

Pastoral Letter on Green Diocese Campaign (Harith Varsh 2021) – Diocese of Chanda

Dear Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and My Dear People,

Thy Kingdom Come!

We are towards the end of *Susamachar Goshana Varsh* and we have to confess that we could not do much due to the pandemic Covid-19. However, we resolve to continue the spirit of the same in the forth coming years as it is our mission. Please recall the resolution of *Susamchar Goshana Varsh* (cf. CS Vol. XLII No.6, Nov. – Dec. 2019, pg. 10). They are important and to be taken seriously. As we all know the mission of proclamation cannot be restricted to one year celebration or for a short period – it is ongoing, it is our primary mission, sole mission and life mission. And, by now we are at the threshold of the Green Diocese Campaign 2021 – *Harith Varsh*. With the Spirit of *Susamachar Goshna Varsh*, which is our basic disposition and vocational commitment, we shall enter into the Green Diocese Campaign, striving to establish ‘green campus and clean campus’ in our houses, parishes/stations and institutions.

The axiom of the year is ‘SERVE NATURE, SAVE FUTURE!’ The created ‘cosmos’ is God’s gift to the humankind (Gen. 1&2) and its sustenance and development according to creator’s plan is our offering to God. At the end of each day of creation God found everything was good and after the creation of the human species, God found it was VERY GOOD (Gen. 1:31). Naturally, God invited “the humans” to continue the creative act of God as per God’s plan and made them ‘co-responsible’ in it. So it is our duty to keep the ‘sanctity’ of creation to radiate God’s image to everyone of every generation irrespective differences, distances and disturbances in the created world by the ‘humans’ for centuries. As the crown of creation, it is the duty of the ‘humans’ to keep the cosmos in mutual sustenance, reverence and assistance.

From the creation story delineated in the book of Genesis, we know that the humans by nature is ambitious (Gen. 3:5). The sin deprived the first parents – Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1-22) of their freedom in paradise. The suffering, the misunderstanding, the avarice, the pride, the gluttony fell on the human species. The primeval ‘sanctity’ is blurred, the image and likeness of God is disfigured, and as millenniums passed, its gravity and severity increased by realms and types. The scientific advancements, the architectural developments, the cybernetic growth and the progress in the information technology took its bad effects on the ‘humans’ to its zenith. Today the creation is disfigured and the human solidarity is at stake. The nature started reacting; the flood, the earth quakes, the climate change etc., to some extent are but a few after effects of these human ‘invasions’ on nature. It is now time to reflect, review and revise.

Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si* invites us to care for our “HOME”, the earth. It is our home – a common home. In the 12th century ‘Francis of Assisi’, the mystic saint invited us to reconcile with the nature, God’s creation: “Praise be to you, my Lord through our sister Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us.” For him the nature and everything in nature was his co-creation – ‘siblings’; so he served nature with sincerity and simplicity. He knew by serving nature, one serves God and fellow beings around him and the generations to come. In this context our axiom of the year

serve nature, save future, is relevant and fruit-bearing, accomplishing far-reaching results for everyone, everywhere and for all times.

‘Serve Nature, Save Future’ comprises not only our duty but also realization of God’s plan for each individual in the whole world even for the generations to come! The created world would radiate God’s splendor and by serving the world/nature we serve God – “*Madhava Seva, Manava Seva.*” The nature radiates God’s glory; so one could say: God is glorified when the nature is fully alive in its ‘sanctity.’ So ‘serving nature’ simply means protecting it and preserving it, as per God’s original plan. When ‘the human’ serve nature in the right way, the nature serves ‘the human’ in a better way. It is the law of creation and the humans are called to respect it. Serve nature to the ‘optimum’, save the future to the ‘maximum.’ It is the divine will for the humans in the universe!!!

To make our observance of Green Diocese Campaign, a success, the following are suggested:

1. Do’s and Don’ts for *Harith Varsh* (cf. CS, Nov.-Dec. 2020, Vol. XLIII, pg.)
2. Resolutions for the *Harith Varsh* (cf. CS ref
3. Decalogue for the *Harith Varsh* (cf. CS ref
4. Ten Take Away from *Laudato Si’* (cf. CS ref
5. Synthesis of the encyclical *Laudato Si’* (cf. CS ref

Please, let us resolve to observe it in the best way possible.

I wish, if you could inaugurate the Green Diocese Campus 2021 in any of the following ways, or do it in an appropriate way as you wish:

- i. Give a homily/reflection to the people on its importance.
- ii. Planting a few trees in the campus in peoples’ presence may be good.
- iii. Distribute tree saplings in our parishes/missions/institutions.
- iv. Arrange ecological seminar, painting competition, Quiz etc. to create awareness on environment issues.
- v. More focus on farming culture in the parishes/institutions and in families particularly for the youth and children.
- vi. Exhibition or cultural programmes (dance, street play, group singing etc.) on ecological conservation.

With good wishes
Yours devotedly in Christ



† Ephrem Nariculam
Bishop, Diocese of Chanda