**Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception**

**Dear Friends in Jesus Christ**

As we are on the 18th Sunday of ordinary time the Gospel passage that we reflect (Mt14:13-21) is one of the passage that welcome the sharing approach is sanctifying through Body and Blood of Christ ie.,Eucharist which is broken for all.

 Once, a fanatic young man was searching for the truth concerning GOD. On his way he asked the birds, trees and animals: ‘my dear friends, would you please tell me something about God?’ Whenever and wherever he went he asked the same question. At last this crazy man found an old woman along with the children sitting on a broken bench. He asked the same: ‘Mother, tell me something about God’. The old lady looked at him gladly, and took a piece of bread from the bag and gave it to the child who was sitting beside her. That child passed the bread to the other child, and that boy passed the bread to the next, and next to the next, while passing the bread among the kids the bread doubled. At the end everybody had a handful of bread, lifted it and said all together: ‘Our Father is our Bread’. This crazy man realized that his God is his Bread, the Spiritual Bread. He looked at the old lady and children said: “you are also my bread, the part of my spiritual bread and I too”. While going back, he saw the birds, animals and trees and he cried aloud to the nature and sang: ‘sister moon, brother sun, you are also my bread, the part of my spiritual bread’. That is none other than, St Francis of Assisi. We are also called to be the bread, the part of God’s spiritual body, which is to be broken for all.

Dear friends, we know that bread is a type of food. Without bread or rice in our context we cannot live. Bread is one of the 3 basic necessities of human needs along with cloth and shelter. One of the preoccupations of the people today is food. For some, the worry is ‘from where will we get our next meal?’ for others, the choices of food: what type of meal shall I have next?

The Bible also depicts the importance of ‘the bread’: Jesus fed Five Thousand with bread (Mt 14,Jn 6). And in OT (Exodus 16: 4)- The Lord said to Moses: ‘I am going to rain bread from heaven’. God provided bread to Elijah through ravens (1King 17: 6). All these passages show that God had concern for the hunger and thirst. At the temptation of Jesus, devil wanted Jesus to make stones into bread. But Jesus the Source of Bread, who born in the House of Bread- ‘Bethlehem’, was not hungry for the physical bread, rather for the spiritual. Therefore he said: ‘Do not work for the food that is perishable, but for the food that endures for eternal life.

Bread has 2 aspects: spiritual and physical. Bread / food can satisfy our physical and spiritual hunger. Jesus says- “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hunger and he who believes in me will never be thirsty” (Jn 6:35). Yes, bread by itself has to broken. Jesus the broken bread is the model for us to become the bread which is to be broken. It has to be baked and it has to undergo sufferings. In the similar way, If we take up the cross and accept sufferings from within and without, we become the true bread of life for others.

Jesus is the bread of life. Jesus is present in this Blessed Sacrament. He tells us the same. My dear friends, everybody should say ‘I am your bread of life’. This bread of life can be our good words or encouragement, appreciation, help, trust, prayer, charity, etc... Even if you are broken hearted, Jesus, the broken bread, needs you to be a broken bread to fill the hunger and thirst of others.

At the last supper, on the table there were many breads but Jesus took only one bread and said: “This is my body which will be given up for you”, and he shared it with all…. let us think that, this world has many bread. And we all are breads on the table of Jesus, but Can I become that **one transformed bread**, which Jesus wants to take at the last supper? Am I ready to become that bread to be broken for everybody and life giving source to the world? May this mission preaching become an occasion to share and help to bring poor children to Jesus who is Bread of life.

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I am also glad to share with you the story of CFIC children’s mission in the world. If you are wondering what is CFIC – it is Latin acronym for the **Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception** founded by blessed Luigi Maria Monti in Rome, Italy in the year 1857 (Three years after the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception). Today after 163 years, the Congregation has extended its branches to 23 countries in different parts of the world. In North America the members of the order are rendering their services in Canada, United States and Mexico.

The members of the Congregation both priests and lay religious dedicate themselves to the care of the sick, in the caring and education of orphaned, poor and abandoned children. At least some of you might have watched the famous Hollywood movie “*Lion”* - though the story seem some exaggerated there is lot of truth in it. It is the fact that there are millions of less fortunate children still struggling for their daily survival in the world. They don’t have so many big dreams but they dream for good education and for their one and only daily meal; suffering and their hardships the congregation feels that it is very significant and essential to show them the rays of hope in their lives. Through several caring centers in different countries, the congregation takes care of thousands of children who either physically or mentally challenged, poor, abandoned or orphaned. The most where caring centers are in India, the Philippines, South Korea, Cameron, Nigeria and the democratic republic of Congo, Poland, Peru, Brazil and Argentina.

(2) The main centers for the children’s mission in India are first divine providence home, a home for disabled children in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Through the efforts of divine providence home thousands of children have been provided with good education, learned skill to become employed, enabled to earn their livelihood.

Second Sneha Sadhan – house of love – a home for poor abandoned children and needy youth in Bangalore city. Bangalore the IT capital of India is metropolitan city but an unfortunately it has the highest number of child labors. Sneha Sadhan plays a vital and relevant role to protect the rights of the children and extends the caring and sharing hand.

And the third - Emmanuel Clinic - the rehabilitation therapy center for the children in tsunami affected areas. The clinic is opened to adults as well as children, mainly for ongoing rehabilitation and physical therapy to overcome the difficulties so severe of this devastating disaster. We know we are doing very little; of course we have manpower and enthusiasm to do more for these millions of children- the future of humanity. But finance always plays a challenge. Unfortunately we don’t get much support from the government, for we are always inspired by the great generosity of many people like you. Whenever you do anything for this great mission you are helping to make the better life possible for this less privileged and the most neglected children in society.

Your generosity allows us to help thousand more children who are in need of our help and support. Your generous contribution and support for these children’s missions is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated and be a sure of these little innocent children’s prayer support. Thanks and God’s blessing to all.