

Lesson 15

LET US JOIN HANDS FOR BUILDING UP A NEW CREATION



“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne crying, ‘see, the home of God is among the mortals. He will dwell with them, as their God; they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mournings, and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away” (Rev. 21:1-4).

The majority of world population desire and pray for a new world filled with peace and joy. But the competitive spirit and disunity create a world filled with terror and war. Any activity devoid of God cannot give us peace. Christians have the duty to create a new age by giving Jesus, the prince of peace to a world where there is no peace because they have received the salvific message for the whole of humanity (GS 1).

Relevance of Catholic Associations

Organised missionary activity is the human and Christian need of the faithful. It highlights the union of the church with Christ. More effects will be obtained through organised activities than through individual efforts. Activity that brings the talents of the whole community together alone will realise all the goals and protect their interests. Common effort is necessary to exalt human dignity and to develop a sense of values (AA 18).

A Christian should be able to lead a life rooted in values in a world where people are ready to do anything to satisfy selfish desires. World peace cannot be obtained without values like truth, justice, love, etc. If we want to give these values to the world, we, Christians ourselves, have to practice it. We must train posterity also in these values. “A future missionary should get special spiritual and moral discipline. He must have the readiness to take initiative suited to the circumstances, courage to complete the tasks he has already undertaken, strength to persevere even in hardships and patience to resist solitude, tiredness and failure”. (AG-25).

Christians participate in various such organisational activities from childhood onwards to help them to witness and to get this training as per the teachings of the second Vatican council. Some of these associations work for the common missionary goal of the Church. Some others aim at evangelisation and human sanctification. Again, other groups have in mind to fill the material world with Christian spirit. Some others bear witness to Christ by charitable deeds and loving service (AA 19).

Activity- 1. What are the associations in your Parish? Prepare a report on the activities of the association in which you are a member.

Thirubalasaghyam (Holy Childhood)

This association helps to let the mind of children grow in Jesus. The members of this association participate in the missionary activity of the Universal Catholic Church, by accepting the slogan ‘Let children help children’. They participate in this mainly through prayer and contribution. They take care to come together in units to pray, study the word of God and participate in the Holy Mass. Through Thirubalasaghyam we are able to make the children grow, pleasing to God and men like Jesus. We do this through short stories and songs and thus form good values in children.



Little Flower Mission League (C.M.L)

The biggest lay missionary association in Asia is the Mission League. This missionary association started in Bharananganam in 1947 with seventy members to help the missionary activities. Now it renders valuable service in India and outside India. The aims of Mission League are to fulfil the mission which Jesus entrusted with the words “Go to the whole world and preach the Gospel to all creatures” and thus develop missionary spirit in individuals, families, parishes and institutions, help in an organised manner the missionary activities of the whole



world through prayer, contributions, encouraging vocations and good example and develop Christian personality in children. This association with its slogan love, sacrifice, service and suffering nourishes missionary spirit in children and elders.

Christian Life Community (C.L.C)



This association began as Marian Sodality. After II Vatican council, this association is known as Christian Life Community, a world-wide lay association serving the Church and society. Its aim is to build up good Christian community. It tries to be a sign

of salvation, God-experience and unity in society. C.L.C. members aim at Christ-Centred life imitating Bl. Virgin Mary, self-sanctification, salvation of others and the growth of the Church.

Kerala Catholic Students League (K.C.S.L.)



K.C.S.L., the association of Catholic Students in Kerala works in Schools. It has its slogan - Prayer, study and service. Through it, we try to develop in students good manners, good study habits and readiness to work hard. 'Study Circles' known as the heart of K.C.S.L., train the student to

evaluate the problems of the day and to react to them creatively. There is another association 'Catholic Students Movement (C.S.M) for Catholic students in colleges.

K.C.Y.M.

K.C.Y.M. is an association helping to develop the youth, the hope and wealth of the church and society, in Christian spirit. It aims at the fruition of the hope of the Church about the youth which II Vatican Council placed on them. In this association, youth get trained to grow in Christ, the light of the world and to identify themselves with the Church, the body of Christ and live and act accordingly. The slogan of this association is to renew the world through parishes. Through such spirit and activity they will be able to form prayerful, sacrificing, just and courageous Christian youth, devoted to the Church. This association takes initiative to bring together youth who work and study in other states of India outside Kerala, to understand their problems and help them.



A.K.C.C.

All Kerala Catholic Congress is a lay association in Syro-Malabar Church, giving leadership to develop lay commitment and to present Christian conscience in society. Its office bearers will be always lay people. This association works through educated lay persons who have knowledge and the ability to react, to express the stand of the Church. Bishops and priests act as their spiritual directors. This association is keen on abiding by the Church. Its subdivisions work on diocesan, parish levels. It is also very careful to keep up the image of the Church bright and make the voice of the Church clear in times of crises and problems.



Association for Fathers and Mothers



These associations work with the aim of sanctifying families, the home Church. They are known by the names 'Mathrujyothis' and 'Pithruvedi'. Parents are trained here to let the family grow in love and spirit of prayer and to bring up children in the proper way. Besides this, there are many social-service associations also in the Church.

Vincent De Paul



This association was instituted by Bl. Frederick Ossanam in the name of Vincent De Paul, the missionary of the poor. Their main activity is to collect money through secret collection and help the poor. They help to meet the basic needs of the poor in the parish like food, cloth, shelter, etc. There is junior Vincent De Paul Association to develop in them love for the poor and a helping mentality.

Associations like Legion of Mary, Third Order of the Fransiscans, etc. play their own role in the formation of the members of the Church. In addition to those, the Church takes care to share the merciful love of Jesus through jail ministry and to give newness and life to prayer experience through renewal movements.

Family Units

Just like these associations, family units are also helpful for the liveliness and growth of the parish. Family units are formed by several families in the vicinity. Like

the early Christian community, they come together, pray, study and share and thus grow in love. All the members of this group share the joys and sorrows of other families and its members and encourage and console one another. They grow in communion by coming together once in a month and sharing their experiences.

The members of the Church have the obligation to join such associations, get training and be active and produce good fruits because they are instituted for the good bringing up of the children by the mother Church. II Vatican Council teaches that we should give proper importance to these associations as they deserve since they do missionary work and priests, religious and lay people must consider them as significant and encourage such associations (Lay apostolate 21).

The aim of all these associations and community gathering is to sanctify and nourish the Church, the body of Christ. Through them the missionary activity of the Church will become more lively and effective. They become effective when they stand with the local Church and the Parish, the basic structure of the Church. The sons and daughters of the Church are enabled to grow in the life of the faith and become witnesses. They are trained to sanctify the world by their presence in the world and to accept the experiences of life as the providence of God and face them. These associations and movements should be able to co-operate with the Church with this aim. We should take care not to have any rivalry or trends of division among them which may stand in the way of reaching this goal (Lay Apostolate 23).

We must take interest in making use of such platforms which the Church presents for our growth and good of the world and co-operate with them.

Let us Read the Word of God and Meditate

Col. 3:12-17

A Word of God to Remember

“So that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God”. (Col. 1:10)

Let us Pray

Lord Jesus, enable us to work for the good of the world, using properly the opportunities you give us through the Catholic Church.

My Decision

I will actively participate in the association activities of the Parish.

Let us think with the Church

We must give due reverence to all the associations for missionary activity. Depending on the place and time, the hierarchy appreciates certain associations, recommends and decides to institute them in an urgent way. Priests, religious and lay people should consider them as important and encourage them as they can (AA. 21).

Let us find out the answers

1. Write a note on 'The Role of Christians in the Creation of a New Age'.
2. What does II Vatican Council teach about the training to be given to the coming generations ?
3. Which are the associations that help in the training of children ?
How will you participate in their activities ?
4. Explain the role of K.C.Y.M. in the formation of the youth.
5. What is the role of the family units in bringing the Parish to the Spirit of the early Christian community ?

