



VELANKANNI IRLA CALLING

FEBRUARY
2022

Church of Our Lady of Health of Velankanni

FROM THE DESK OF PARISH PRIEST

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

Though the shortest month of the year, February is rich in Liturgical activity. It contains a feast (Presentation of our Lord) that bridges two other seasons (Christmas and Easter)! In addition, the faithful may receive in February two of the four major public sacramentals that the Church confers during the liturgical year: blessed candles and the blessing of throats.

The **Solemnity of the Presentation of the Lord** on February 2nd harkens back to the Christmas mystery of Light except that now, Christ, the helpless babe, is 'the Light of Revelation to the Gentiles who will save his people from their sins.' Candles, symbolizing Christ our Light, are carried in procession this day, as will be the Paschal candle during the Easter Vigil Liturgy.

'God enters the temple not as a powerful ruler but as a little child in his Mother's arms. The King of glory comes not with a show of human force and power, not with a great fanfare and noise, not causing fright and destruction. He comes into the temple as he came into the world, as an infant in silence, in poverty, and in the company of the poor and the wise.' - St. John Paul II

Jesus' presentation in the Temple reflects how He fulfills the Old Covenant. According to Old Testament law, a sacrifice had to be offered in the Temple when a child was consecrated to the Lord. Mary and Joseph honor this tradition, as Luke 2:22-24 describes:

Simeon, a devout and upright man, had been told by the Lord he would meet the Messiah before his death. When Jesus comes to the Temple, we see the fulfillment of this prophecy. Simeon and the prophetess Anna, acting - in the words of Pope John Paul II - as 'representatives of the Old Covenant' - recognize Jesus' Lordship as Messiah in this culmination of their watchful waiting. When Simeon receives Jesus, he blesses Him, and prophesies Jesus' future as Saviour, proclaiming Him the Light of the world.

On this day, we also reflect on the gift of consecrated life. While the momentary satisfaction of selfish living ultimately leads to emptiness, living a life of holiness, dedicated to God's service, will give true contentment and peace. As Pope Francis has expressed: "Consecrated life is born and reborn of an encounter with Jesus as he is: poor, chaste and obedient... And while worldly life soon leaves our hands and hearts empty, life in Jesus fills us with peace to the very end, as in the Gospel, where Simeon and Anna come happily to the sunset of their lives with the Lord in their arms and joy in their hearts."

Focus of the Liturgy: The Gospel readings for the Sundays in February are taken from St. Luke following the Lectionary Cycle C, and the Weekday readings follow Year II.

February 6th 5th Sunday of Ordinary Time	Year C, Luke 5:1-11: This Gospel is about the miraculous catch of fishes after Peter and the Apostles had fished all night.
February 13 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time	Year C, Luke 6:17, 20-26: Jesus teaches the Beatitudes. "Behold, your reward will be great in heaven."
February 20 7th Sunday of Ordinary Time	Year C, Luke 6:27-38: Jesus says "the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."
February 27 8th Sunday of Ordinary Time	Year C, Luke 6:39-45: Jesus says to remove the wooden beam from your own eye before removing the splinter in your brother's eye.

Let us consecrate our lives to the Lord and render our service to the Lord. *Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you."* (Joshua 3:5)

**Fr. Ravi Thanaiah Marneni, PIME
(Parish Priest)**

Parish Team:

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

Asst. Parish Priest – Fr. Praveen Jangam, HGN

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 FEBRUARY 2022

For Religious Sisters and Consecrated Women: We pray for religious sisters and consecrated women; thanking them for their mission and their courage; may they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times.

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

THANKSGIVING ADORATION AND SOLEMNITY OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD (NEW YEAR'S EVE MASS)



Marriages: 04.01.2022 – Neesha Puthran and Kunal Prakash Vedkar

16.01.2022 – Yollinda Ingle and Denver D'Silva (St. Anthony's Community)

Deaths: 31.12.2021 – Valerie Manuel (Our Lady of Fatima Community, Irla Village)

03.01.2022- John Apolin Mathias (St. Paul Community, Lallubhai Park)

FAREWELL SR. TERESA AND SR. FATIMA (2ND JANUARY 2022)

Our parish bid adieu to Sr. Teresa and Sr. Fatima (Sisters of St. Ann of Lucern) on 2nd January 2022 with a thanksgiving mass at 9 am followed by a small program. On this day, which also was the Feast of Epiphany of our Lord, Fr. Ravi expressed his sincere gratitude to Srs. Teresa and Fatima for their service in our Parish. He on behalf of the Parish and parish community felicitated them. The PPC and Lay organisation came together along with the parishioners in prayer, song and dance.

On behalf of the parishioners, Mrs. Fay and Mrs. Vera presented a tribute to Sr. Teresa and Sr. Fatima respectively.



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A TRIBUTE TO SR. FATIMA

"So don't hide your light! Let it shine brightly before others, so that the commendable things you do will shine as light upon them, and then they will give their praise to your Father in heaven." – Matthew 5:16

Today we say farewell to our dear Sr. Fatima who has been with us at Our Lady Of Health Of Velankanni for many years now and has never shied away from shining her light on each and every one of us. She has inspired, guided and in some way or the other touched each of our lives. And for that we will always be grateful.

Sr. Fatima, as many of you may know, comes from a large family and has nine siblings. What you may not know is that of the 10 of them four chose to walk the religious path, three going on to become nuns and one a priest. For this we owe a debt of gratitude to their parents for allowing their children to answer the call and willingly surrendering them to the Lord. Sr. Fatima took up the vocation 60 years ago, pledging her life to the service of God and His people.

Her journey began with looking after young orphans at a boarding school. And her bond with her boarders is so strong that till today she stays in touch with them and their families. A bond that we hope is similar to the one we have forged with her. Sr. Fatima has been a constant presence in our lives and we are so grateful that her calling brought her to our little parish, first in 1986 till 1992 and once again in 2010 until now, a period totaling 17 years. She wholeheartedly embraced each of us, sharing her experiences, learnings, faith and of course, love. The most amazing thing is that she remembers us by name, delights in our children's achievements and never fails to inquire about a sick family member. And there's only one word that can describe this relationship - Family.

However, Sr. Fatima didn't stop at just embracing our parishioners as family, her warmth, love and grace extends to all devotees who visit the Church, including those of different faiths who come to show their devotion to Our Lady. In her eyes, we are all her children and she has never made us feel any less.

During her time here, much like an angel she has been working tirelessly behind the scenes, alongside Sr. Teresa, taking care of numerous duties, including registration of masses, weddings, etc; decorating the Altar, attending to Our Lady's statue by picking out a saree that matched the decorations, and so much more. Yet she was never too busy to help anyone in need, to offer advice or to just be present when words failed. Nor too tired to greet everyone with a smile at mass or the parish office.

All of these are things most of you know and have experienced for yourselves. However, what you may not know about Sr. Fatima, is that she is a very good cook and it is a simple task that she delights in. When our priests did not have a cook, she would happily prepare meals for them and if any of us visited the Sisters at their residence in the morning, the first thing she would do was ask if we had eaten breakfast and was ever ready to supply us with dosas and coffee.

I'm sure many of you are recalling similar experiences you've shared with Sr. Fatima. And the more we do, the more we reflect on time spent together, the clearer it becomes that simply saying, "Thank You," is not enough to convey our gratitude for everything she has done for us.

To give without counting the cost or expecting anything in return is one of the most courageous examples of faith I've known. And Sr. Fatima personifies this. So, I believe the best thing we can do is take what we have learnt and follow her example in doing everything we can to be of service to God and our community.

Sr. Fatima, the Lord shows his love for us through special people like you and we are so grateful that He brought you to us. We will never forget the lessons you have taught us and will strive to make you proud. Though we are here to say adieu, it does not mean goodbye, only that we will see each other again. However, in the meantime, on behalf of the entire parish of Our Lady Of Health Of Velankanni and all the devotees you have touched, I would like to say thank you for making us a part of your family, for your kindness, thoughtfulness, warmth and most importantly your light, which we know will continue to shine wherever the Lord leads you.

– With Love and Gratitude,
Fr. Ravi, Fr. Praveen and Parishioners of Our Lady of Health of Velankanni Church, Irla.
2nd January, 2022.

A TRIBUTE TO SR. THERESA

"She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue". – Proverbs 31:26

This proverb sums up the person, Sr Theresa is: quite, dedicated, intelligent and full of encouragement. A nurse by profession with humble beginnings. One among the 10 siblings who heard God's call and made it her mission in life. She dedicated her life working with the poor and needy. Sr came to our parish in 2010 and has worked passionately and yet silently since then. 'Work hard in silence. Let your success make all the noise'. So very apt as Sr Theresa always worked behind the scenes and avoided the limelight. It is extremely challenging to be working in church like ours, small, but with thousands of devotees thronging to Our Mother's feet. The door was opened to every knock and all queries answered. Novena days saw them working till late at night and waking up early in the morning ensuring that all was in order, the altar with an amazing look each of the 9 days.

On the rare occasion when you get an opportunity to speak with Sr. Theresa. Her pearl of wisdom to all, especially the young. "Whatever you do in life, Whatever path you choose, your one aim should be to be a 'Good Person', no matter what."

'In a gentle way you can shake the world'. This is exactly what you have done to us, we are today stirred and saddened that we will no longer see your familiar face around the church.

I end with a quote from St Teresa of Avilla: 'Let nothing trouble you, let nothing frighten you, all things are passing. God never changes. Patience obtains all things. He who possess God lacks nothing. God alone suffices'.

Farewell dear Sr Theresa. Stay safe, take care and all the best!

– From the Parishioners of Our Lady of Health of Venlankanni Church, Irla

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD (23RD JANUARY 2022)



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