



VELANKANNI IRLA CALLING

**MAY
2021**

Church of Our Lady of Health of Velankanni

FROM THE DESK OF PARISH PRIEST

Dear Parishioners, Devotees and Pilgrims of Our Lady of Velankanni,

The month of May is dedicated to our Blessed Virgin Mary and on 1st May we celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker. St. Joseph is the patron saint for all the workers. Pope Pius XII instituted the feast of Saint Joseph the Worker in 1955. This feast extends the long relationship between St. Joseph and the cause of workers in both Catholic faith and devotion. Beginning in the Book of Genesis, the dignity of human work has long been celebrated as a participation in the creative work of God. By work, humankind both fulfills the command found in Genesis to care for the earth (Gen 2:15) and to be productive in their labors. St. Joseph, the carpenter and foster father of Jesus, is but one example of the holiness of human labor. Jesus, too, was a carpenter. He learned the trade from Saint Joseph and spent his early adult years working side-by-side in Joseph's carpentry shop before leaving to pursue his ministry as preacher and healer. In his encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, St. Pope John Paul II stated: "the Church considers it her task always to call attention to the dignity and rights of those who work, to condemn situations in which that dignity and those rights are violated, and to help to guide [social] changes so as to ensure authentic progress by human being and society."

St. Joseph is held up as a model of such work. Pius XII emphasized this when he said, "The spirit flows to you and to all men from the heart of the God-man, Saviour of the world, but certainly, no worker was ever more completely and profoundly penetrated by it than the foster father of Jesus, who lived with Him in closest intimacy and community of family life and work."

Focus of the Liturgy:

The Gospel readings for all the Sundays in May are taken from St. John and St. Matthew and are from Year B, Cycle 1.

May 2nd - 5th Sunday of Easter	In today's Gospel Jesus says He is the vine and we are the branches.
May 9th - 6th Sunday of Easter	Jesus Christ gives the commandment to love as He loves
May 16th - Ascension of the Lord	Jesus tell his disciples to preach the Gospel to the whole world
May 23rd - Pentecost Sunday	In this Gospel Jesus gives His disciples the power to forgive sins.
May 23rd - Pentecost Sunday	Jesus tells the apostles to "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

In the month of May, we celebrate ascension of the Lord on 16th of May, on May 23rd we will celebrate Pentecost and finally on 30th of May we celebrate Trinity Sunday. Each Sunday we rejoice and joyfully celebrate these feasts.

Pentecost, the birth of the Church, is also among the celebrations of May. Though sprung from the side of Christ on the Cross, the Church marks as her birthday the Descent of the Holy Spirit on Mary and the Apostles. At the 'birth' of the world, the Holy Spirit — the Breath of God — was the "mighty wind that swept over the waters" (Gen 1:2); at the birth of the Church He is present again "like the rush of a mighty wind" to recreate the world in the image of Christ through His Church (Acts 2:2).

Dear People of God, the Covid Pandemic has once again waged a war against whole humanity. Number of the people are affected and number of deaths are taking place. At present we have only common enemy that is Corona. We need to pray lot and pray in a special way to Blessed Mother through recitation of the Rosary to keep all of us safe under mantle of her motherly protection.

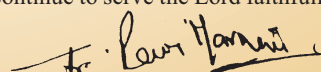
I wish to thank Fr. Rajkumar our Assistant parish Priest on behalf of all the parishioners and devotees for his great service in our parish. We assure him of our prayers. Fr. Rajkumar is leaving the parish on 28th of April 2021. Let us wish him best of luck in his future ministry.

I request you all to keep me in your prayers in a special way. On Saturday May 1st 2021, I will be celebrating my 18th anniversary of Priestly Ordination. I was ordained on May 1st 2003 at my own Parish of St. Joseph, Bhimanapally, Telangana State.

I am thankful to the Lord for bestowing on me the greatest gift of Priesthood. Pope Francis said, "Being a priest is not a job or fulfilling an employment contract but is a gift from God that should be contemplated and treasured as such."

Dear People of God, pray for me in a special way so that I may continue to serve the Lord faithfully through the gift of Holy Priesthood.

With Blessings


Fr. Ravi Thanaiah Marneni, PIME
(Parish Priest)

Parish Team:

Parish Priest – Fr. Ravi T. Marneni,
P.I.M.E

Sisters of St. Ann:

Sr. Fatima
Sr. Teresa Elamthuruthyl

Parish Office Timings:

Monday to Friday: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Saturday: Closed.
Sunday: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Donation & Mass Offering:

At donation stall from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Book stall:

Monday to Thursday:
2 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. FRIDAY HOLIDAY.
Saturday: 7 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.
Sunday: 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. & 5 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.

Mass Timings / schedule:

Saturday (Novena):

6.30 a.m. English
8.00 a.m. Tamil
2.30 p.m. Marathi
3.30 p.m. Marathi
4.30 p.m. Konkani
6.30 p.m. English

Sunday:

7.00 a.m. English – Parish Mass
9.00 a.m. English – Children's Mass
6.30 p.m. English – Youth Mass

Weekdays:

6.30 a.m. & 7.00 p.m. (English)

Baptism:

Sunday during 9 a.m. Mass.

Confessions:

Fridays from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
or on request

Sick calls:

Anytime on request.
SCC animators / PPC member /
Eucharistic Minister to be informed.

Funeral:

To inform Parish Priest or
SCC Animators.

Sunday school:

7.45 a.m. to 9 a.m.

HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2021

THE WORLD OF FINANCE: LET US PRAY THAT THOSE IN CHARGE OF FINANCE WILL WORK WITH GOVERNMENTS TO REGULATE THE FINANCIAL SPHERE AND PROTECT

ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2021.

In View of the Coronavirus Pandemic, All Meetings and Activities are cancelled.

Please Continue to Recite the Prayer for the Control of Coronavirus

Almighty and merciful God, who show your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the coronavirus in various parts of the world.

We come before you asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for healing of those who are affected, for the victims and their families. We pray for the doctors doing research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found. We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY: STATIONS OF THE CROSS LED BY THE YOUTH

The youth of the Parish conducted the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday this year on the theme: The Cross of Triumph.



Dear Fr. Ravi,

Once in a while, there comes someone very special like you....
who not only serves the church and its people faithfully,
but who makes of their own life a living testimony of Christ's love.
Your abiding devotion and faithful service to the Lord has
touched countless hearts and inspired so many souls-
what a blessing you are to all of us.

May the Grace and Peace of our Lord be with You in all you do.

*God's Choicest Blessings on the
18th Anniversary of your Ordination*



GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY: A TRIBUTE TO THE SHEPHERDS OF OUR PARISH

Today [standing here] on behalf of the PPC & the Parishioners, I am reminded of John F. Kennedy's words and I quote "We must find time to stop and thank the people who made a difference in our lives". I believe, showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other.

Yes, dear Parishioners especially during this time and year, it is important to reflect on the blessings each one of us has received. First of all, I'd like to thank our dear Fathers; Fr. Ravi, Fr. Raj & Fr. Mateus. We are extremely blessed to have dedicated and faithful Shepherds that are continuously guiding and leading the flock during this pandemic. Even though we could not talk with you as often as we did before, we could not even share in the Eucharist that God provides us through your hands, as often as we would have liked, but we could only see you, listen to you and pray with you, virtually of course!

You gave us strength through your words, your advice and counsel as you celebrated the Sacraments and other Liturgical events in what seemed to be empty Churches - just be re-assured that we were there with you in Spirit.

It was probably and must have been painful to preach a Homily to a camera instead of a congregation. Each one of you worked tirelessly through this Pandemic, going through emotional, physical and mental exhaustion to find new ways to reach out to us, Parishioners. On behalf of the Parishioners, all I can say is a big THANK YOU! for living out your vocation in the truest way possible; by bringing Christ to us in this time of uncertainty. Also, we would not want to forget to thank Sr. Fatima, Sr. Theresa, our Sacristy Anil, our Media Cell and all others who have worked behind the scenes, to help in the smooth running of this virtual Parish.

Vera Fernandes

A FOND ADIEU TO FR. RAJKUMAR MADRI

The parish bid farewell to Fr. Rajkumar on Sunday, 25th April, 2021 during the 9 am mass. The mass was celebrated by Fr. Rajkumar along with Fr. Ravi as his concelebrant. Though the mass was streamed online due to Covid restrictions, the community presence online was felt with farewell message pouring in during the live celebration (short, simple and sweet) post mass. Fr. Ravi thanked Fr. Rajkumar for his tenure at our parish for the second time. Ms. Vera Fernandes, the Vice President of PPC on behalf of the Parishioners gave a farewell speech and small token of appreciation. Here's what was addressed in the Farewell speech:

'Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some people move our souls to dance. They awaken us to a new understanding with the passing whisper of their wisdom. Some people make the sky more beautiful to gaze upon. They stay in our lives for awhile, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same.' – Flavia Weedn a well-known illustrator, but when she stated the above, she might have been talking about Fr. Raj Kumar and his impact on our lives and the life of our Parish community. I remember welcoming him last year during the current pandemic-Pandemic Welcome and little did I imagine that we would also be bidding him farewell before the pandemic ended-Pandemic Farewell. Fr. Raj was ordained a Priest on 28th April 2014 in the state of Andhra Pradesh and belongs to the Congregation-Heralds of Good News (HGN). This is Fr. Raj's second stint at our Parish and as we bid him farewell, there is a bit of heaviness in our hearts, but that is a feeling that is shared in part by him as well. When he arrived, he conveyed to us the following: "I hope I can be the priest that the Lord wants me to be. I want to love God's people in Jesus, and as Jesus. I want to accept the gift of my baptismal graces and help parishioners allow those graces to take deeper root in their lives, as well." We can vouch for the fact that he made every effort to accomplish exactly that. Fr. Raj, your tenure with us may have been short but they say don't the count the number of years that you have lived but what you did in those number of years. During this short term, what we have generalised about you is that you are 'simple in attitude', humble in behaviour, serene in nature, gentle in approach, genuine in loving, sincere in dealing, eager in prayer, generous in giving and enthusiastic in serving...all-in-all a dedicated and fun-loving person. All this we have noticed in person and also during our viewing of the on-line services. Fr. Raj is also very much appreciated for his hard work, his obedience to his Superiors and his homilies which were well-constructed with quotes from the Scriptures and the Holy Bible. Father, we know that you do not choose your Pastoral appointments yourself, instead you humbly accept all that comes your way, with great respect and obedience.

A Hawaiian poet wrote a poem titled Always for Others, dedicated to priests. There are two stanzas in that poem we cite as we bid a fond farewell to Fr. Raj: "God handpicked you from a myriad of souls, moulded you since you were a babe, To prepare you for a journey not for you, But always for others.. You hold the Body of Christ, Embrace His name and proclaim it, And a Father and a counselor you have become, Not for you, But always for others." Father, we pray for you, and we thank you for being such a noble part of our lives. 'We shall always remember and thank God for your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1 Thessalonians 1: 3)

As you take on your new assignment, may God be with you until we meet again. May His counsel guide and uphold you, may His love securely fold you. We wish you good health, happiness and success in your future ministry. May our Lady of Velankanni guide, guard & protect you always. '

Dear Rev. Fr. Raj Kumar, Adios & God Bless!!!"

Following this, Fr. Rajkumar shared a few words in which he thanked each and every one for their prayers, support and guidance.

Dear Fr. Rajkumar, we assure of our prayers and wish you well for your future assignment.



EASTER CELEBRATION: EASTER VIGIL SERVICE and INAUGURATION OF THE NEW FLAG POLE.

This year's Holy Triduum may have had many changes but it also came with many surprises. The church was adorned with Alleluias (literally) and host of Angels along with twelve Apostles on the church altar gives us a glimpse of our heavenly home. The statue of the Risen Lord and Empty Tomb below with the signage: 'HE is not here, for HE is risen' resonates the very fact as Easter people, we should seek the Risen Lord and receive his never-ending Grace and Mercy.

After the Easter Vigil Service, Fr. Ravi blessed and inaugurated the Flag Pole. This pole, which is a bit of Velankanni, Chennai here in Irla, stands several feet high and is adorned with a beautiful cross. With fanfare and a huge applause, the Easter Flag was hoisted to mark Easter and also a reminder that the Risen Lord is always there with us even in these uncertain times.

