



Prot. No. 0352/2020

18 March 2020

Dear Bishop Stephen Chirappanath, dear Priests, Sisters and Brothers in Italy and other European countries,

The onslaught of COVID-19 has become a matter of great concern for humanity as a whole. As you know the people of many countries are affected by this pandemic. At this time I write to you to express our solidarity with you priests, sisters and brothers who are away from the mother Church in Kerala.

You are almost feeling the situation of a house arrest. You are not able to go outside the house and engage in your ministries or studies as you would desire to do. Anyhow we have to accommodate ourselves to this particular situation created by the corona virus. I need not tell you that this is the time to intensify our spiritual solidarity through the celebration of sacraments especially the Holy *Qurbana* and other common and personal prayers.

The Word of the Lord should give us encouragement to face this crisis situation. 'You are my refuge and fortress, my God, in whom I trust' (Psalm 91:2). We who are in distress should pray for all those who are affected by the disease and those who are in anxiety and fear.

I had written earlier a letter to all the people who are in *diaspora* especially in Gulf countries, Europe and Singapore. Each one of you should strengthen our faithful in all the ways possible. Let us abide by the counsels given by the Holy Father and the directions of the civil authorities. This is the time of purification for the Church and the society and our personal sanctification.

Dear Reverend Fathers, Sisters and Brothers, please be assured of my personal prayers and the prayers of Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal and all the members of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia in Kakkanad. In all our Eucharistic celebrations, in the Liturgy of the Hours and in the daily Eucharistic adoration we are intensely praying for all the corona virus affected people.

In India the spread of the Corona virus is much less than the other countries like China, Italy, Iran, Spain Germany and France. Only four people have so far died in India due to this virus. The Church and the governments in India are taking very effective measures which are proven successful.



The President of India has said that ‘although we keep a distance from one another due to the corona virus, let our hearts be united’. So also let us all be united in our hearts and minds entrusting ourselves and the rest of humanity in the protection of the Lord. May, Mary Mother of Christ intercede for us in this great calamity affecting the Church and the humanity as a whole.

May God bless you!

Yours cordially in Christ,



George Cardinal Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church