



VELANKANNI IRLA CALLING

DECEMBER 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,

Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will. Luke 2:14

We have now entered into the month of December, a month which is filled with preparation, expectation and celebration. The early days of December also coincide with the season of Advent which is the Season **"of devout and expectant delight."** which marks the beginning of the Church's Liturgical Year. The best person we can turn for help during Advent is Mary our Mother. She waited patiently for the day of Christ birth with more eagerness than any other human being. Her preparation was complete in every respect. Let's crown our preparation and borrow something of Mary's prayerfulness, her purity and whole-hearted submission to God's will.

The month of December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "From all eternity God chose with infinite wisdom the woman who would be the Mother of His divine Son. To prepare for the Word Incarnate a spotless and holy tabernacle, God created Mary in grace and endowed her from the moment of her conception with all the perfections suited to her exalted dignity. St. Thomas teaches that through her intimacy with Christ, the principle of grace, she possessed beyond all creatures a fullness of divine life."

Why do we celebrate Christmas with great rejoicing?

First, Christmas is the Feast of God's sending us a Savior: God undertook the Incarnation of Jesus as God-Man to save us from the bondage of sin. Scripture teaches us of Incarnation, and its purpose as given in John 3: 16: "God so loved the world that He sent His only Son so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life." We celebrate the Incarnation of God as a baby today as Good News because we have a Divine Savior. As our Savior, Jesus liberated us from slavery to sin by his suffering, death and Resurrection, and he atoned for our sins. So, every Christmas reminds us that we need a Savior every day, to free us from our evil addictions and unjust, impure and uncharitable tendencies. This Christmas also challenges us to accept Jesus in the manger as our saving God and personal Savior and to surrender our lives to him, allowing him to rule our hearts and lives every day in the New Year

Second, Christmas is the Feast of God's sharing His love with us: Jesus, as our Savior, brought the **"Good News"** that our God is a loving, forgiving, merciful and rewarding God and not a judgmental, cruel and punishing God. He demonstrated by his life and teaching how God our Heavenly Father loves us, forgives us, provides for us and rewards us. All his miracles were signs of this Divine Love. Jesus' final demonstration of God's love for us was his death on the cross to atone for our sins and to make us children of God. Each Christmas reminds us that sharing love with others is our Christian duty, and every time we do that, Jesus is reborn in our lives. Let us face this question, "What does it profit me if Jesus is born in thousands of cribs all over the world and He is not born in my heart?" (Alexander Pope). Hence, let us allow Jesus to be reborn in our hearts and lives, not only during Christmas, but every day, so that he may radiate the light of his presence from within us as sharing and selfless love, expressed in compassionate words and deeds, unconditional forgiveness, the spirit of humble service and overflowing generosity.



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Parish Team:

Parish Priest – Fr. Ravi T. Marneni, P.I.M.E
Asst. Parish Priest – Fr. Praveen Jangam, HGN

Sisters of St. Ann:

Sr. Fatima
Sr. Teresa Elamthuruthy

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.



Third, Christmas is the Feast of the Emmanuel (God living with us and within us): Christmas is the feast of the Emmanuel because God in the New Testament is a God who continues to live with us in all the events of our lives as the "Emmanuel" announced by the angel to Mary. As Emmanuel, Jesus lives in the Sacraments (especially in the Holy Eucharist), in the Bible, in the praying community and in each believer as the Holy Spirit transforms us into "Temples of the Holy Spirit." Christmas reminds us that we are bearers of God with the missionary duty of conveying Jesus to those around us by loving them as Jesus did, through sacrificial, humble and committed service. Sharing with others Jesus, the Emmanuel living within us, is the best Christmas gift we can give, or receive, today.

"Our hearts grow tender with childhood memories and love of kindred, and we are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime."

– Laura Ingalls Wilder

"It's true; Christmas can feel like a lot of work, particularly for mothers. But when you look back on all the Christmases in your life, you'll find you've created family traditions and lasting memories. Those memories, good and bad, are really what help to keep a family together over the long haul." – Caroline Kennedy

As we come to the end of this year, a year of such pain, difficulty and uncertainty try to see this 'bigger picture': that our lives are in the hands of God; that our Church is constantly consoled by the presence of the Holy Spirit; that our world is God's work of art. As we enter the New Year, we place all this before the Lord, knowing that he, who 'steers our course', will bring each one of us, and the whole of creation, to completion, in the fullness of time.

May this joyful season bring lots of joy and happiness in your life. May all your wishes and dreams come true, and may you feel this happiness all year round. Merry Christmas! Happy New Year 2022.

God bless you all!

Yours in Christ,



Fr. Ravi Thanaiah Marneni, PIME
(Parish Priest)

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

Catechists: Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

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 an efficacious control of the outbreak, for healing of those who are affected, for the victims and their families. We thank you for blessing the efforts of our research scientists working on the development of a vaccine. We pray that these vaccines be effective in combating the virus and its mutants, and in controlling the spread of the pandemic. We pray that the vaccine be available for all our people even the poor and those in rural areas.

We pray for the doctors, nurses and health workers who are in the frontline of this battle, that they be kept safe and have the strength and courage to continue their heroic efforts.

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

TILL FURTHER NOTICE, PLEASE NOTE THE MASS TIMINGS:

Monday to Friday: 7.15 a.m.

Saturday: Mass & Novena in English at 6.30 a.m. & 6.30 p.m.; in Tamil at 8.00 a.m.; in Marathi at 2.30 p.m.; in Konkani at 4.30 p.m.

Sunday: 9.00 a.m. & 6.30 p.m.



ANIMATION OF MASSES DURING THE FOUR SUNDAYS OF ADVENT BY THE SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES



Date	Theme	9.00 a.m.	6.30 p.m.
28th November '21	BE READY AND VIGILANT	St.Paul's	St. Jude's
5th December '21	REPENTENCE	St. Anthony's	St. John Bosco's
12th December '21	CHANGE	Holy Family	Our Lady Of Fatima
19th December '21	FUFILMENT OF A PROMISE	Parish Pastoral Council	Youth

DIWALI PARTY - SVP STUDY CLASS CHILDREN

A Diwali Party for the children of our Study Class was held on Saturday, 30th October 2021, in the Prayer Hall. About 32 children attended the party. At 10 am, the children dressed in party wear, entered the hall, very anxious to participate and enjoy the party. Rangoli and Diwali Greeting Card competitions were pre-planned activities for the children. They came prepared with colored powders for the Rangoli designs, and colour pencils/paints for the Diwali Greeting Cards. The children were divided into various groups, some to prepare rangoli designs and others to draw, paint and add suitable wordings to their Greeting cards. A sheet of drawing paper was given to the children to prepare their rangoli designs. Smaller card papers were given to those preparing Greeting cards. The children used their vivid imagination and came out with some unusual beautiful designs. The Greeting cards too were wonderfully painted with very apt wordings for Diwali.



At 11 a.m. Fr. Praveen Jangam, our Spiritual Advisor, came to the Hall to oversee the proceedings. Sponsors donated food grain hampers containing oil; sugar, moong dal, besan, maida, rawa and poha. Large colorful shopping bags, water bottles, ready-made dresses, were also sponsored. The items were very well displayed by our SVP members who also attended the function. In addition, there were also boxes of readymade food items like haka noodles and sheera for the children to enjoy.

At the outset, Fr. Praveen said a short prayer and blessed all the sponsored items which were later distributed to 36 of our aided family members who were also present. It was very difficult to judge the best rangoli designs and Greeting cards as each outwitted the other. In the end, prizes in the form of chocolates were distributed to all the participating children.

After the distribution of the Diwali gifts, the children and their parents went home joyously carrying the heavily loaded bags packed with all the goodies. We are very grateful to Fr. Praveen for gracing the occasion and distributing all the gifts. We thank our generous donors and also all our SVP members present who cooperated and helped to make the function a resounding success.

– Jennifer Lopez

5th WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

November 14, 2021 saw the fifth celebration of the World Day of the Poor. An initiative strongly desired by Pope Francis in order to urge the Church and the faithful to 'go out' to encounter poverty in the various ways it manifests itself in the modern world and in order to reach out to those most in need. This year the motto chosen to promote the Day was from Saint Mark's Gospel: "The poor you will always have with you" (Mk 14:7).



Our parish celebrated this with distribution of food packets to the poor and needy in the Irla, Vile Parle and Andheri. Food packets were also distributed at the Vimala Leprosy Home as well as the Missionaries of Charity at Santa Cruz.

This initiative was carried out the PPC along with the SSVP. Those present expressed their joy and appreciation as well as their heartfelt experiences they had. They are thankful to our Parish Priest for giving them the opportunity of reaching out to the poor far and wide.



BOMBAY CATHOLIC SABHA UPDATE: HEALTH OUTREACH AND GO GREEN INITIATIVE

The Bombay Catholic Sabha Irla Unit distributed free Medicines to 10 Parishioners received from Archdiocese Healthcare Outreach Project.

Fr. Ravi Marneni Parish Priest of Irla prayed for the good health of all the Parishioners and specially for those receiving the medical assistance. He thanked the Health Outreach Team and the Bombay Catholic Sabha, Irla Unit and prayed for the success in their future endeavours.



All the beneficiaries expressed their gratitude to the Health Outreach Team.

The Bombay Catholic Sabha Irla Unit also submitted 20 kgs Plastic, 10 kgs E-waste, 175 Tetra Pack to Bisleri as part of their Go green initiative.



GLIMPSES OF THE FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING (21st November, 2021)



**BEGINNING THE SEASON OF ADVENT: BLESSING THE ADVENT
WREATH AND LIGHTING THE FIRST CANDLE**



Wishing you all a blessed Christmas

May the joy of Christ's birth fill our hearts anew with peace
and love and enliven within us a spirit of hope for the world.

Editorial Team: Fr. Ravi Marneni (Editor), Clayson Fonseca, Susan D'Mello, Vera Sequeira, Macjoyle Barretto.