

Homily Rerun: August 20, 2017 ~ Fr. John Britto Antony C.S.C.

Mission Appeal

Diocese of Salem, India



Upon greeting a Jewish Rabi, I thought it would be appropriate to end our greeting by saying “Shalom” to the Rabi. The Rabi was so impressed that I wished him “Peace” that he thought it would also be appropriate to respond with a Catholic response, so he kindly wished me “Hail Mary”.

I am here today at Prince Of Peace to share with you my concerns that are happening in my homeland of Salem, India. The Diocese of Salem, established in 1930, is located in the state of Tamil Nadu in the Southern part of India with 91,000 Catholics out of a population of 5.4 million.

Christians in India are the target of hate crimes that is currently sweeping the country today. With a vicious and vengeful federal government with their extremist Hindu ideology bent on targeting Christians along with the draconian conversion laws are huge hurdles in living out one’s Christian faith today.

To mention a few of the hate crimes that we are dealing with in Salem would include the burning of Christian Churches. The raping of Christian Nuns, and the disfiguring of pregnant Christian women by throwing acid in their faces. Not to mention by the year 2020 Christians will have to convert to Hinduism or face leaving the Country.

Another ongoing problem we are having is the severe drought that has plagued our land for at least the last three years. Upon visiting my homeland recently, I was saddened to see that trees such as “Palm Trees” which are able to handle a drought are dying, because the drought has been going on for so long. With this problem creates more problems such as “FOOD”. The farming communities are struggling because of no water. The monsoons have not blessed us therefore there is no water for watering the crop.

The farming communities are in one of the three categories.

1. They “own” their land and sell their harvest for their profit.
2. They “rent” the land and have to split the profit with the land owner.
3. They own “nothing” and are hired to work the fields for low earnings.

With no water all three categories are frustrated to the point of committing suicide. Over 500 farmers have committed suicide over the past few years.

This is why your donation is in greatest need. No amount is too small. \$5.00 would feed a child for a week. \$10.00 would feed a family for a week. Larger donations would enable us to educate people, and drill needed wells for water. Many women walk many miles a day just to get enough water for that day.

I am so greatly looking forward to sharing many challenges faced by our people in the Diocese of Salem with you and requesting you to keep our mission in your constant prayer.

May your shining faith create ripples across the globe! Thank you! Your brother in Christ

Fr. John Britto Antony C.S.C.