

Jan - Mar
2019



Quarterly News Letter

Fulfillment
Of The
Promise



Diocese Of Jabalpur
Church Of North India
Jabalpur



**Diocese Of Jabalpur
Church Of North India**

News Letter

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God fulfills God's promises. What is God's promise? It is an assurance of something which will happen in your life. It comes from someone who can make everything possible. It is God's choice of your life. It is God's purposeful intervention in your life. It may change the direction of your life.. Through the promise you become an important part of God's history. You are not an inactive recipient of the promise but an active promoter of God's purpose in the promise. Promise arrives in your life not when you wish but when God wishes, in God's time!

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Ipe Joseph
(Editor)

Editorial

This issue of the News Letter is covering the first quarter of the new year. The call from our Bishop in his New Year message was that we need to become true disciples of Jesus Christ in the process of transforming the world. Let us stay with this dedicated agenda throughout the year. In this issue he is asking us to prepare and strengthen ourselves for this task by observing lent in its true sense.

New Year was followed by Epiphany where the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ and the salvation through him was proclaimed to people all over the world irrespective of race and culture. On 26th January we celebrated the 70th Republic Day of our nation, once again affirming that we are Indians first and last. Unity Octave from January 18th to 25 was an occasion which brought together all denominations for a week of prayer. From Feb. 10 to 17 we celebrated the Healing Week, continuation of the healing ministry of Jesus. On the same dates Mar Thoma Church conducted the 124th annual Maramon Convention, perhaps, the world's largest annual Christian gathering. March 1 was World Day of Prayer which was observed all over the church especially by women's fellowship. We are already into Lenten season of repentance and renewal of life. On March 6th we observed Ash Wednesday reminding ourselves that we are unworthy like ashes and that we need to humble ourselves before God.

On February 4th, the World Cancer Day, we remembered all the people suffering from Cancer, especially our dear ones. Palliative care is a fast developing ministry of the Church. World Women's Day fell on 8th of March when world over women celebrated expressions of gender justice and women's rights and all activities to prevent violence against women. 22nd March was Water Day. We know that water has become a commercial commodity. The world is threatened by the danger of shortage of water soon. We need to consciously save every drop of water.

It is a matter of joy and pride that our bishop was unanimously elected as the President of the Bible Society of India for the new triennium. We congratulate him and thank God for his precious ministry. This issue carries his acceptance message. Our Bishop was specially invited to the Church of England Synod held 19-22 February 2019. He spoke on Discipleship and Evangelism in the Indian Context. We have printed his message.

The theme for this issue is "Fulfillment of God's Promises". The hope which generates out of promise is the spiritual fuel for sustaining the life of the faithful. In the Scriptures we see that the promise comes as part of the covenant love between God and people. There are several outstanding examples which come to our mind such as promise to Abraham, Moses, prophets, the people of God, to Mary and to all disciples of Jesus, "Behold, I will be with you till the end of times". All that God desires from us in return for the promise is undivided loyalty. We have couple of reflections on this theme in this issue.

Christ Church Cathedral, Jabalpur will be celebrating 175 years on 3rd April. This is a moment to praise God for this great monument. We have included a brief history of the Cathedral and other articles related to the Jubilee. Other items in this News Letter include, a write-up about World Wild Life Day and a report about health check up done by Vikas Asha Kendra.

Holy week will fall in April. We hope you will accompany Jesus to the cross and enjoy a wonderful Easter thereafter.

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Dearly Beloved in Jesus Christ,

Time is flying very fast. The first quarter of the new year is already gone. I hope that, at least, some of you are able to keep up with new year decisions you have made! I am happy to note that our monthly prayer meetings of the Pastors and all regular activities of children, youth, women and Vikas Asha Kendra are going on well.

We rejoice with Christ Church Cathedral for the 175 year celebrations which will take place on 3rd April 2019. The Spirit moved Rt. Rev. Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta and Archdeacon Pratt to visit Jabalpur in January 1841 and the Bishop laid the corner stone of Christ Church. From April 1844 divine service was held in the Church. We start counting the beginning of Christ Church from that date. The first chaplain was Rev. F. A. Dawson. Since then, 47 Presbyters and several assistant presbyters as well as lay leaders served the Church. We keep all of them in our memory and thank God for their life and witness.

From 19th to 22nd February the Synod sessions of Church of England took place in Lambeth Palace. I was invited as a special guest and given the responsibility of giving a message on Discipleship and Evangelism. The session was attended by 665 delegates. The message which was given from our context was well received and broadcasted. I have requested Church of England to accompany us in our ecumenical journey.

We are in Lenten season. Repentance, Reformation and Restoration are the three-fold focus of Lent. This should lead us to transformation of life. We have to scan our lives and become aware of our sinfulness. In radical humility we need to present ourselves before our Lord and seek forgiveness. Forgiveness will naturally lead us to new decisions to reform our whole life. In this way, we will be restored to the original glory of true humanity. I request all of you accompany Jesus to the cross.

Our theme of this quarter is "fulfillment of God's promises". This is the motivating spiritual force of our life. Our basic affirmation here is that we belong to God and God intends our well being. All blessings required for our well being are assured through God's promises. All we need to do is to put faith in the promises of God and to surrender us fully to the will of God.

We intend to open unit II of Christ Church Girls Higher Secondary School on 3rd of April 2019 at Vijay Nagar. We thank God for enabling us to take another step forward in the field of quality education. National elections are at hand. As dutiful citizens of our nation we must exercise our right to vote. What we need is a strong democratic secular government which would bring prosperity, peace and harmony in our country. Abstaining from voting means that you are already casting a vote in favour of an undesirable party. Easter will arrive soon. It will be time to say, "Praise the Lord. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!".

With Blessings

Most Rev. Dr. P.C. Singh,
Moderator CNI Synod
and Bishop Diocese of Jabalpur, CNI.



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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

(Talk given by Moderator Most Rev. Dr. P.C. Singh who was invited as a special guest in the Church of England Synod 19-22 February 2019)

“EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP”

In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Your Excellency the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan, the Most Reverend and Right Honorable Justin Welby, Colleague Primates, Bishops, Clergy and all other distinguished members and guests of the Synod, I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in whom we are united as one people and one body. I bring greetings also from the Church of North India (CNI) as its Primate and Moderator; from the National Council of Churches in India of which I am presently serving as the President, and also from the Bible Society of India of which I was recently elected as President.

Introduction

I am indeed privileged and honored to be invited to this Synod meeting. I thank the Archbishop and all others who invited me to this unique occasion. I am sure that most of you know about the Church of North India. We too belong to the family of the Anglican Communion. We are always indebted to the missionaries who brought the light of the gospel to our country. We faithfully continue the ministries you have initiated.

A historical note about the Church of North India will be in place.

The Church of North India (CNI), was born as an ecumenical wonder on 29 November 1970. The organic union, which had been in discussion since 1929, became a reality by bringing together the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon (Anglican), the United Church of Northern India (Congregationalist and Presbyterian), the Baptist Churches of Northern India (British Baptists), the Church of the Brethren in India, the Methodist Church (British and Australian Conferences) and the Disciples of Christ.

The CNI's jurisdiction covers all states of the Indian Union with the exception of the five states in the south (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana) and has approximately 1,500,000 members in 27 dioceses and about 3,000 pastorates. The following is our mission statement:

"The Church of North India, as united and uniting together, is committed to announce the good news of the reign of God inaugurated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in proclamation, and to demonstrate in actions to restore the integrity of God's creation through continuous struggle against the demonic powers by breaking down the barriers of caste, class, gender, economic inequality and exploitation of the nature."

Our Appreciation of the Church of England

I thank God for the life and witness of the Church of England. I am fascinated to see the wonderful work you are doing. Your network of parishes covers the country, bringing a vital Christian dimension to the nation and strengthening community life in numerous urban, suburban and rural settings. You have a huge educational system. I understand that one in every 4 primary schools as well as one in every 16 secondary schools belong to Church of England catering to about 1 million pupils in more than 4,700 Church of England Schools.



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According to the information I have gathered, you have more than 20,000 ordained ministers involved in many diversified ministries and more than 6,000 Readers and Lay ministers. You have about 16,000 churches and 12,500 church buildings serving every part of the country including 42 mainland Cathedrals. May God continue to enable you to transform people and communities in this country in the power of the Spirit of God. We in India, especially Church of North India and my own Diocese of Jabalpur are grateful to you for your partnership programmes.

The assignment given to me is to speak on Discipleship and Evangelism

It is understood that you would like me to present this theme from my own context because it is intimately related to specific contexts. Before I say anything about the Asian, especially the Indian context, I will try and make an equation of relating Evangelism and Discipleship.

We know that a disciple refers to a dedicated follower of Jesus. In ancient India a disciple was known as "shishya" who stayed with the teacher who was known as "Guru" in the Gurukulam, the abode of the Guru. It is not the same as being a student in the modern sense. The shishya learned every art the Guru taught to its perfection and actively imitated both the life and teachings of the master thus becoming a living copy of the Guru. Total respect and utter obedience were the keys in Guru-shishya relationship. Christ is our Guru and we are his shishyas.

The risen Christ, before his ascension into heaven, gave us his Great Commission – "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28: 18-20

Peter preached the Gospel on the Day of Pentecost Acts 2:4. About 3000 people were saved. Stephen who was appointed as a deacon preached with courage and conviction and was stoned to death. Then Paul appeared. He said, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" He found it compelling to preach the gospel 1 Corinthians 9:16. These were the pioneering disciples.

Here comes my equation: Discipleship is the life style of the true followers of Jesus and Evangelism is their mission imperative.

Responding to New Indian Situations

All of you are aware of the difficult situations the minorities, especially Christians in India are facing today. I do not need to elaborate it here. The new situations demands that we take a fresh look at our practice of discipleship and evangelism. Where do we need changes and transformation? I wish to submit before you two main aspects: 1. We need to transform our understanding of Discipleship, and practice accordingly. 2. We need to transform our methods of evangelism. I have drawn my major insights from the Asia Mission Conference held from 11 to 17 October 2017 in Yangon, Myanmar. The theme was 'Journeying Together: Prophetic Witness to the Truth and Light, in Asia'.

Transforming Discipleship: Re-affirming the Servanthood

We understand, from the life and ministry of Jesus, that the mission unquestionably affirms the servanthood. Re-affirmation of the servanthood requires a new understanding of its complex manifestations in the light of the context described above. It must challenge the hierarchical structure of the society that marginalises people based on their nationality, class, gender and different abilities. In our country a good majority of the Christians are Dalits who are marginalized and discriminated.



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Our new understanding of servanthood means to care for each other, to minister to one another, and to befriend one another. St. Paul reminds us to, "Serve one another in love" and "the entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbour as yourself." (Galatians 5:13-14). Churches have a tendency to be authoritarian even now. It is here that we are challenged to rediscover the meaning of servanthood.

Transforming Discipleship: Embodying the Spirituality of the Cross

Journeying together with all peoples is the image used about our mission activities now. Mission has to be always the practice of the spirituality of the cross. It is a journey where we are embracing the strangers, the Dalits, the tribals, the transgenders and all the marginalized people in our arms of inclusion and love. It is a journey where men, women and children travel with equal dignity. In this journey we are called upon to suffer as well as bear each other's burdens. Coming away from our comfort zones and risking our lives in the spirit of sacrifice are salient features of the spirituality of the cross. The cross is a living symbol of the people's struggle and liberation. It remains the most powerful symbol of faith that sustains the life and hope of Christian communities in the midst of suffering, violence and injustice.

The spirituality of the cross is embodied in our country today in the lives of Christians and all people who struggle for healing, justice, and transformation. In the aftermath of the cross, the disciples received the assurance of resurrection (John 20:19-22). This assurance took place at the site of fear and uncertainty. The spirituality of the cross, empowers our community that has been overcome by fear and violence and death.

Transforming Evangelism

We journey together; ours is not a singular way or an exclusive path. We have to learn to accept others who are different from us. We need to respect the faith of others. We walk together, in communities, towards a common goal. As Christians, we journey with our sisters and brothers in churches who join together in communion with one another. We journey with our families and with the people of many nations and cultures who walk the roads, sail the seas and fly the skies, embracing one another and struggling for justice and peace. We journey with the migrants and the excluded as we embrace the stranger (Hebrews 13:2). As religious believers, we journey together with women and men from other religious communities, drawing inspiration from all people who seek the common good.

Our concern about Groaning of Creation

The creator God gave us the responsibility of the care of the creation. We are asked to "dress and keep" it. This is becoming all the more relevant to our age of massive destruction to the environment and the fatal endangering of all life on earth. We have now come to recognise the deep interconnections and interdependence between human life and all other forms of life on earth. We also realise that human activity can change the delicate natural ecological balance of our small planet earth for the worse. Global warming and climate change, obviously related to the excessive emission of carbon from human industrial activity, burning of fossil fuels and the pervasive consumerist life-style are now visibly affecting all parts of the world. Inexorable human greed continues to destroy forests, pollute rivers and deplete ground water and all other non-renewable resources.

Religious Tolerance: Nurturing Interfaith Harmony

This has become a great necessity for human survival. We all hoped that 21st century would bring in an age of peace and justice in our world which is suffering from increasing violence and conflicts. However, we are deeply disappointed. The spectre of fundamentalism, with its characteristic exclusivism and aggressiveness, is on the rise in several world religions that were once considered peace loving.



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We are witnessing the volatile situation in the middle eastern countries. In this context, we call upon all Christians to demonstrate the forgiveness and reconciling power of the cross of Christ, in their relationship with other religions. We have to humble ourselves and give up our superiority attitude. A good principle in inter-religious relationship is: accept whatever we can from other faith traditions and respect those things we are unable to accept. Learning about the faiths of our neighbours is an essential requirement of evangelism. We should not address people of other faiths as “non-Christians” , but address them as fellow pilgrims. In this way let us make our evangelism really inclusive.

The Church of North India – The Mission Priority of Evangelism & Discipleship.

In the last two Synod's the Church of North India had taken the CNI priorities as Mission & Evangelism and Discipleship. In this context I would like you to know that Bishop, Andrew Rathore has sacrificed the Episcopal Ministry and joined the CNI Programme department as Mission Evangelism Director.

We had a very big Evangelistic Conference, “The Festival of Peace” in October 2017 in Jabalpur where 50,000 people gathered together and listened to the voice of God.

In the same way in November 2018 the CNI held a big convention “Festival of Peace” in Kandhamal District, under the Diocese of Phulbani where 2,50,000 people gathered together in the name of Evangelism and and listened to the voice of God.

Although that was the place where riots took place and 130 people were brutally killed and many people were forced to leave their homes and live in the jungles as their houses were burnt as well as some people were burnt inside their houses.

In spite of all the suffering that people went through and witnessed during these riots, the Convention took place there itself and was a grand success.

This convention took place to remember the martyrs of Kandhamal and salute those who gave their lives for Christ.

The Church of North India has established a Mission Evangelism Institute of Theology in Batala, Punjab, under the Diocese of Amritsar, where a training programme is conducted every month for all Evangelists, Junior Pastors / presbyters from all CNI Diocese to learn the method of Evangelism.

I request the whole of the Synod of the Church of England to remember this Ministry in your prayers and give full support to continue this witness in India where multi culture, language and strong Hindutva movement prevails.

Conclusion

I must conclude now. Evangelism is the mission imperative of Discipleship. Transforming individuals, communities and nations in the love of Jesus Christ is our singular task. In fulfilling our mission we need to struggle as one body united in the love of Jesus Christ. I invite the Church of England to be accompanying us in this ecumenical journey.

Thank you!

May God bless you all.

The Most Rev. Dr. P. C. Singh



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RESPONSE FROM THE NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT

Dear Members of the Triennial Council of BSI,

I thank God along with you for the great ministry entrusted to us through the Bible Society of India. Now I am standing here to express my gratitude: First, to God who has entrusted me with the new responsibility of the President of the Bible Society of India for the next triennium; and Second, to you all who have expressed your trust and confidence in me for electing me to this position. Next I wish to express gratitude to the outgoing President, other officers and team for their meritorious leadership which they have rendered during the past triennium. This is also the appropriate occasion to welcome the members of the new triennium. I promise that I will render my full commitment and cooperation to serve together as members of one another in the new team. I have already mentioned that it has been a joyful experience to work with Rev. Dr. Mani Chacko and the efficient team. May God continue to bless our common ministry.

Bible for everyone will continue to be the dream which motivates us. We will keep the priorities of the Philadelphia Promise. Of those priorities, our first efforts during this triennium should be for publishing the word of God in at least ten Indian languages where Bible portions are not available now. On the organizational side, we need to focus on the churches which are not the members of BSI even now and enroll them as members. The most important task for us in the local level is to create a renewed interest in young people to love the word of God. We need to take a lesson from the resurgence of other religions. There is an increased effort in those religions to teach their young people their history and faith articles as well as religious observances. There should be a well organized system in all levels of churches and Christian organizations to teach our young people the word of God.

As you know, I believe in servant leadership and it will continue to be so. As a follower of Lord Jesus I know that the only effective leadership is the one which he showed us: "The Son of man came to serve and not to be served". I found this Lord through the word of God. It is my Christian obligation to recommend it to others also. So I will be committed to all efforts of BSI to reach the word of God to as many as possible.

You elected me as the President of BSI. This makes me more and more humble. I will always remember that I began my ministry as an evangelist of National Missionary Society. God gave me many more responsibilities there after about which all of you. I know that I am not worthy of all these. It is only God's grace which is sufficient for me; it is through Christ I can do all things. I request your support and prayers for me and my fellow workers.

Most Rev. Dr. P.C. Singh, Moderator CNI and Bishop of the CNI Diocese of Jabalpur.



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Rev. Bruce Thangadurai

REFLECTIONS ON ASH WEDNESDAY

A high school boy greeted the pastor after the Holy Communion Service saying, "It was good to be here. You know pastor, Lent is my favourite season." This may seem a strange thing for anyone for that matter to say that Lent is his favourite season.

The colour of Lent is purple - a sign that it is time for penitence and preparation. Some of us may agree with the words of the school boy that Lent is our favourite season. The reason for this is that we spend much time in the presence of God. It encourages us Christians reach the highest level of devotion and spiritual activity. Anyone who loves the Church must prefer this season which causes the Church to come most alive.

Ash Wednesday gets its name from the practice of placing ashes on the forehead of the faithful as a sign of repentance. There are 40 week days in Lent, plus six Sundays, making forty six days in all. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and is a period of special devotion, meditation and consecration. This season provides us with a most desirable opportunity to take account of the state of our soul, and seek a little quietness in the hope of understanding clearly the meaning of life. In this busy hi-tech world we rarely get time to spend in the presence of God. This season provides us with time to examine our journey of Christian discipleship and renew our commitment in God's service and witness.

Our Bible passages for reflection are : Matthew 6. 1-6 and 16-18. Here Jesus is speaking to his disciples about the motive behind the deeds of righteousness. He uses 3 illustrations:

- the giving of alms. verses 1-4
- the offering of prayer verses 5-15
- the practice of fasting verses 16-18

In each of these areas which are illustrative of service to others, service to God and personal spiritual discipline, Jesus warns against the desire to get people's appreciation.

Giving: Giving alms was an important part of ancient Judaism. The same practice of giving passed into Christianity. But with every act of giving there is the danger of the selfish motive creeping in. So Jesus says, " Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven". "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

When we give something don't we expect some privileges, name and fame in return? We need to find satisfaction in giving to others without anyone knowing. So do it quietly without announcing your name and the size of your gift. Your father in heaven will reward you.

Praying: Prayer is talking to God and God talking to us. It is a way of communication between us and our heavenly father. This will help us to know the will of God in our life.



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Do we pray so that others will think highly of our spirituality? Do we pray to impress ourselves about our spirituality? Do we pray to get merit in front of God? Jesus deals with all these issues. "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him"

Our affirmation is that our heavenly father knows what we need before we ask. So prayer is not simply informing our God all our needs. It is the act presenting ourselves and pouring out our heart before God. It is clinging to him in faithful dependence.

Fasting: Fasting is observed by almost all religions. It is a spiritual discipline when the faithful deny themselves, restrain themselves from passions and pleasures of life. Fasting is a time to express our humility before God and come closer to God by regular reading of scriptures and spending much time in prayer. Abstaining from food is another important part of fasting. Jesus says that fasting also should not be for showing off and drawing the attention of others. "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you".

Thus our Lord Jesus gives us clear instructions about giving, praying and fasting. He warns us to guard our spiritual devotion from ending up in our self glorification. We have entered into another season of Lent. We are called upon to do self examination, repent about our sins and mend our ways. Spiritually, the ashes which we have put on our forehead serves as a symbol of repentance .

Through all these spiritual exercises Jesus wants us to be true disciples and witnesses of his Gospel. When he is teaching us not to show off before others in giving, praying and fasting, he is asking us to shine before others in another way." You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven". Finally, all glory belongs to God and not to us.

ASH WEDNESDAY

TURN AWAY FROM SIN AND BE FAITHFUL TO THE GOSPEL



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Rev. Subha Venkataram

Meditation: Our Sins begin with refusing to hear God

Matthew 13:10-17

Greetings to you in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! The theme for our meditation is, Our Sins begin with refusing to hear God. Once a tree is planted on the ground, in order to grow, the plant must suck water, and receive sun shine for healthy growth. Here in the Gospel of Matthew we read the parable of the sower. In this passage Jesus is identified as an effective teacher. He has a unique ability to take scenes from everyday life and use them to teach profound spiritual truths. Jesus begins his teaching on the parable of sower. A large crowd has gathered around him on the beach, so gets in to a boat and sits down and starts talking from there. He is speaking about a man taking seeds into a field and casting the seeds upon the earth. These seeds fall upon the ground and land upon different types of soils. Some of the seeds bring forth fruit, other seeds do not. Jesus uses this common story to teach those who hear him about the condition of the human heart. Here we see that the sower is the Holy Spirit, the seed is the Gospel of grace and the soil is the human heart. Basing upon this text we can draw out some valuable insights.

1. The plan of the sower:

The sower goes into his field with the intention of raising a crop and gleaning a harvest. He expects to reap a profit from the crop he is sowing. The best example is that our God, who sent His Son into the world to die and He sends His Spirit into the world to convict lost people of their sins so that he might reap a spiritual harvest to the glory of His name, John 16:8. Here the plan of the sower is to save the lost for his glory. He is the planner for everything. His purpose is to save the lost.

2. The potential of the seed:

Every seed that is sown by the sower has the potential to produce much harvest. One little seed has the potential to multiply itself 30%, 60% and 100%. That is, the seed has the potential to reproduce itself many times over. Such is the seed of the Gospel of grace. When it is sown in a ready heart, it will germinate and reproduce itself over and over again. The seed has the potential to begin small and to produce much. It is worth noting that the seed always changes the ground in which it is planted. When the seed of the Gospel finds a lodging place in a heart that has been plowed by the Word of God and tilled by the grace of God, it will germinate and leave that heart forever changed producing a harvest of spiritual fruit to the glory of God.

3. The problem of the Soils (or) The condition of the Listeners or Hearers.

As the sower sows his seeds, they fall upon four distinct kinds of soils. The conditions of the soil determine its potential for producing a suitable harvest. The seeds fall on a four different places; the road side (the hard soil), the stony soil, the thorny soil and the good soil. People are not attentive to take the Word into their hearts, they refuse to hear the Word of God, and they do not accept or perceive the things which are hidden treasures of their lives. Here Jesus goes on to instruct listeners to perceive the truth instead of just seeing and hearing. In verse 12, Jesus is speaking of the ability to perceive the truth. In verse 14, Jesus teaches the disciples as well as people about the necessity to look beyond to be able to perceive the truth. When we look into the text from Isaiah 1:1-9 we see the Israelites rejecting Isaiah's message. At that time Israel's unwillingness to repent and accept God's forgiveness was the result of its rejection of the Word of God. In the New Testament Jews reject his teaching. It is about them that Jesus speaks, "Though they could hear, they could not understand. though they could see, they could not perceive."



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They are all filled with selfishness. Thus, sin can also be called missing the mark (or) falling short of the glory. Thus sin does begin with our refusal to hear what God has to say to us. Sometimes, we decide that we know better, sometimes we rebel against the commandments of God. Then we fall into sin.

The people who are with him do not pay attention to God. They do not give their time to God rather rebel against him. They do not give their time to God rather they think they are wise. They harden their hearts not to listen the word of God. In all these conditions Jesus brings the Word of Gospel to them by sharing the parable of the Sower. When Jesus begins to say the Parable, the disciples of Jesus come to him and ask, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" Jesus replies that the kingdom has come, yet it has come in secret or veiled form. Only people of faith and commitment are given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God now manifested on earth. Therefore, there are people, who though they hear the parables, do not understand them and perhaps also do not want to understand them, because they do not have no prior commitment to do the will of God. They do not hear when they should be hearing the Word of God. Here the emphasis is that those who are having a firm commitment, are following God's will and obeying the Word of God, will be given the salvation and fullness of life. We are granted God's comfort and strength when we make a firm commitment to follow God's will in our lives.

Jesus says that our hearts should be like a good soil, which brings forth the result 30%, 60%, 100% folds. If we are not doing what we know God wants us to do, we are certainly spiritual slackers. In fact, when we refuse to obey God, we are sinning. There is a quotation from Cindy Hess Kasper, "When we know what God wants us to do, but then we refuse to obey, we're ignoring the voice of the Lord, and sinfully choosing our way". Listen to these challenging and convincing words from the book of James: (4:17) "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins". Let us not be spiritual slackers. Let us overcome all the forces of sin. Let us be ready to hear the Word of God and believe it. Let us deny our self and rely upon the strength of God. Let us be lightened by the word of God by putting it into practice. James 1:23. Let us perceive the truth from the depth of our heart. Then the result he will guide, lead, protect and supply all the things from above whatever we require. This is the teaching of Jesus who wants to show his hidden treasures of kingdom to those who believe in him. Let us ask ourselves, "Am I one who carefully listens to what God has to say to me? or am I like the people in the Gospel who, though they have ears do not hear, and have eyes do not see?" As Psalm 37:5 says, "Commit your way to the Lord and trust in him". May God bless you.





Diocese Of Jabalpur Church Of North India



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL JABALPUR: HISTORY OF 175 YEARS SINCE 1844

The Christ Church began with the visit of the Bishop from Calcutta and the Archdeacon to Jabalpur in January 1841. Bishop Wilson, was also Bishop of India, East Indies, and Australia, and the Archdeacon was the Hon'ble Pratt. The Bishop laid the first stone for the Church which came to be called, "Christ Church".

The building progressed in leaps and bounds and was so advanced that by March 1843 it had begun to be used. Divine services started from April 1844. The main building and tower cost Rs. 2,500/-. The bricks were made with labour of the prisoners.

The first Chaplain, The Revd. F. A. Dawson, was appointed by the Lt. Governor of North West Province, by an Order dated 2nd January 1844. The Revd. Dawson arrived at Jabalpur on 26th February 1844. After his arrival the Vestry costing 749/- was added to the Church building in 1845. The first Church Holy Communion Chalice and patten was ordered from L.M. Lattery of Calcutta, costing Rs. 102.8 annas. The first Church Committee was formed in March 1844 to help the Chaplain in the discharge of his duties. Sunday School was held in the Church Vestry.

In 1869, the Revd. W.B. Drawbridge was appointed as Chaplain. The Revd. Drawbridge was a remarkable man, for in the 4 years of his Chaplaincy, he installed the lectern and brass altar desk at a cost of Rs. 320/-. He also made plans to purchase a bell for the Church. He was responsible for the consecration and opening of the present Mandla Road cemetery. He provided a new organ and added pews capable of seating 78 persons.

In 1870, the Revd. W.B. Drawbridge started the Christ Church Schools with the help of Mr. G.P. Thomas, the Resident Engineer. He also planned to extend the Church.

The Lady Chapel was dedicated on the 17th March 1897 as a Thanks offering. This Chapel was dedicated to St Mary, the virgin. The Tamil Parish, under the Church Missionary Society donated Rs. 500/ for its erection and was using it for Sunday Services.

The Next milestone in the history of Christ Church was the visit of the Metropolitan of India and the Bishop of Calcutta, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Coplestone in November 1902. He was approached about the installation of a marble altar for the church. He gave his consent for the Project. The altar was designed by the superintending Engineer Jeypore State.

The altar was made of white Jeypore marble with shafts of other colours. In the center with the AGNUS DEL is executed in green jade. The altar is 7 ft.6 "long, 3 ft.3" high and 3ft.wide and is extremely beautiful in appearance.

On 15th November 1902, the Metropolitan, Dr. Coplestone held a confirmation service at 8:00 am and on Monday, 17th November 1902, he celebrated Holy Communion in Tamil for the members of the Christ Church Tamil Mission.

The Revd. Kitchin was concerned about the Church of England Tamil Mission, and tried to get a worker to instruct the children in their own mother tongue (Tamil), since this instruction was not available in the Government and mission School. The Chaplain corresponded with the Bishop of Madras through the Metropolitan with a view of securing the services of a Tamil Priest and his wife for evangelistic and School work, but his efforts did not bear fruit.



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In May 1910, the pavement of the Choir sacristy was laid by Mrs. McGuire in memory of her late husband, J. D. McGuire, and a small brass tablet records this fact.

A new organ was heard for the first time in the Church on Sunday 6th December 1903. This was the third organ to find a place in the Church, the earlier two being out of order.

The new pulpit was designed by M/s P. Orr and Sons of Madras. The new pulpit was dedicated on Palm Sunday 1905, by the Bishop. The Bishop's chair was presented by Rev C. J. Palmer and placed in the Church on Christmas Day, 1905.

In January 1906, marble paving was laid around the font and in May 1907 the marble steps and lectern stands were erected in memory of Nora Kunhandt.

From 1st April 1926, the Christ Church Parish took up the responsibility of maintaining their own Chaplain. The Chaplain at that time was the Rev. Can. E. R. Clough. The Rev. Clough seeing the condition of the Parish funds said that economy measures should be taken and also a drive for raising member's contribution should be undertaken.

On May 7th 1920 the Church house bungalow was converted temporarily into the Parsonage for the Chaplain.

The first meeting of the Mothers Union held on 18th July 1934 at the Church House. Mrs. Barton was elected President, Mrs. Churchill was elected Treasurer and Vice President, and Mrs. Walton and Mrs. French were elected Joint Secretaries.

The Rev. G. C. Rogers was invested with Kaiser-e-Hind by the Governor on his visit to Jabalpur in December 1934.

In September, 1935 a small chapel was built in the Christ Church Boys' School by Revd. D. E. J. Earle, as the Christ Church was out of bounds for the boarders during the week. This Chapel still stands today near the entrance of the Christ Church Boys' School.

On 6th August 1935, the foundation was laid for the Parsonage and the contract for the building was given to Mr. Dal Singh. The Parsonage was dedicated on May 31st, 1936. On Whitsunday. The bungalow was occupied by the Chaplain on 1st September 1936. The Chaplain at that time was Revd. D. E. J. Earle. The total cost of the Parsonage was Rs.6000/-.

The Rev S. Wheeler took over as Chaplain on 1st May 1937 and handed over to the Rev J. M. E. Bagley in 1938. The Rev E.H. Ward was Assistant Chaplain from 1942 to 1943. The Rev Canon J.W.H. Johnson was Chaplain from 1944-1951. During this period the Rev G.S. Salisbury and the Rev N. C. Chelvem were Assistant Chaplains.

The Lima Memorial fund was started on 9th May 1939 for poor widows and poor orphans out of the proceeds of the late Miss Edith Lima's will.

The Rev Can. W. N. Mategaonker took over as Chaplain in 1951 until 1955. During this period he was assisted by Deacon J. Clements in 1952 and later on by the Rev Can. N. C. Chelvum in 1955. From 1956-1957 the Ven R.A. Kurian, the Metropolitan's Commissary looked after the Parish, assisted by the Rev N. Whittam. In 1957, the Rev Can. R. Jacob was appointed with special responsibility for outstation areas like Itarsi etc. Rev J.E. Robinson was Chaplain from 1957 to 1958. In 1959, the Chaplain was the Rev A.D. Ince and from 1960 to 1962 the Chaplain was the Rev J. Dela Hoyde. The Rev Can. J.E. Robinson again assumed charge as Chaplain from 1962, which position he held till 1987 when he was called home to rest from his years of faithful service.



Diocese Of Jabalpur Church Of North India



In August 1958, the parish received notification from the Bishop about Church Union proposals in North India. In November 1958, the Lima Memorial Building Project was sanctioned, costing approximately Rs.9,000/-. This building was for Anglican widows of Christ Church Parish. The Lima Memorial was blessed on 28th December 1959.

On 18th April 1970, farewell was given to Bishop and Mrs. J. Sadiq.

The next historic event was the formation of the Church of North India on 29th November 1970, and Christ Church became a Cathedral in 1970 with the formation of the new Jabalpur Diocese, Church of North India. The Bishop S. K. Patro was installed as First Bishop of Jabalpur Diocese, Church of North India on 20th December 1970 at very solemn and impressive service.

On 6th April, 1975 the parish bid farewell to Bishop and Mrs. S. K. Patro. On 12th September 1976, the Rt. Rev Franklin. C. Jonathan was installed as the Second Bishop of Jabalpur Diocese, Church of North India at a very impressive service.

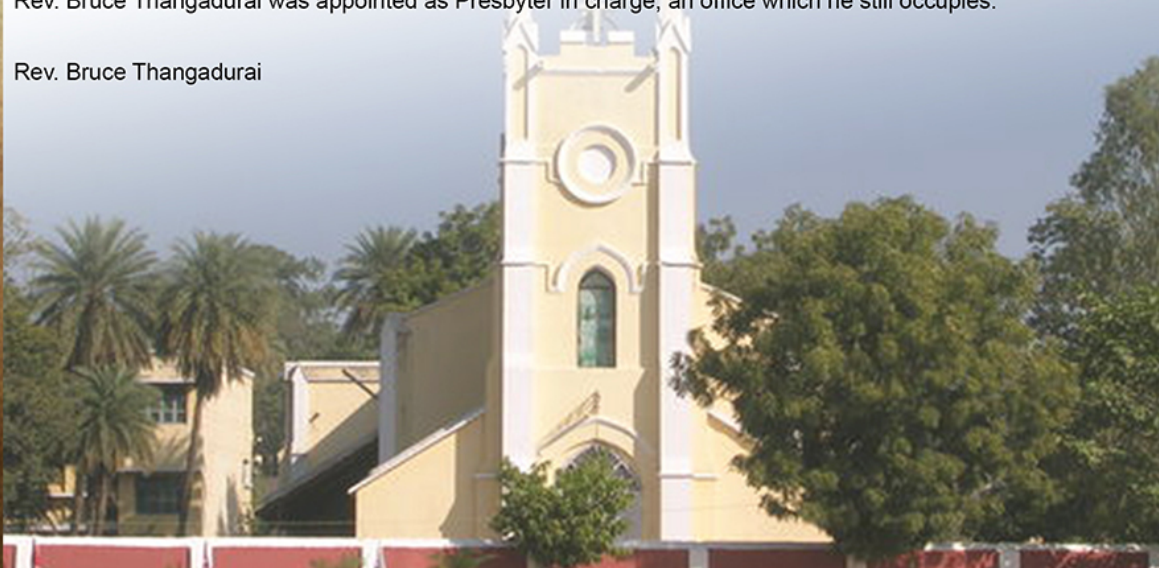
In 1984, Dr. E. C. Daniel took over as Lay Reader from Dr. B. F. Woods. After the Death of Rev Can J. E. Robinson, in 1987, the Rev. E. F. Albert was looking after the parish till a new priest could be found.

On 1st June 1988, the Rev. Marshal Hereford took over as Presbyter in charge of the Christ Church Cathedral. In 1991 a new Yamaha organ was installed from the fund raised by youth, choir and women's Fellowship.

In June 1991 Mr. Pushparaj Daniel Thangadurai was ordained as Deacon and appointed to Christ Church Cathedral with special responsibility for the Tamil Parish. After the retirement of Bishop F. C. Jonathan, in the year 1996 Rt. Rev. Sunil Cak was installed as the Third Bishop of Jabalpur Diocese, Church of North India at a very impressive service held at New Delhi. He Served from 1996 to 2004. In April, 2004 Rt. Rev Dr P. C Singh took charge as the 4th Bishop of the Jabalpur Diocese Church of North India, an office which he still occupies.

When Rev Marshall Hereford left Jabalpur in the year 1995 Rev. P. D. Thangadurai was given the charge of the Christ Church Cathedral where he was the presbyter in charge from 1995-2005. In the year 2005 Rev. Joel Patrick took charge and served as Presbyter in charge from 2005-2008. When Rev Joel Patrick went for his further studies to Chennai, Rev. Arvind Peter took the charge and served from 2008-2012. In the year 2013 Rev. Bruce Thangadurai was appointed as Presbyter in charge, an office which he still occupies.

Rev. Bruce Thangadurai





Diocese Of Jabalpur Church Of North India



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (2019)

Everything is ready (Luke : 14.16 - 24)

This year the World Day of Prayer programme was held on Friday, 1st March at the Christ Church Cathedral, Jabalpur. The day was celebrated jointly by women's groups Diocesan youth, and the Cathedral.

The programme started with the praise and worship led by the Diocesan Youth Choir. At the altar the tables were set according to the meal choices of the people of Slovenia (like fruits bread wine etc). Diocesan women came into the church in a small procession singing to the tunes of Slovenia pop culture. The women very joyfully danced around and they came to a halt at the centre of the church where they had decorated the church with Slovenian banner and they had also made mountains and steams with cardboard so that the church looked like Slovenian fields.

Opening prayer was offered by Rev. Bruce Thangadurai. Then, the D.W.F.C.S. office bearer came up and the ceremony of lighting the lamp took place. While lighting the lamp the women took oath and sang songs on light. The President and office bearer of D.W.F.C.S. and the pastors were also welcomed at this point. The women's fellowship of Christ Church Cathedral, through a short film, made a very fine presentation on the culture, staple food, agriculture and various farming techniques of the people of Slovenia. After that, they also gave a high "thank you" to the women of Slovenia for their utmost hard work.

The Christ Church Cathedral this year is celebrating 175 years of its glorious existence and the women were very happy because they were celebrating the joyous and auspicious occasion with all the women present there. A small history of the Christ Church Cathedral was also read out and everybody was keenly listening to the history.

After that, special programmes were given by churches like Disciples Church, St. Paul's Church, Ghamapur and St. Pauls Church, Gokalpur. Then, a small skit was presented on the 3 Slovenian women and how they dealt with life. The women fellowship of Christ Church Cathedral also presented a skit on the same theme. The skits were liked and appreciated by all present. After that, the word of God was preached by the President of D.W.F.C.S. Mrs. Nora Singh.

The Sermon was on Luke chapter 14 verse 16 to 24. Mrs. Nora Singh explained the parable basing on this. She said that Jesus Christ gave us a path of salvation but we, because of our sins, did not accept that path of righteousness. She also said that Jesus Christ has come to save us and Jesus said that those who will be with him will get eternal life and those who will decline the offer. Jesus will also disown them. She narrated the parable to explain her point.

Once there was a rich merchant holding a feast. He invited all the rich and wise men of the city but all of them declined his invitation. The first one said that he had bought some land and he had to take care of it. The second said that he had bought some bullocks and he had to take care of them. The third said that just then he got married so he could not come. All of the men declined the offer. Listening to this the merchant got very angry and he ordered his servants to go and call bring all the poor people, blind, deaf, dumb and the lame from the streets. All the people came to the merchant's feast and were blessed. The result was that the merchant was blessed by God for he gave food to the people who were overthrown by the society. He gave shelter to the downtrodden.



Diocese Of Jabalpur Church Of North India



Mrs. Nora Singh said that Jesus has come to find the lost people and the people who will give shelter to those who are downtrodden will only get righteous life. She also told the people to be ready for God and she quoted another parable from the scripture, the parable of 10 virgins who went to receive the bridegroom. 5 were prepared and 5 were not prepared for the Lord. She said that we need to be ready in our life like the 5 virgins who were ready with the oil in their lamps.

The Lord our God has given us many chances and he will keep on giving us chances but now the time has come for us to be ready for our Christ. All the women present over there were filled with the holy presence and appreciated the word of God. The programme ended with the vote of thanks and offertory taken by the women of the Christ Church Cathedral. A fellowship dinner was also served and all the women enjoyed the occasion. The programme turned out to be a great blessing for all.





Diocese Of Jabalpur Church Of North India



Christ Church Girls' Senior Secondary School Unit II

Ground Breaking and Laying of the Foundation Stone was held on 3rd April at 11 a.m, on the same day when Christ Church Cathedral, Jabalpur was celebrating 175 years of its monumental ministry. The new campus of the school is located at Vijay Nagar, Jabalpur. The solemn worship service and the reception which was followed were led by the Most Rev Dr. P.C. Singh, Moderator of CNI and the Bishop of the CNI diocese of Jabalpur. In his message he highlighted God's guidance and empowerment in educational ministry. He said that the challenge before the diocese now is to establish professional colleges and hospitals. It is expected that the new school will begin functioning from 2020.

Felicitation messages were offered by Mrs. Nora Singh, manager of the school, Mr. Alwan Masih, General Secretary of CNI Synod, Dr. Sudipta Singh, Mission Secretary of CWM and Mr. Suresh Jacob manager of Christ Church Boys' School. Praise and worship was led by the Girls' school teachers and choir. The liturgy was conducted by The Most Rev. Dr. P. C. Singh, Mrs Nora Singh, Rev. S. Nelson, Rev. Ajay Umesh James, Mrs. L. M. Sathe, Mr. Atul Abraham, Mrs. Ekta Peters, Rev. Lalit Solomon, Ms Neeta Jacob, Mr. Neeraj David, Rev. Bruce Thagadurai and Rev. Subha Venkataram. Mrs Preeti Thangadurai Principal of Christ Church Girls' Senior Secondary School offered the vote of thanks and the function concluded with a fellowship lunch.



"Fountain of knowledge" which is the base ..."
I Ovaschik B. D.

**THE GROUND BREAKING
&
THE FOUNDATION STONE LAID**
for
**CHRIST CHURCH GIRLS' SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL, UNIT
VIJAY NAGAR, JABALPUR**
On Wednesday, 3rd April 2017
In the occasion of 175 years of Christ Church Cathedral
&
celebrating 50 years of existence of the Christ Church School & Hostel
by
THE MOST REV. DR. P. C. SINGH
Moderator, Church of North India, Bishop,
Bishop of Jabalpur Diocese & Chairman,
Board of Education, CNI, Jabalpur Diocese
&
Mrs. NORA SINGH
Manager, Christ Church Girls' Senior Secondary School
In the presence of
Mr. Alwan Masih, General Secretary CNI Synod
Dr. Sudipta Singh, Mission Secretary CWM
Dr. Suresh Jacob, Manager Christ Church Boys' School
Mr. Justice Edwin, Chief Justice, Jabalpur
During the Principality of Mrs. Preeti Thangadurai.



**Diocese Of Jabalpur
Church Of North India**

All I have needed Thy
hand hath provided.
Great is Thy
Faithfulness,
Lord unto me.

175 YEARS CELEBRATION OF CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, JABALPUR

“GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS”

On the occasion of 175 Years of its glorious existence the Christ Church Cathedral, had 5 days of celebration from 30th of March 2019 to 3rd of April 2019. On the 30 th March 2019 the Christ Church Youth Fellowship organized the T7 Inter Church Cricket Tournament in Christ Church Boys Hostel ground. The City Methodist Church won the Inter Church Cricket Tournament. On the 31 st March 2019 the Christ Church Cathedral organized the Musical Concert by “Glorious” Choir from Bangalore. This choir sang beautiful melodies songs, and all the Churches from Jabalpur witnessed this event. On the 1 st April the Christ Church Youth Fellowship organized the Inter Church a Volleyball Tournament. We are happy to inform you that the Christ Church Cathedral won the Inter Church Volleyball Tournament. On the 2nd April the Christ Church Sunday School organized the Inter Church Sunday School Singing and Choreography Competition. On this occasion 17 Churches of the city of Jabalpur participated. In singing Hawabagh Methodist Church stood first and in dancing City Methodist Church. On the 3 rd April there was a Thanksgiving Service along with releasing of a Souvenir to mark the 175 years glorious existence. The Most Rev. Dr. P. C. Singh Moderator of CNI Synod and Bishop of Jabalpur Diocese, Mr. Alwan Masih, General Secretary CNI, Synod, Justice. J. K. Maheshwari, Dr. Sudipta Singh Mission Secretary, CWM, Mr. Joshua Ratnam Chief Functionary SBHS were present and they also dedicated a Monument about the History of the Church.

Rev. Bruce Thangadurai and Rev. Subha Venkataram



Vikas Asha Kendra Medical Checkup Camp



**Diocese Of Jabalpur
Church Of North India**





Diocese Of Jabalpur Church Of North India

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY



On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March, the day of signature of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as UN World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants. The UNGA resolution also designated the CITES Secretariat as the facilitator for the global observance of this special day for wildlife on the UN calendar. World Wildlife Day has now become the most important global annual event dedicated to wildlife.

The incalculable value of wildlife

The animals and plants that live in the wild have an intrinsic value and contributes to the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic aspects of human well-being and sustainable development.

World Wildlife Day is an opportunity to celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora and to raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that conservation provides to people. At the same time, the Day reminds us of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime and human induced reduction of species, which have wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts. Given these various negative effects, Sustainable Development Goal focuses on halting biodiversity loss.

There are plenty of ways you can participate in the celebration of World Wildlife Day. In the past, countries and people around the world have observed the day in various ways. Some activities are big and others are small, but all of them have helped promote awareness about wildlife conservation issues.

Here are some suggestions to get involved:

Get to know the wild life and the challenges they are facing and how you can help. Share what you've learned with your friends and family.

Post on social media and spread the word. Take a photo with the action card and say something about the day.

Remember to use the hashtags #World Wildlife Day follow the official Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts of World Wildlife Day.

Bring World Wildlife Day to the class and talk to students about the day. The youth are the future leaders of wildlife conservation and they deserve a future where we humans live in harmony with wildlife that share the planet with us.

Organize or enter a competition! It can take many forms, for examples, an art competition, a photo competition, a speech competition or why not a World Wildlife Day marathon?

Take the World Wildlife Day to the street, and raise awareness about wildlife protection.

Organize a talk show, a presentation or discussions at your school or university on conservation.

Organize wildlife awareness contest and give awards to the winners.

Courtesy:- Authentic Media.

Save The Wild Life



Photos By M Tully

Celebrating 175 Years Of Christ Church Cathedral

