back with open arms.

Pope Francis has often referred to confession as "the sacrament of mercy." He reminds us that no sin is too great for God's forgiveness. By acknowledging our sins with humility and contrition, we open ourselves to the transformative power of God's grace, which washes away guilt and restores the dignity of our souls.

A Fountain of Hope

Confession is not only about mercy; it is also a sacrament of hope. It assures us that failure is never final and that God's grace is always greater than our weakness. When we confess our sins, we are reminded that God never tires of forgiving us, even when we struggle repeatedly with the same failings.

This hope extends beyond personal renewal; it impacts our relationships with others and the broader community. By reconciling with God, we are called to extend forgiveness and healing to those around us, becoming instruments of peace in a divided world.

The Journey of Conversion

Confession is a key part of the ongoing journey of conversion. It invites us to examine our conscience regularly, confront our failings, and take concrete steps toward spiritual growth. The sacrament not only reconciles us with God but also strengthens our resolve to live a life of virtue, fueled by the grace received.

As Catholics, we are reminded that confession is not merely an obligation but a gift—an opportunity to encounter the loving mercy of Christ. In a world often weighed down by despair, this sacrament shines as a beacon of hope, assuring us that God's love is unfailing and His mercy is unending.

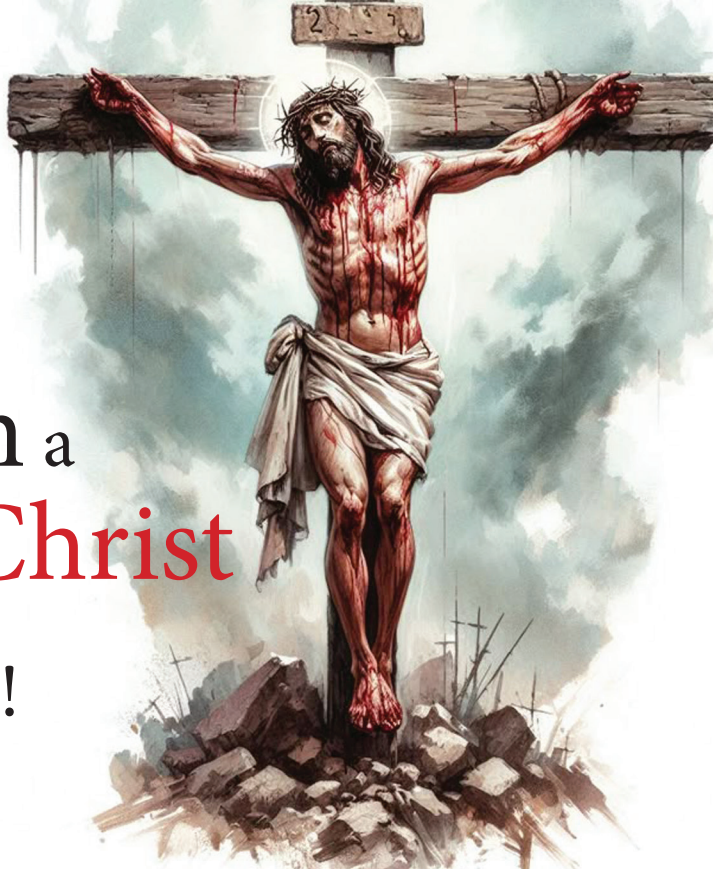
Conclusion

The sacrament of confession is a ministry of mercy and hope, offering a path to healing and renewal for every soul. It reminds us that God's forgiveness is always within reach and that His grace empowers us to rise from sin and walk in the light of Christ. Through this sacrament, the Church fulfills its mission to bring God's love to all, proclaiming the joyful message of mercy and hope to a world in need.

Let us approach this sacrament with trust and gratitude, confident in the promise of Christ: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).



We Proclaim a **Crucified Christ** who bears the sins of the world!



GOOD FRIDAY

On Good Friday, we hear the Gospel of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed dramatically. We see churches filled with crowds of believers in an unusual way. Just as Jerusalem was filled with pilgrims during the Passover in an unusual way. The narrative of the suffering of the Lord tells us about the betrayal of Judas Iscariot to his teacher Jesus. And through it, we see the great conspiracy plotted by the high priests Caiaphas with the Sanhedrin. Those who follow the daily news around the world, if they listen carefully with a Christian faith to what lies beyond the painful events happening everywhere, feel that they are an extension of the Lord's suffering. Even those who watch movies, TV series, and social programs that convey realistic human trials, if they contemplate deeply, and stop in front of their personal life test, we all discover three interconnected elements: evil and sin in the world, the weak victim, and the issues of truth and justice.

Through the suffering of the Lord Jesus, we also discover a fourth element that gives meaning and overturns all balances, which is: wounded and victorious love. Starting from here, we understand the meaning of salvation and transformation achieved by the Lord Jesus in his death on the cross.

JESUS' PASSION BRINGS SALVATION

When we read the Gospel of the Lord's Passion, we see for the first time that it tells us about a human event, in which the power of injustice, evil, and sin appears strongly, and then it turns into a salvific event because the oppressed, persecuted, and crucified



Fr. Charbel Rizik OFM.Cap

person is Jesus of Nazareth. And, he was accused of being the "Son of God", "the King of the Jews" – meaning the God who addressed His people in history, liberated them from bondage, and promised them salvation. Jesus of Nazareth became a victim, when He was expected to proclaim the truth for justice to prevail for good. God's ways are not human ways, and His thoughts surpass human thoughts!

FULFILLING THE WILL OF GOD

Against the great conspiracy, we see Jesus taking a confrontational stance in silence, because He had reached the utmost love, and according to his saying: "Do not resist evil with evil". We see He did not choose to escape or surrender, but He freely accepted being a weak victim because He did not only focus on tangible evil, but went further. He placed himself under the will of the Father. This means that His entire life, including rest and pain, good and evil, made it an act of glorifying the Father in every circumstance and time. Consequently, Jesus answered Pilates, "You could have no power over me, unless it had been given to you from above; therefore, he that delivered me over to you is guilty of a greater sin". Jesus believed

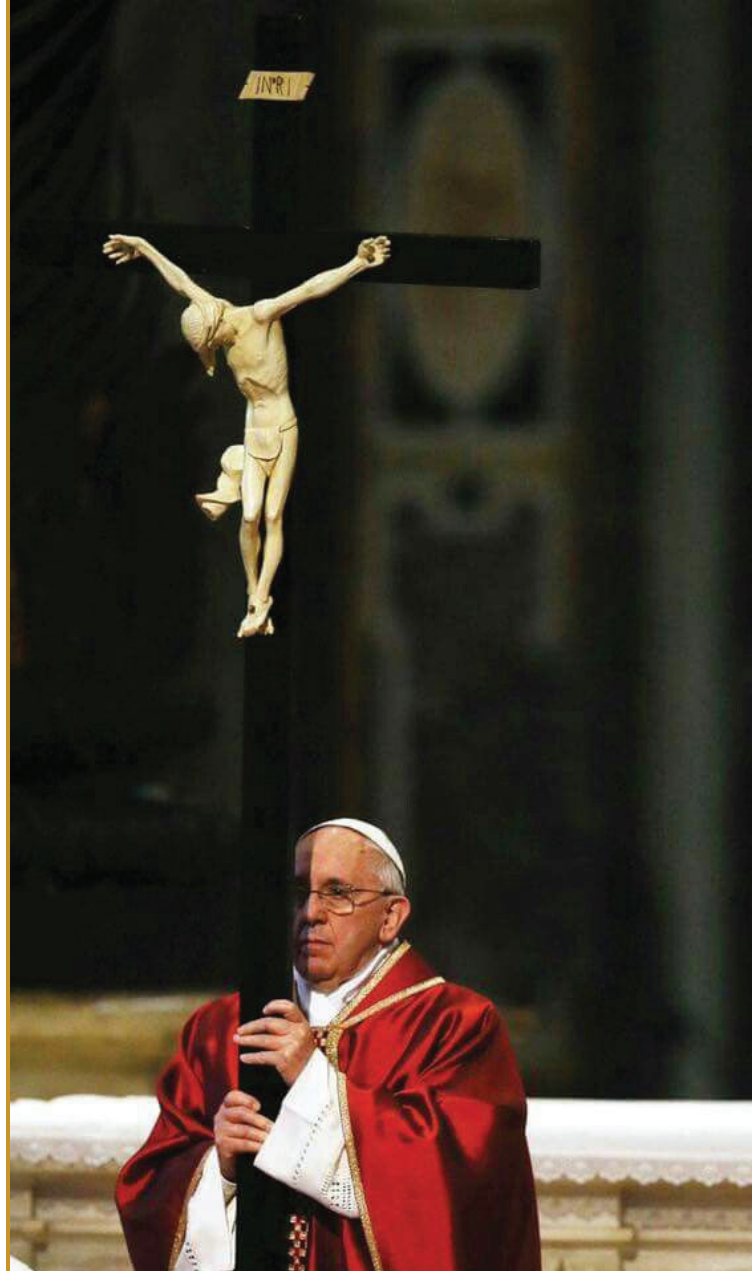
and was convinced that evil cannot prevail over good because love is the life that triumphs over death. We hear Jesus affirm that he came as a Messiah to bear witness to the truth: “For this reason I was born, and for this reason I came into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” His testimony states that God is always with the poor, oppressed, and persecuted, and they are given eternal life.

THE FINAL VICTORY OF JESUS OVER EVIL

After standing in despair in the face of injustice, pain, illness, persecution, and death in various forms, salvation came to us in Jesus Christ crucified, meaning that God’s love surpasses them all, liberates us from their bonds, not by removing them from us, but by filling us with the power of the presence of the one who incarnated and suffered for us. The final word is no longer for evil and injustice, but for Jesus Christ. When we come to worship before the crucified Jesus, we come to proclaim a crucified Christ who bears our sins and the sins of the world. We come to declare that His love, forgiveness, and mercy far exceed our sins, so we are able to confess them with humility, contrition, and joy – because He is given to us as the one Savior, Jesus.

WE PROCLAIM CHRIST CRUCIFIED

We are the ones who ask and demand truth and justice on the basis of logic and rationality. We, who question the mystery of pain and death, must let faith lead us to prostrate before the crucified Jesus, where with the wound of His love, He heals us from the confusion of doubt, so we know that He is the only answer given to us by the Father. The sufferings of the Lord Jesus are still alive in every oppressed, poor, and suffering human being, and He himself remains our salvation. When we proclaim a crucified Christ bearing the sins of the world, we declare the hope of salvation in our mouths, and witness that He is truth and love when we perform good deeds and show mercy in our actions.



***Behold the wood of the Cross, on
which hung the Savior of the world;
come let us adore Him.***

***“The Cross of Christ... is the source
of all blessings,
the cause of all graces. Through
the Cross the faithful
receive strength from weakness,
glory from dishonor,
life from death.”***

-St. Leo the Great, Pope.



Risen CHRIST is our Hope

Have a look at the picture of the camping Tent. It could be defined as a collapsible shelter of fabric stretched and sustained by a main pole and tent pegs. The middle pole is the essential part that holds the tent and the fabric that is tied with rope to the tent pegs. If the pole breaks the whole tent could collapse. The middle pole is the hope of the tent.

I would like to compare the life of Jesus and his disciples to the tent. Jesus is their middle pole. All their hopes, inspirations, and convictions were based on His words and deeds. He was their hero and master who performed miracles, healings and casted out demons. They had placed their full hope in him, but on the day of his crucifixion and death, the middle pole of their life collapsed, they lost all their hope. The disciples of Emmaus were hopeless and the apostles said, 'Let us go back to our original business of fishing.' Their lives and inspirations were brought to zero level.

But on the third day, that Easter morning, Mary Magdalene exclaimed, "He is Risen." The broken centered pole has risen. He is dead no more. Hearing this message Peter and John ran towards the tomb to confirm the proclamation of the Apostle to the apostles. The angels too replied, "Whom you are looking for, He is risen".



Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM Cap.
Delegate of Missio-Avona (2024)

Jesus is the first among the dead to be risen. This belief is the foundation of our faith. Saint Paul said, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is also in vain" (1 Cor 15:14). The risen Christ is the sure foundation of our faith and hope. Our faith does not disappoint us.

Our hope is the risen Jesus, who died and rose again, defeating sin, death, satan and his kingdom. Our hope is in the ascended Jesus, who is seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us. This was the motivation for the apostles to preach the risen Christ everywhere. Many times, the disciples were warned not to preach in the Name of the Risen Lord. They preached because that is what they witnessed. They were not afraid to die. All apostles were martyred except John for sharing and witnessing the Gospel of Jesus.

Our hope in the Lord does not disappoint us. Our hope is everlasting. One who believes in Him will have eternal life.



GO BACK TO JERUSALEM FOR A REASON

A voyage with Cleopas and his companion

The disciples' experience on the road to Emmaus, detailed in Luke 24:13–35, centers on their transformative happenstance with the risen Jesus. This event highlights themes of doubt, revelation, faith, spiritual disclosure, and rehabilitated determination. Key moments of Emmaus experiences are:



**Fr. Dr. Stephen
Kachappilly OFM Cap**

Director, Office of Care, AVONA

1. Preliminary Despair and Unrecognized Existence

The two disciples, Cleopas and an unnamed acquaintance, were walking to Emmaus, a village about seven miles from Jerusalem, discouraged and confused after Jesus' crucifixion, disillusioned and grieving their devastated hopes for a political Messiah. Despite discoursing recent events - Jesus' death, the empty tomb, and rumors of resurrection—they failed to grasp their implication. When Jesus joined them, they did not diagnose Him, perceiving Him only as a fellow itinerant.

2. Scriptural Insight and Burning Hearts

Jesus asked them about their conversation and listened compassionately to their distresses. They explain how they had hoped Jesus was the Messiah, but His death shattered their expectations. He elucidated Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah's suffering and glorification. This teaching ignited a passion within them, described as “burning within” (Luke 24:32), as they began to connect Scripture with Jesus' life and death. They mentioned that some women found the tomb empty but did not see Him. Gregory the Great noted that Jesus' hidden identity mirrored their internal struggle between faith and doubt.

3. Recognition in the Breaking of Bread

Jesus, in His resurrected form, joins them, but they do not recognize Him. He rebuked their lack of understanding. As they reached Emmaus, they invited Jesus to stay with them. Their spiritual blindness

lifted throughout a shared meal. During supper, Jesus blessed and broke bread and gave to them – a moment resembling the Last Supper. Their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him, resounding Eucharistic symbolism. This moment revealed His real presence, transforming their despair into joy, but He disappeared.

4. Disciples' Transformed Mission

Instantaneously, the disciples returned to Jerusalem to proclaim the good news with the other disciples, embodying brand-new missionary zeal. John Paul II linked this earnestness to the Eucharistic call to evangelism, while Alfred McBride highlighted their “enthusiasm” as a direct result of encountering the risen Christ. True encounters with Jesus lead us to true transformation and mission – just like the disciples eagerly returned to share the good news.

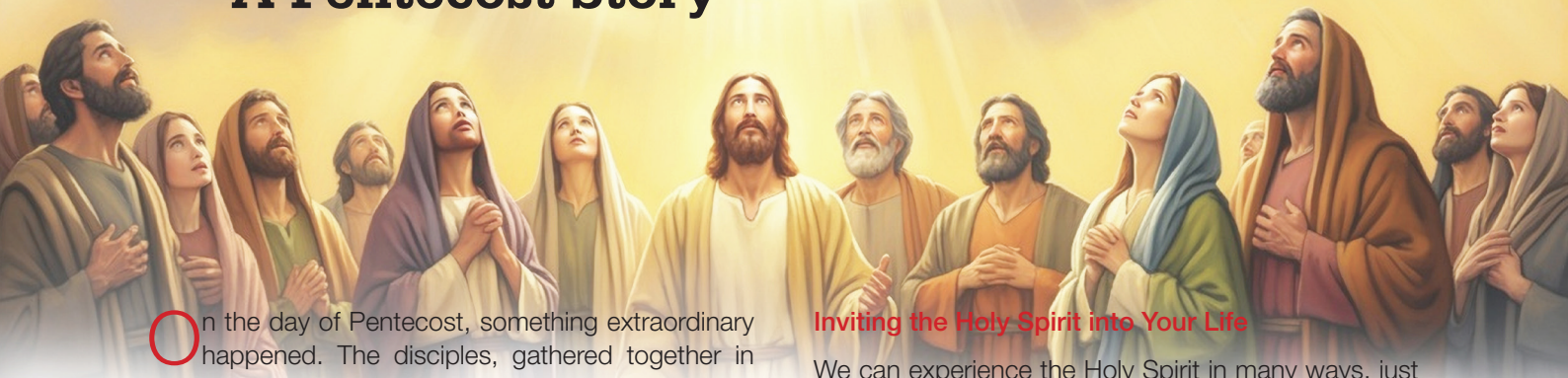
5. Pastoral Significance and Spiritual Lessons

The narrative serves as a model for spiritual journeying: Jesus walks with us even when we do not recognize Him in our struggles. He accompanies and illuminates us with Scripture in moments of doubt. He reveals Himself to us through the Eucharist (Holy Communion and communal worship). Modern reflections, such as the “Walk to Emmaus” retreats, draw stimulation from this passage to foster profound faith and discipleship. Let us hold on to a post-resurrection experience of the disciples who travelled to Emmaus but returned to Jerusalem and proclaimed their happiness and new enthusiasm to their contemporaries.

The Gift of the **HOLY SPIRIT:** A Pentecost Story



Rogy Joseph



On the day of Pentecost, something extraordinary happened. The disciples, gathered together in prayer, experienced a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Tongues of fire appeared above their heads, and they began speaking in languages they didn't know, spreading God's love in a way that was never possible before. This was a moment that changed the world, and it's a moment we can still feel today.

The Holy Spirit is not just a concept from a long time ago; He is a living, breathing presence among us. He is the comforter, the guide, and the source of strength. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live with courage, to love with kindness, and to forgive with grace. Just like the disciples on Pentecost, we too are called to share this love with others, no matter where we are.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

Let me share a simple story of how the Holy Spirit worked in someone's life recently: A woman named Maria had always struggled with anxiety. She was a loving mother and wife, but fear often overwhelmed her. One Sunday, after hearing a sermon on the Holy Spirit, Maria felt a deep longing in her heart to trust God more fully. As she prayed that night, asking God for peace, she felt something she hadn't felt before — a deep, calming presence. It was as if God was wrapping His arms around her, saying, "You are not alone."

Over the next few weeks, Maria experienced a change in her heart. The anxiety was still there, but it no longer had control over her. She found herself praying for peace, and every time she did, she felt the Holy Spirit come closer. Her fear began to diminish, replaced by a quiet confidence that God was with her, every step of the way.

Maria's story is not unique. Many of us experience the Holy Spirit in different ways, but one thing is for sure: when the Holy Spirit enters our lives, He changes everything. He gives us the strength to face life's challenges, the wisdom to make the right decisions, and the joy of knowing we are loved beyond measure.

Inviting the Holy Spirit into Your Life

We can experience the Holy Spirit in many ways, just like the disciples did. But sometimes, in the busy moments of life, we forget to make time for the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts and guide us. One special way to do this is by setting aside a quiet moment each week for meditation.

Here's how you can invite the Holy Spirit into your life:

Find a free time during the week when you can be alone, even for just 15 minutes. Go to your room, sit comfortably, and close your eyes. Let go of all the things happening around you — your worries, your tensions, and everything on your mind. In this peaceful moment, say a simple prayer: "Come, Holy Spirit. Oh Jesus, fill me with Your Holy Spirit."

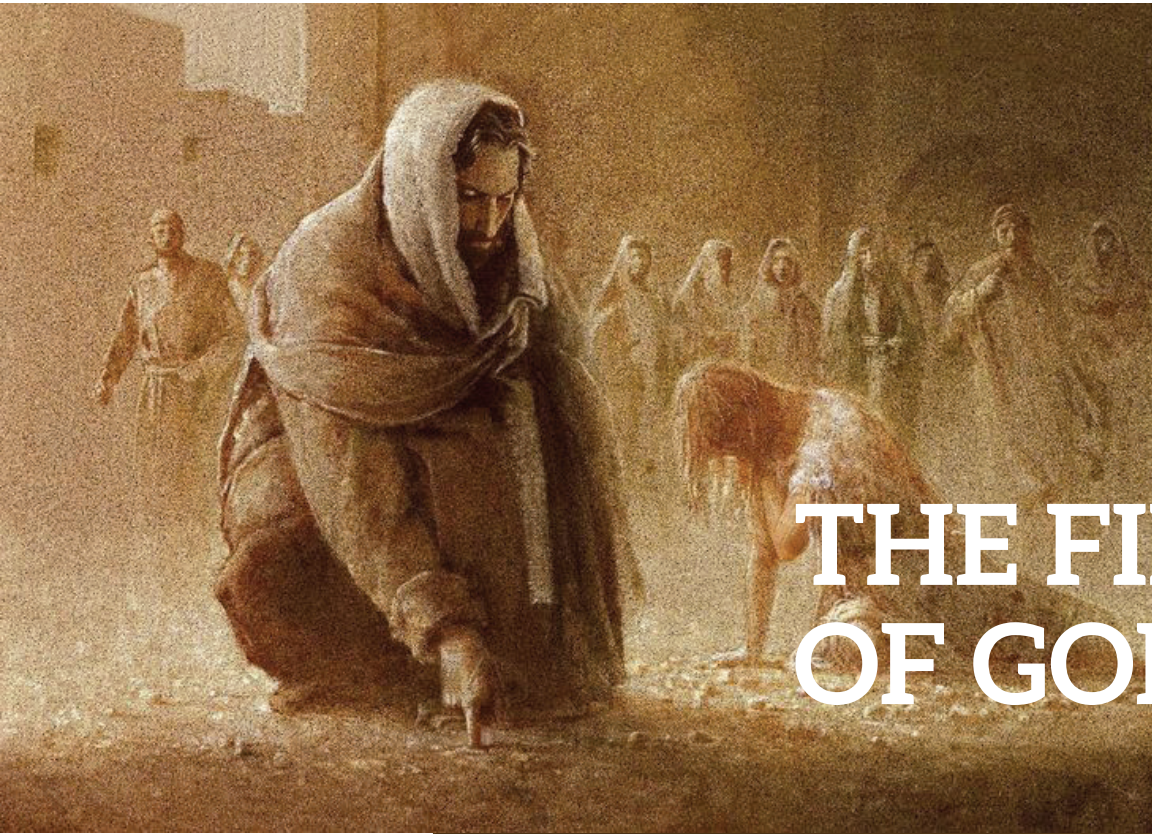
As you invite the Holy Spirit, just sit in silence and wait. Don't rush. Let the Holy Spirit come and be with you. You may feel calm or peaceful, and sometimes, you might feel a sense of warmth or a quiet voice guiding you. Trust that the Holy Spirit is with you, and as you listen closely, He will guide you on what you should do in the coming days. This quiet time is a special gift where God speaks directly to your heart.

Opening Our Hearts to the Holy Spirit

As we remember Pentecost, let us open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. Let us ask for His presence to guide us, heal us, and empower us to love more deeply. Just as the disciples were changed that day, so too can we be transformed by the power of God's Spirit in our lives.

So, take a moment each week to spend time in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to fill you. Trust that He will guide you, just as He did with Maria and the disciples, and know that His power is always with you.

God bless us all!



THE FINGER OF GOD

In the Old Testament

The phrase “Finger of God” is found in the Bible for first time in the context of the Ten plagues. Pharaoh’s magicians are frustrated because they are not able to produce gnats by their magical powers and they said to Pharaoh,” this is the finger of God” (Exodus 8:19). Here “finger of God” means power of God. Sometimes both Finger of God and Hand of God (So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt Ex 3:20) are used to refer the power of God. This type of figure of speech is called synecdoche which means a part represents the whole. Like a ‘hired hand’ represents a ‘worker’. Finger or hand represent full power or the full person.

The Ten commandments (Ex 31:18) were written on the stone tablets with the Finger of God. Here it refers to the action of writing. In the book of prophet Daniel chapter 5, we have a reference that the “fingers of human hand” appear and write on the wall “MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN” a divine message to the king Belshazzar’s. Here too the fingers are referring to the activity of writing.

In the New Testament

Jesus uses his fingers to cure a deaf man (Mark 7:33) here it indicates the power of God. And again Jesus says, “it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons” (Luke 11:20). It means I cast out demons by the power of God. This also refers to the Spirit of God.

Pope Francis says, “She has fallen in the dust; Jesus passes his finger on this dust and writes a new story for adulterous woman”.

In the Gospel of John (ch.8:1-11) the narration of the adulterous woman, Jesus writes “with his finger on the ground” (John 8:6). It indicates the action of writing.

Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 700.

The finger: symbol of the Holy Spirit.

“It is by the finger of God that [Jesus] cast out demons.” If God’s law was written on tablets of stone “by the finger of God,” then the “letter from Christ” entrusted to the care of the apostles, is written “with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts”. The hymn “Veni Creator Spiritus” invokes the Holy Spirit as the “finger of the Father’s right hand.” Pope Francis makes his reflection during the Angelus on the 5th Sunday of Lent 2025. By reflecting on the Gospel based on the adulterous woman, Jesus writes on the ground. Pope Francis says, “She has fallen in the dust; Jesus passes his finger on this dust and writes a new story for adulterous woman”.

Allow God’s finger that is The Holy Spirit to write a new chapter of your life. Jesus says, “Go and sin no more”- go and live a life of grace. Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

Courtesy...



THE TRUST

BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD

A child's trust in the mother begins from the mother's womb and is strengthened when the child is placed in the mother's arms after birth. Trust between father and child develops from the time a child wraps his/her finger around the father's fingers. During the various stages of the child's development, the trust waivers in depth and intensity. During infancy, a child is more dependent on the parents for comfort and security. A two-year-old wants to be more independent and starts refusing parental authority. As the child grows the trust between the parent and child varies because of the nurturing environment at home. Even in the Bible, it can be seen that till the age of 12, Jesus follows the path laid down by Mary and Joseph. In Luke chapter 2 verses 41-50 as a pre-teen Jesus exerts his independence and a conversation between Mary and him happens about trusting each other's judgement.

According to various psychologists, there are 4 types of parenting styles:

- 1) **Authoritative-** This style is considered ideal because it combines warmth and flexibility. Children of authoritative parents know what is expected of them. Parents explain the reasons for the rules and the consequences of breaking them. Parents also listen to their children's opinions, but the parent remains the ultimate decision-maker.
- 2) **Permissive-** Parents who follow this style pride themselves on being their child's friend. They have low expectations and use discipline sparingly. These children tend to have good self-esteem and social skills. But they can be demanding, impulsive and lack the ability to self-regulate.
- 3) **Authoritarian-** Parents who use this style have strict rules, and high standards and use punishment to regulate the child's behaviour. Children of authoritarian parents are good at following instructions and behave well. However, these children might become aggressively rebellious, lack social skills and may have difficulty making decisions of their own
- 4) **Neglectful-** These parents fulfill the child's basic needs, but then pay little attention to the child. Children of neglectful parents usually grow up to be resilient and self-sufficient. They might have trouble controlling emotions, don't develop effective coping strategies and they have difficulty maintaining social relationships.



Aarti George

Trust is essential in any relationship but it's the foundation of a parent and child's relationship. When a child grows up to be an adult the level of trust, he/she has had during childhood reflects on the relationships he/she builds as an adult.

(courtesy: mayoclinic.org)

HOPE:

A Light in the Dark

In the face of adversity, hope shines as a guiding light. Take the story of the head of the family named Robert, where the father, the sole breadwinner, suffered a debilitating stroke. The family was heartbroken; he lost not just his physical strength but also his memory. Following the doctors' advice, they brought him home and worked tirelessly to help him regain recognition of his family, home, and even his beloved garden. Each day, they reminded him of his life, hoping to spark the memories that had faded away.

Despite their efforts, he struggled to recognize even the most familiar faces—his wife, children, and cherished mementos. Yet, in a world filled with uncertainty, this family held onto hope. Their unwavering belief in his recovery became their strength. They never stopped trying, pouring love and persistence into every interaction, praying for his healing and restoration.

One day, in a moment that would change everything, his daughter brought forward his beloved dog, Jacky. With a touch of humor, she introduced the dog as a special family member. "Dad, is this your wife, Leela?" she joked. In that instant, something remarkable happened. His dry lips curled into a smile, and his eyes began to sparkle with recognition, akin to a dim bulb slowly warming up. This beloved pet, with its unconditional love, was the key that unlocked the memories that had been locked away.

Days passed, and with Jacky's companionship, the dim light of hope grew brighter. The dog roamed the garden, igniting memories of family and friends. The almost extinguished flame of hope flickered back to life, fueled by small steps of faith and the persistent love of family.

Just as a boat must brave the waves to reach the sea, so too must we face our challenges head-on. Hope is the bridge that connects us to positive outcomes, even in the darkest of times. Throughout history, hope



Fr. Darel Fernandes OFM Cap.

has served as a catalyst for change and progress. Great leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. inspired millions by offering a vision of a better world—a dream that continues to illuminate our path today.

Our church has faced numerous challenges and tough times, yet it stands resilient, providing endless hope to its community. As pilgrims of hope, we are called to cultivate this energy within ourselves. We can begin by setting small goals and striving to achieve them without ceasing.

Engaging with uplifting people, appreciating the good around us, and sharing hope are essential to building a thriving community. When we focus on the positive, we create a space where good prevails. Hope is not merely an individual virtue; it flourishes when we come together. Sharing stories of hope and success strengthens our bond and inspires us to foster a brighter future.

The teachings of our church, especially during this jubilee year, encourage us to hold onto the virtue of hope. As Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

May hope be the anchor of our souls, keeping us steadfast in the storms of life and guiding us toward brighter horizons.



PART 2

OUR LADY OF ARABIA



THE MISSION APPEAL TO PRAY

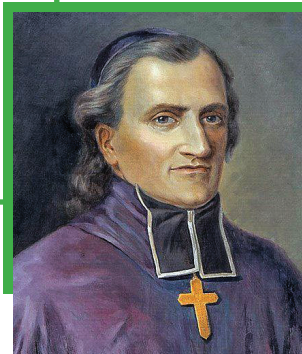
The Vicar Apostolic H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi requested all the faithful in the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia to pray: to offer Rosaries, Holy Adorations and Holy Eucharist for the good health and protection of Our Holy Father Pope Francis (through video message as on 23rd February 2025).

A photograph of Pope Francis in his white papal attire, including a zucchetto and a large silver cross necklace. He is smiling and waving with his right hand. In the background, the large dome of St. Peter's Basilica is illuminated against a twilight sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

POPE FRANCIS encourages CHILDREN to be MISSIONARIES in PRAYER

Speaking at the Angelus on the Solemnity of the Epiphany on Monday- 6 January 2025, Pope Francis recalled World Missionary Childhood Day and He invited children to pray and show solidarity with others, “to their peers from other continents” as part of their Christian mission.

THE Birth OF THE PONTIFICAL HOLY CHILDHOOD SOCIETY



*H.E. Bishop Charles de Forbin Janson
(1785-1844)*

FOUNDER: H.E. Bishop Charles de Forbin Janson, the bishop of Nancy diocese in France. He founded the association on 19th of May 1843.

MOTIVATION: In the mid-nineteenth century, Bishop Charles was upset by hearing the news of Chinese children dying without receiving Baptism. He wanted to help the children in China through children, so he involved the children of France.

TARGET GROUP: The Bishop organized many groups; each group consisted of 12 children. The idea behind it was to follow Jesus' example during his 12 years' life.

SPIRITUALITY: The society has the following mottos, children praying for children (one Hail Mary), children helping children (a penny) and children sharing the Gospel with children.

AIM: Its aim is to form the children and prepare them in a missionary spirit. They are the little missionaries who become witnesses of their faith to their peer group.

PONTIFICAL: In 1922 the society received the title Pontifical. Pope Pius XII established the Holy Childhood Society Day on 4th December, 1950.

The Universal Church celebrates Holy Childhood Day on Epiphany Sunday (on 6th January or any near by date), but the particular church could arrange its own date in the month of January to celebrate it.

WORLDWIDE PRESENCE: Today the society is spread in more than 130 countries.

OPPORTUNITY: The Pontifical Holy Childhood Society allows children to be witnesses of the Gospel life.

THE PONTIFICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETIES IN THE WORLD

The Conciliar decree *Ad gentes*, number 38, when it deals with the duties of the Bishop concerning the universal mission, states: "To promote the works of mission institutes among his own faithful, but most especially the papal mission works. For it is only right to give these works pride of place since they are the means of imbuing Catholics from their very infancy with a real universal and missionary outlook; and they are also the means of making an effective collection of funds to subsidize all missions, each according to its needs".

From a structural point of view, the Pontifical Mission Societies are both universal and local. They are coordinated at a universal level by the 4 international secretariats, under a single President, and entrusted to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

DICASTERY FOR EVANGELIZATION: (explained in document *Praedicate evangelium*: Art.53- 68)

Art. 67 of *Praedicate Evangelium* (Preach the Gospel)

1. The Section for the First Evangelization and New Particular Churches is entrusted with the Pontifical Mission Societies: The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Society of Saint Peter the Apostle, the Holy Childhood Association and the Pontifical Missionary Union of Priests and Religious, as instruments for promoting responsibility for the missions on the part of all the baptized and for the support of new particular Churches.

2. The management of the economic subsidies designated for missionary work and their equitable distribution are entrusted to the Adjunct Secretary of the Section who holds the position of President of the Pontifical Mission Societies.

FOUR PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES:

President of PMS



Fr. Tadeusz Jan Nowak, OMI.
General Secretary for Propagation of Faith



Sr. Ines Paulo Albino
General secretary for Holy childhood



Fr. Guy Bognon
*General secretary for the society
of Saint Peter the Apostle*



Fr. Dinh Anh Nhue Nguyen
General secretary for the missionary union

The local dimension is manifested in the approximately 122 national directions which in turn supports the work of the diocesan person in charge. Can. 791 of the Code of Canon Law provides that in each diocese “A priest should be appointed to effectively promote initiatives in favour of the missions, especially the Pontifical Mission Societies”. In fact, the great task of the PMS is to raise awareness for the mission, which - in the wake of all the teachings of the Popes and the Council - is a task of the whole People of God. The PMS has a special mandate to keep this spirit alive.

Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia

The Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia is an apostolic vicariate of the Catholic Church with territorial jurisdiction for Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. The Apostolic Vicar of the vicariate is Bishop Aldo Berardi O.S.S.T. It was first established in 1953 (as the Apostolic Prefecture of Kuwait) and took its current name in 2011.

It was created to better serve the growing Catholic population in the region. The reorganization of the two Vicariates aimed to distribute pastoral care more evenly and efficiently. The Apostolic Vicariate of Southern Arabia, which includes the UAE, Oman, and Yemen, remains centered in Abu Dhabi.

Local dimension -



Bishop Aldo Berardi O.S.S.T.
The Apostolic Vicar
President of Missio-Avona



Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM Cap.
Delegate of Missio-Avona (2024)

BAHRAIN



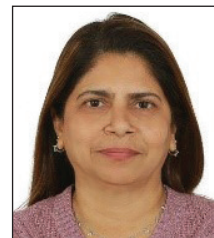
Fr. Victor Prakash OFM Cap.
Spiritual Director
Sacred Heart Catholic Church,
Manama, Bahrain



Mrs. Aldita Dcosta
Coordinator
Sacred Heart Catholic Church,
Manama, Bahrain



Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM Cap.
Spiritual Director
The Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia
Awali, Bahrain



Mrs. Olga Fdes
Coordinator
The Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia
Awali, Bahrain

THE PONTIFICAL HOLY CHILDHOOD SOCIETY DAY

Manama



On January 17th, 2025, the Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood of Manama Bahrain celebrated its feast day with a Youth Mass at 10:30 AM. The main celebrant of the Holy Mass was Fr. Darel, who warmly greeted and welcomed the members of the Holy Childhood. During the Mass, Fr. Darel took a moment to introduce the society to the Catechism children, emphasizing their important role as new missionaries of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. – Manama.

All the children brought their love offerings as a sacrifice, which they presented during the offertory procession. Before the end of the Mass, a member of the holy Childhood led the congregation in the “Missionary Prayer.” Fr. Darel concluded the Mass with words of gratitude to the children, and a photograph was taken with Fr. Darel to commemorate the occasion.

“DREAM COMES TRUE”



Establishment of the Holy Childhood Society in the Cathedral of Bahrain. Under the Leadership of our Vicar Apostolic H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi O.S.S.T, the Pontifical Mission Societies are seeing their good days in the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia. On 28th of March 2025, His Lordship has officiated the Holy Eucharist during which he blessed and welcomed the willing 46 children in the Pontifical Holy Childhood Society. During the sermon, our Bishop reminded the children of the three mottoes of the Holy childhood. He said, “praying, helping and sharing the Gospel is the children’s mission”. Pray and share the Gospel everyday was an open invitation to the congregation.

Fr. Marcus Fernandes, the delegate of the Missio-Avona conceptualized the logo of the Awali Holy Childhood society. It is explained as follows:-



Holy Childhood motto: Pray, Help and Share.

Five human figures: Speaks of the idea of children from different continents.

Cathedral: symbol of Our Lady of Arabia Cathedral.

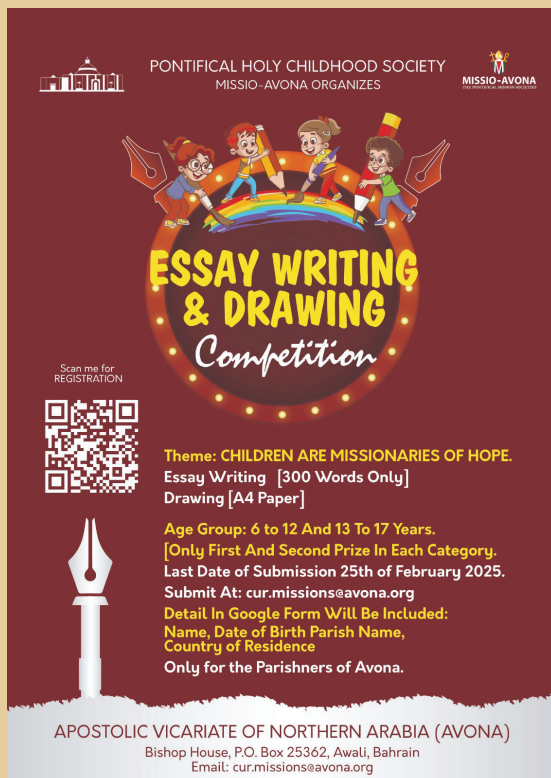
PMS and Address: Holy Childhood society and town and country.



Before the final blessing Bishop asked the children, “what do you ask from the Church?” The children recited the pledge and expressed their desire to make them child missionaries to become friends of Jesus and to serve the children”. Finally, we all congratulated the children and their parents. On this joyful occasion the cake was sliced. Now the Cathedral Team and our four coordinators are ready to carry forward the missionary zeal of the children. Infant Jesus and Our Lady of Arabia guide and lead us.

JOY OF WINNING

ESSAY AND DRAWING COMPETITION TO CELEBRATE HOLY CHILDHOOD DAY IN AVONA



Sowing the seeds of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia is a herculean task due to its jurisdiction in four countries. But a visionary sees a solution for every problem. Being aware of Ad gentes no. 38, our Bishop is a “Visionary Bishop” who promotes mission. To create an awareness of PMS we have our Missio-Avona digital Magazine. Especially during the Easter issue the magazine which is in the pipe line will cover the Holy Childhood Society.

On 5th of January 2025, we celebrated the Holy Childhood day in our Northern Vicariate (AVONA). Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM.Cap, says, “To make this day a memorable one, the Missio-Avona Office organized an essay and drawing competition based on the theme “Children are the Missionaries of Hope”. The aim of the contest was to create an interest and to know about the Holy Childhood or PMS. We received beautiful essays and drawings.

The winners of the competitions were declared during the Inaugural mass of the Awali Holy childhood society on 28th March 2025 in Bahrain. Our Bishop Aldo Berardi is seen in the photo, as presenting and congratulating the prize winner with a trophy and a certificate.

Reported by Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM.Cap.

WINNERS

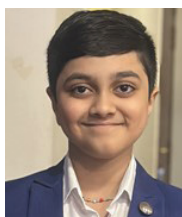
RESULTS OF THE ESSAY AND DRAWING COMPETITION 2025

This year as we embrace the Jubilee Year of Hope 2025, we are reminded that our children too have a ray of hope. In the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia, we have celebrated the Pontifical Holy Childhood Society on the 5th of January 2025. To create an awareness of the Holy childhood, the Missio-Avona had organized two competitions: Essay writing and Drawing in two age group categories (6-12 years and 13-17 years).

The theme of the competition was **"CHILDREN ARE THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE"**. The **ESSAY** or the **DRAWING** must have the essence of the three mottos of Pontifical Holy Childhood societies: 1) children praying for children, 2) children helping children and 3) children sharing Gospel with children. The winners of the contest are awarded with trophies and certificates. Each group is given two prizes. The awards were distributed at the hands of H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi during the inaugural Mass of the Awali Cathedral Pontifical Holy Childhood Society. The following are the prizewinners.

AGE GROUP: 6-12

1st Prize



Kiaan Bhandarkar
Co-Cathedral Parish, Kuwait
Essay Writing

2nd Prize



Melinda Misquita
Co-Cathedral Kuwait
Essay Writing

2nd Prize



Adele Coutinho
St. Joseph's Parish, KSA
Essay Writing

1st Prize



Miya shibu
St. Joseph Parish, KSA
Drawing

2nd Prize



Ann Maria
SHC, Bahrain
Drawing

AGE GROUP: 13-17

1st Prize



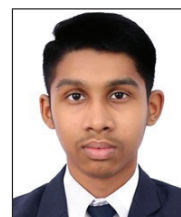
Cicil Jiya
Co-Cathedral Parish
Kuwait
Essay Writing

2nd Prize



Jose Anto Brilston
Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia
Bahrain
Essay Writing

1st Prize



Keith Dsouza
Jubail, KSA
Drawing

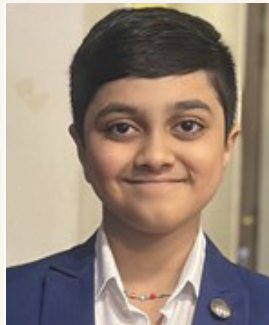
ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

AGE GROUP: 6-12



WINNER



Kiaan Bhandarkar

Co-Cathedral Parish, Kuwait

Children are God's precious gift to the world, filled with love, kindness, and faith. As young missionaries of hope, they bring joy, comfort, and light to others. The Pontifical Holy Childhood Society encourages children to be instruments of God's love by living three important mottos:

1. Children praying for children
2. Children helping children
3. Children sharing the Gospel with children

Children Praying for Children

Prayer connects us to God and one another. When children pray for those who are sick, hungry, or suffering, they bring God's love into their lives. A heartfelt prayer, no matter how simple, can work miracles and remind every child that they are never alone. For example, during war or natural disasters, children worldwide unite in prayer for those affected. In 2005, after a devastating earthquake in Pakistan, children from different countries prayed for the victims and their families. Many later shared how these prayers brought comfort and hope to those in need. This shows that even a child's prayer can make a difference in someone's life.

Children Helping Children

Love is best shown through action. When children share, comfort, and support one another, they reflect God's love. Small acts of kindness create a ripple effect, inspiring others to do good. By helping each other, children become true missionaries, spreading hope wherever they go. A great example of this is when children organize charity events, donate toys, or visit the sick and elderly. A simple act—like sharing food with a hungry friend or helping a struggling classmate—can bring happiness and hope. As Jesus said, "Whatever you do for the least of my brothers, you do for me" (Matthew 25:40).

Children Sharing the Gospel with Children

Jesus calls us to share His love with the world. Children can do this by spreading kindness, speaking encouraging words, and living according to the Gospel. By showing love and faith in their daily lives, they inspire others to grow closer to God. For example, Saint Dominic Savio, though young, was known for his strong faith and kindness. He encouraged his friends to pray, avoid sin, and help one another. His life teaches us that children, through their words and actions, can lead others to Christ.

Conclusion

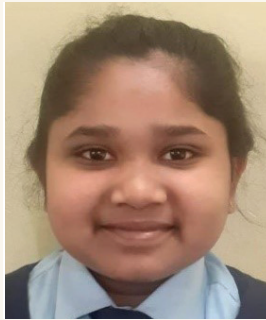
Children may be small, but their hearts are filled with faith and love. Through prayer, service, and sharing the Gospel, they bring hope to the world. By living out the three mottos of the Pontifical Holy Childhood Society, they become true disciples of Christ, making the world a better place one act of kindness at a time.

ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE
AGE GROUP: 6-12



WINNER



Melinda Misquita
Co-Cathedral Kuwait

Have you ever tried lighting a candle in a dark room? Suddenly, everything looks brighter! Now imagine if we, as children, were little candles, spreading God's love and hope wherever we go. Pretty cool, right?

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14) That means we're not just kids—we're important in God's mission! We may not wear fancy missionary hats or travel across the world, but we can be missionaries right where we are. A simple "Jesus loves you," a kind act, or even sharing our lunch yes, even the last French fry! can bring hope to someone's day. And it's not just about words—it's about showing love in action.

Through Divine Goenkar Chronicles, I am already on this mission— spreading the gospel in fun and inspiring ways along with my mom. It's like making the internet a place where faith grows, and Jesus' message reaches more hearts. So, let's be fearless hope-spreaders! Whether we're helping a friend, making someone smile, or just reminding the world that God is good, we are shining for Jesus. And here's the best part—unlike batteries, our light never runs out because God is our power source!

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14) So, let's glow so brightly that even the sun might get jealous.

ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE
AGE GROUP: 6-12



WINNER



Adele Coutinho

Al Khobar, St. Joseph's Parish, KSA

I asked my father, what is a missionary? He said that a missionary is a person who leaves his or her home and travels to another place to spread and teach the message of Jesus Christ. So I followed up asking if only a priest or nun can be a missionary. He told me that everyone who love Jesus and believe in his teachings is a missionary. We are expected to spread the message of Jesus everywhere we go by our words and our actions.

Jesus gave us only 2 commandments, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind and Love your neighbor as yourself. So when we spread Jesus's message of LOVE to everyone we become missionaries of Christ.

As the world today is facing a lot of wars and troubles the only solution is to spread love and change this situation. As children, we are the Hope for the future. If we learn and follow Jesus's teachings today, we will impart his message of Love to the world in the future and that would surely make the Earth a better place to live.

In conclusion, I pray that I become a pilgrim of Hope and spread the mission of Jesus everywhere I go.

DRAWING WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS 2025

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

AGE GROUP: 6-12



WINNER



Miya shibu
St. Joseph Parish, KSA



WINNER



Ann Maria
Sacred Heart Catholic Church, – Bahrain

ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

AGE GROUP: 13-17



Cicil Jiya

Co-Cathedral Parish
Kuwait

In a world that sometimes feel divided, it's easy to forget that quiet power the children hold. But the mottos of the Pontifical holy childhood society remind us that children, with their pure hearts and simple faith have the ability to change the world in ways we often overlook. These three mottos: children praying for children, children helping children and children sharing the Gospel with children” has the message of love, action and hope.

Children praying for children is an invitation for children to lift each other in prayer, no matter the distance or circumstances. A child's prayer does not need to be elaborate or fancy- it's honest, peace or strength for a friend in need. The power of a child's prayer for another, it is not just a ritual- it's a deep innocent belief that God listens, that love can break boundaries and that even the smallest voice can make a difference.

Children helping children is the second motto that calls children to action. Helping does not always mean grand gestures. Sometimes, it's as simple as a child giving away their lunch to a friend who is hungry or comforting a classmate who is feeling sad. It's the smile shared with someone lonely, the hand held out when someone falls. The smallest act of generosity come out, creating change by one small act at a time.

Children sharing Gospel with children may seem like a big task, but in reality it's about the way children live their faith. It's about how they treat others, how they speak about love and forgiveness, and how they share the stories that shape their lives. For a child, sharing the gospel is simply telling others about the love they have experienced. It's in the moments when children tell their friends “Jesus loves you”, or “let's pray for that person” without hesitation. In simple words, they bring the message of Christ to life.

These three mottos are a call to action, but also a reminder of the power of a child's faith. Children have a great ability to pray with sincerity, to help with pure intentions and to share the gospel with genuine hearts. By doing these things, they remind us all of what it means to live with love, show compassion and a belief that we no matter the age, can make a difference.

When children pray for each other, help each other and share their faith they are creating a world where love is the most important thing.

ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

AGE GROUP: 13-17



WINNER



Jose Anto Brilston

Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia
Bahrain

People say that children are too young to change the world, but can we really say that? With prayer, kindness, and faith, we, as children, have the power to shape the future.

Every day, children unite in prayer for those suffering in places like Ukraine and Gaza. When you pray for a child in pain, does your prayer reach them? A recent news story showed a child in Gaza, injured by conflict, being comforted by another child—proving that even in darkness, children are the first to help. Prayer is not just words; it is a force that warms frozen hearts. It sparks healing and promise, even if we don't always see the outcome.

Yet prayer must be paired with action. Children helping children isn't about waiting for others to act—it's about making a difference today. When a fire displaced families in our community, my school's SHS Samaritans organized a fundraiser. We sold handmade crafts, raising over BHD 200 in a week to help them recover. This small act didn't just change their lives—it inspired others. Through these efforts, we become part of the Church's global mission to spread radiance and love, as the Holy Childhood Society teaches.

But beyond action, our true mission is sharing our faith. Sharing the Gospel isn't about preaching; it's about living Christ's message. When a friend asked, "Why do you believe?" I shared how faith helped me through struggles—how, in moments of doubt, prayer became my refuge.

So, can children change the world? The answer is a resounding yes. Through prayer, kindness, and faith, we are already shaping the future—one small act at a time. Let us never underestimate the power of our hands, hearts, and voices. Hope is not just a word; it is a mission. Together, as messengers of hope, we can build a world where love and light triumph over darkness.

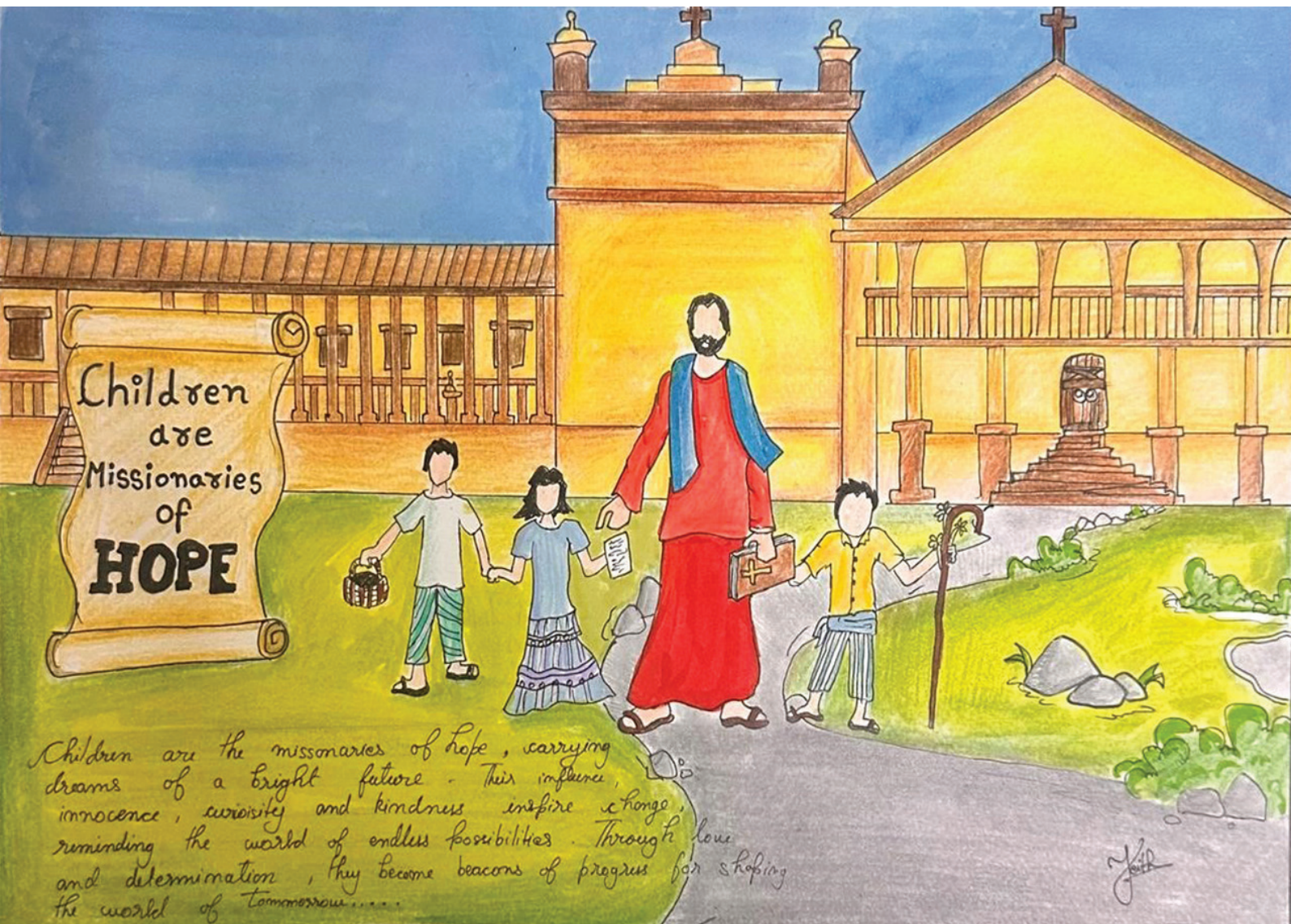
DRAWING WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS 2025

THEME: CHILDREN: THE MISSIONARIES OF HOPE

AGE GROUP: 3-17



WINNER



Keith Dsouza
Jubail, KSA

PART 3

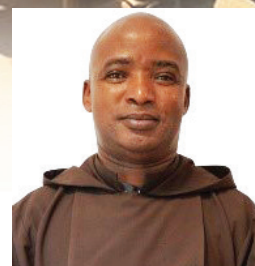




Pilgrimage:

A Journey of

FAITH and RENEWAL



Fr. Desideri Chuwa OFM.Cap
*Cathedral of Our Lady of Arabia,
Bahrain*

Pilgrimage is a universal spiritual practice found in many religions. In the Christian tradition, Pilgrimage holds a unique meaning. It is a journey to a holy place, undertaken as an act of penance, thanksgiving, or petition. Pilgrims walk in the footsteps of saints, martyrs, and biblical figures, seeking to deepen their relationship with God and grow in holiness.

A given Jubilee Year, invites the faithful to embark on a profound spiritual journey through pilgrimage. Rooted in centuries of tradition, pilgrimage is a physical and spiritual act of devotion, reflection, and renewal. It is a time to step away from the distractions of daily life, draw closer to God, and rediscover the essence of faith.

In the context of the Jubilee Year 2025, pilgrimage takes on a special meaning. Pilgrims are called to cross the threshold of the Holy Door, a symbol of Christ, who said, "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved" (John 10:9). This act symbolizes entering into God's mercy and grace, leaving behind

sin and embracing a new beginning. The Jubilee Year therefore, signifies a time of liberation, forgiveness, and renewal.

Pilgrimage is not merely a physical journey but a symbol for the Christian life. It reminds us that we are all travelers on the path to eternal life, called to persevere in faith, hope, and love.

The concept of pilgrimage finds its roots in the story of Abraham, often regarded as the first pilgrim in the Bible. In Genesis 12:1, God calls Abraham to leave his homeland and journey to an unknown land: "Go from your country, your people, and your father's household to the land I will show you." Abraham's response is one of unwavering faith and obedience. He sets out on a journey, trusting in God's promise to make him the father of a great nation.

Abraham's pilgrimage is a model for all believers. It teaches us to trust in God's plan, even when the path is uncertain. His journey is marked by moments of trial and triumph. Abraham's faith-filled journey reminds us that pilgrimage is not just a journey; it reminds us that, pilgrimage is not just about reaching a destination, but about growing in trust and surrender to God's will.

The Second Vatican Council described the Church as a "pilgrim Church," emphasizing that the People of God are on a collective journey toward the Kingdom of Heaven. This image reflects the Church's mission to guide humanity toward salvation, offering hope and mercy along the way.

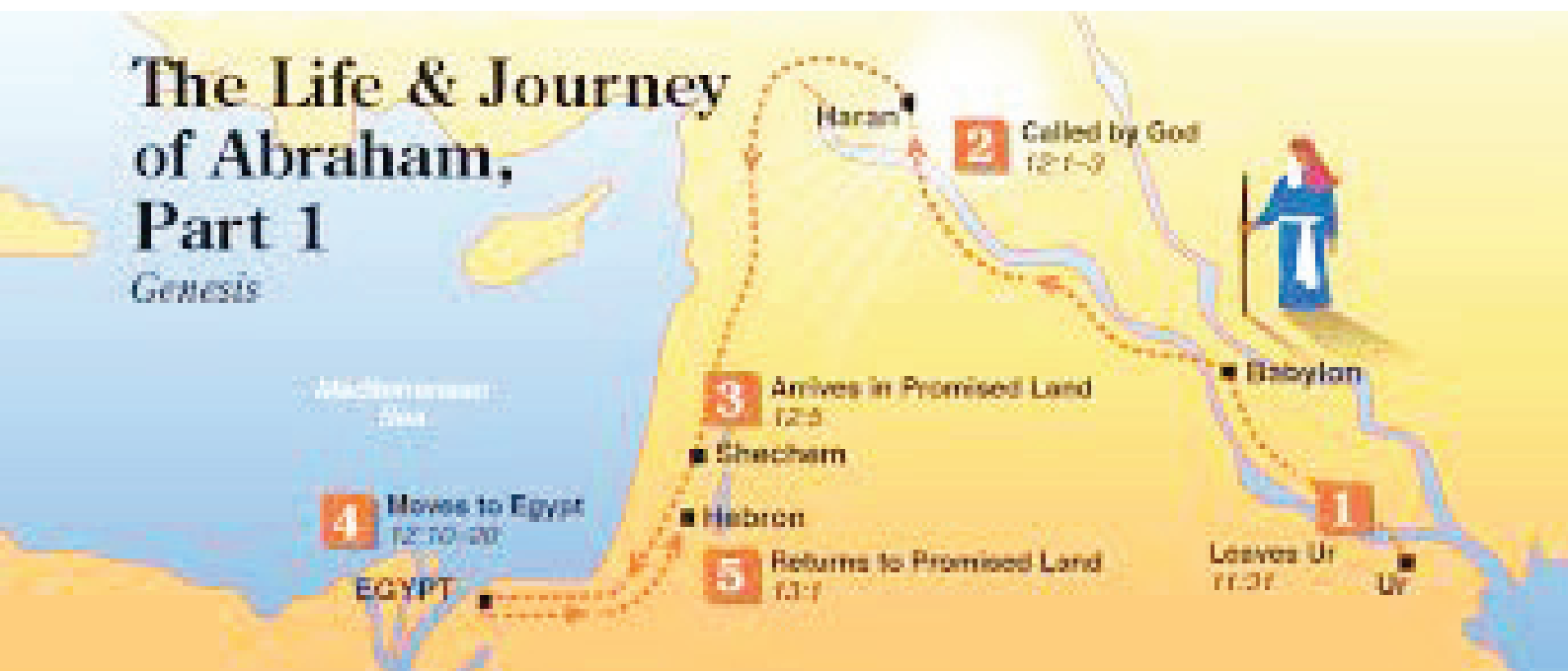
The pilgrim Church is both a community and a witness. It is a community because it gathers people from all walks of life, united in their faith and shared purpose. It is a witness because it proclaims the Gospel through its actions and words, shining as a light in the world.

During the Jubilee Year 2025, the pilgrim Church in-

vites all believers to join in this sacred journey. Whether travelling to Rome, the Holy Land, or local shrines, pilgrims are reminded that the Church is not a static institution but a dynamic movement toward God. The Church's pilgrimage is marked by the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, which nourishes and sustains the faithful on their journey.

Pilgrimage for the Jubilee Year 2025 is an invitation to rediscover the heart of the Christian faith. It is a call to follow in the footsteps of Abraham, the first pilgrim, and to embrace the Church's identity as a pilgrim people. Through pilgrimage, we are reminded that life itself is a journey toward God, filled with challenges and graces. As we cross the threshold of the Holy Door, may we open our hearts to God's mercy, allowing His love to transform us and guide us on the path to eternal life.

Let us take up this sacred journey with faith, hope, and joy, trusting that God walks with us every step of the way.





Pilgrims of Hope: THE TRINITARIAN CHARISM and the JUBILEE YEAR 2025

The Year of Jubilee 2025, themed “Pilgrims of Hope,” is a call for Catholics worldwide to rekindle their relationship with God, foster solidarity, and renew their commitment to mercy and justice. This ordinary celebration, occurring every 25 years, begins with the Opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter’s Basilica on December 24, 2024, and concludes with its Closing on January 6, 2026, the Feast of the Epiphany. Pope Francis invites the faithful to embrace hope and trust in God’s providence, as he writes, “By his perennial presence in the life of the pilgrim Church, the Holy Spirit illumines all believers with the light of hope” (Bull of Indiction, 2025 Jubilee).

In the context of this Jubilee’s call to hope, solidarity, and mercy, the charism of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of Captives finds particular resonance. Founded by St. John de Matha in 1198, the Trinitarian Order embodies a mission of redemption and liberation, deeply rooted in charity and the glorification of the Holy Trinity. Inspired by a vision during his First Mass, where he saw Christ between two captives, St. John established the Order to ransom Christians held captive during the Crusades. This mission was not only a practical response to a pressing need but



Fr. Binoj Edits O.S.S.T

also a profound expression of hope and trust in God’s providence.

Living the Charism of Mercy and Redemption

The Trinitarian Order’s mission reflects the principles emphasized during the Jubilee Year: fostering a relationship with God, advocating for the oppressed, and performing works of mercy. The Order’s foundational charism is succinctly summarized in the words of Pope Innocent III, who approved the Rule of the Order in 1198, describing it as “stemming from the root of charity.” Trinitarian priests and brothers across Europe collaborated with laypeople to collect funds for ransoming missions. They travelled to regions such as

North Africa and the Middle East to negotiate the release of captives, often offering themselves as substitutes if funds were insufficient. This heroic sacrifice epitomizes the spirit of mercy and redemption.

Even today, the Trinitarian Order's charism remains vibrant, addressing modern forms of captivity. Trinitarians work in prisons, serve the homeless, assist immigrants, support individuals struggling with addiction, and advocate for those persecuted for their faith. Their global ministry embodies the Jubilee's call to show solidarity with the poor, care for the vulnerable, and promote human dignity.

Pilgrims of Hope in Action

The Jubilee Year's emphasis on pilgrimages, missions, and acts of charity parallels the Trinitarian Order's mission to foster spiritual renewal and social transformation. The Order's efforts to sustain faith and freedom echo the Jubilee's aim to help humanity breathe in the freedom of the children of God. Pope Francis' reminder to "fan the flame of hope" aligns with the Order's legacy of bringing light to those in darkness, whether through physical liberation or spiritual accompaniment.

A Legacy Rooted in Charity and Redemption

The insights from the Trinitarians' Constitution No. 5 provide a profound understanding of the Order's en-

during charism. It highlights the commitment to render "a service of mercy and redemption" by aiding those suffering persecution for their faith, the poor, and those deprived of justice and freedom. This mission, rooted in the 12th century, saw Trinitarians ransoming captives, caring for the sick, and advocating for human dignity. Through the centuries, from the Middle Ages to the 20th century, the Order expanded its mission to address modern forms of captivity—whether physical, spiritual, or social.

Today, the Trinitarian Order continues to bring light to the marginalized and oppressed, drawing inspiration from the foundation laid by St. John de Matha. By glorifying the Holy Trinity through acts of mercy and redemption, the Order embodies the spirit of the Jubilee and invites the faithful to join in its mission of hope, freedom, and solidarity.

As we journey through the Year of Jubilee 2025, the charism of the Trinitarian Order invites us to be active participants in God's mission of redemption. By glorifying the Holy Trinity and serving humanity, we can embody the spirit of hope and freedom that the Jubilee proclaims. Inspired by the example of St. John de Matha, may we commit ourselves to works of mercy and justice, becoming pilgrims of hope in a world yearning for God's love and freedom from sin.



THE TRINITARIAN CROSS



The meanings of Trinitarian Cross

The Trinitarians wear a distinctive habit that features a red and blue cross on a white background, each color rich in spiritual symbolism.

The white of the habit represents the purity of God the Father, a symbol of holiness and divine perfection. The blue symbolizes the suffering of Jesus Christ, reminding us of His Passion and the depth of His love for humanity. The red stands for the fire of the Holy Spirit, evoking the Spirit's power, zeal, and presence in the life of the Church.

Some theologians interpret the red and blue together as a reference to the blood and water that flowed from the side of Christ when He was pierced on the Cross (John 19:34)—a symbol of the price paid for the ransom of humanity and the redemption of the world.

Others see in the colors a connection to the Exodus journey, where the people of Israel were led out of captivity by a pillar of cloud by day (blue) and a pillar of fire by night (red) (Exodus 13:21). In this sense, the colors express the Trinitarian mission to bring liberation and hope to those in spiritual or physical bondage.

The red and blue cross also symbolizes the divinity and humanity of Christ—red for His divine nature, and blue for His human nature.

Altogether, the Trinitarian habit visually proclaims the mystery of the Holy Trinity and the redemptive mission of the Order: to serve, to free, and to bring the light of Christ to those in need.



WITNESSES OF HOPE

A Virtual Jubilee Journey

Through his disciples, sent to all peoples and mystically accompanied by him, the Lord Jesus continues his ministry of hope for humanity.
– Pope Francis, Message for World Mission Sunday 2025

Join fellow ministers and missionaries on a virtual journey of hope for the Church, world and all creation!

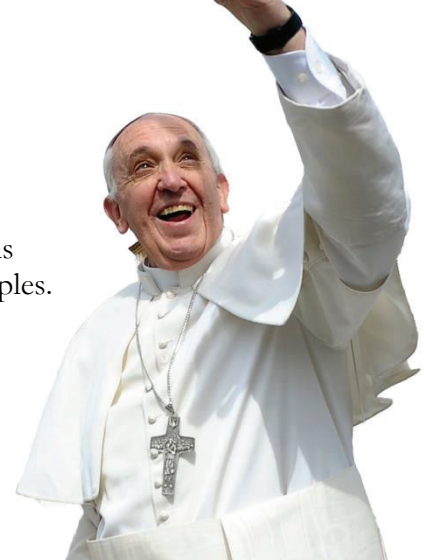
With the words of Pope Francis as our guide, these monthly reflection and discussion sessions will lead us towards new horizons of encounter, dialogue and solidarity in service of hope for all peoples.

Dates: March 27, April 24, May 29, June 26

Time: 11:30am Eastern US / 5:30pm Rome

Location: Zoom

Participation is **FREE** ([Register here](#))



Thursday, March 27 – A Special Call for the Jubilee

The vocation of the baptized to be missionaries of hope in the world
[LINK TO JOIN](#)

Thursday, April 24 – Baptized and Sent

Three foundations of the evangelizing mission of the Church

Thursday, May 29 – Renewing Communion with God and Others

Concrete aspects of a renewed spirituality
and realization of the foundation of mission

Thursday, June 26 – Toward the Mission & Evangelization Summit

Synthesis on the Missionary Spirituality of Hope

Presented by the United States Catholic Mission Association and the Office for World Mission / Society for the Propagation of the Faith of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, in special collaboration with the Vatican International Secretariat of the Pontifical Missionary Union.



PONTIFICIA UNIO MISSIONALIS
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VENI

Creator Spiritus

English version:

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator blest,
and in our souls take up Thy rest;
come with Thy grace and heavenly aid
to fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

O comforter, to Thee we cry,
O heavenly gift of God Most High,
O fount of life and fire of love,
and sweet anointing from above.

Thou in Thy sevenfold gifts are known;
Thou, finger of God's hand we own;
Thou, promise of the Father,
Thou Who dost the tongue with power imbue.

Kindle our sense from above,
and make our hearts o'erflow with love;
with patience firm and virtue high
the weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread,
and grant us Thy peace instead;
so shall we not, with Thee for guide,
turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow
the Father and the Son to know;
and Thee, through endless times confessed, of
both the eternal Spirit blest.

Now to the Father and the Son,
Who rose from death, be glory given,
with Thou, O Holy Comforter,
henceforth by all in earth and heaven. Amen.

Latin version:

Veni, Creator Spiritus,
mentes tuorum visita,
imple superna gratia
quae tu creasti pectora.

Qui diceris Paraclitus,
altissimi donum Dei,
fons vivus, ignis, caritas,
et spiritalis unctio.

Tu, septiformis munere,
digitus paternae dexterae,
Tu rite promissum Patris,
sermone ditans guttura.

Accende lumen sensibus:
infunde amorem cordibus:
infirmi nostri corporis
virtute firmans perpeti.

Hostem repellas longius,
pacemque dones protinus:
ductore sic te praevio
vitemus omne noxium.

Per te sciamus da Patrem,
noscamus atque Filium;
Teque utriusque Spiritum
credamus omni tempore.

Deo Patri sit gloria,
et Filio, qui a mortuis surrexit,
ac Paraclito, in saeculorum saecula. Amen.



MISSIO-AVONA
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