



MISSIO-AVONA
THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

Silent Night Holy Night

Mission of Hope, Light of Faith



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Empowering Faith, Inspiring Action:
Quarterly digital magazine.





*Happy Christmas
Happy New Year &
Happy Jubilee Year 2025*

H.E BISHOP ALDO BERARDI O.S.S.T
APOSTOLIC VICAR OF NORTHERN ARABIA

Silent Night Holy Night

Mission of Hope, Light of Faith

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Editorial



The mission of the Apostolic Vicariate of the Northern Arabia is titled as *Missio-Avona*. *Missio-Avona* with the blessings of the Our Lady of Arabia begins its first maiden quarterly digital magazine. Through this magazine we will try to provide information regarding: the topics of the Liturgical Seasons, Evangelization, the Pontifical missionary societies, *Missio-Avona's* activities and Formation.

The theme of the first Christmas issue 2024 is “Silent Night-Holy Night”. People live in the war-zones with various crisis and fears. They long for the end of wars and a peaceful living. Christmas season is a time that announces glory to God in the highest and peace on earth. May the story of Jesus’ birth inspire us to become the instrument of peace.

Every Christian is a missionary by baptism. To awaken our missionary zeal the four Pontifical Mission Societies are: 1) Pontifical society for the proclamation of faith, 2) the Pontifical society of holy childhood, 3) the Pontifical society of St. Peter Apostle and 4) the Pontifical missionary Union. These societies invite us all: both children and adults to support the missions of the church and to promote holy vocation through prayer, sacrifice and contribution.

This year we celebrate the Holy Jubilee year 2025. The theme for the jubilee year is “The pilgrims of Hope” (Romans 5:5). The Franciscan Capuchins are the missionaries of Hope to the pilgrim church in the gulf of Arabia since 1950.

This is the first step of the digital magazine. Wishing you all the readers a Merry Christmas and Happy New year 2025. May Jesus inspire us to be the missionaries of Peace and Hope.

Fr. Marcus Fernandes, OFM.Cap.
Delegate of Missio-Avona to PMS



PONTIFICIA OPERA MISSIONALIA



PRAESES

December 2, 2024

Prot. N° 389/2024

Dear Fr. Marcus,

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of your kind letter, Prot. No. M-A/01/President of PMS, dated last November 20, in which you requested that I prepare a brief message for the inaugural issue of the quarterly digital magazine that will be published by Missio-Avona.

I am grateful to you for your commitment as a Delegate of Missio-Avona and for undertaking this initiative, which will undoubtedly contribute to the formation of the faithful on the significance of the missionary dimension of our Catholic faith. It is a great honor for me to have this opportunity to collaborate further with the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) in Northern Arabia. Enclosed you will find the short message I have prepared, which I hope will serve as an introduction to a deeper reflection on the history and charism of our PMS.

Thanking you once again for your dedication and zeal, I take advantage of the occasion to wish you a very blessed season of Advent, as I remain

Yours Sincerely in Christ,

+ **Emilio Nappa**
President

(With attachment)

Rev. Fr. Marcus Fernandes, O.F.M. Cap.

Delegate of Missio-AVONA to the

Pontifical Mission Societies

Awali

BAHRAIN

Message for the first digital magazine of Missio-AVONA

I was especially pleased to hear that Missio-AVONA, recently established as the Delegation of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) in the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia, has undertaken the project of publishing a quarterly digital magazine with the aim of providing faith formation, especially in the context of mission and evangelization, to its readers.

By way of introduction, I would like to begin by noting that there are four Pontifical Mission Societies: the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Society of the Holy Childhood, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle, and the Missionary Union, each with its own specific mission and charism. In 2022, we had the grace of celebrating the bicentennial of the first Society, founded by Blessed Pauline Jaricot, a woman of great human and spiritual depth. The same year marked the centennial of Pope Pius XI's elevation of the first three Societies to the "pontifical" status. Later, in 1956, Pope Pius XII also conferred the title of "pontifical" to the Missionary Union.

Their pontifical status underlines and guarantees their universality. In fact, the Pope expresses his missionary concern for the Church through the work of the Pontifical Mission Societies, which are a worldwide network of prayer and charity at the service of the Holy Father, for a greater awareness and zeal for the *missio ad gentes* among the baptized through prayer, missionary animation, formation, collaboration and personal sacrifice.

In a world marked by materialism, division, egoism, wars, perversion, and the loss even of the most basic human values, the mission of the PMS is more relevant today than ever before. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, Pope Francis makes a strong appeal for "a pastoral and missionary conversion" (EG 25), and encourages the local Churches "to make this missionary impulse ever more focused, generous and fruitful" (EG 30). As we draw near to the upcoming 2025 Jubilee Year, centered on the theme "Pilgrims of Hope", let us return to what is most essential. Let us fix our gaze on Christ and so recover that unperishable hope that no one can take away from us. Only then will we become true missionaries, light and salt of the earth, able to share this true hope with those around us.

I trust that the articles in this magazine will help to inspire prayer and charity for the missions, so that the Gospel may reach the ends of the earth.

May you all have a blessed Advent and a joyful Christmas.

+ Emilio Nappa

*President of the Pontifical Mission Societies
Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization*



النيابة الرسولية لشمال شبه الجزيرة العربية
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE OF NORTHERN ARABIA
BAHRAIN . KUWAIT . QATAR . SAUDI ARABIA



Prof. N.: 144/2024

Date: November 30th, 2024

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the entire team behind this digital magazine. In a world where information is at our fingertips, your publication stands out as a beacon of creativity, insight, and innovation. Through this platform, we have the power to inspire, educate, and connect people in ways that transcend the ordinary.

As we continue to spread the gospel by the command of Jesus, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”* (Matthew 28:19), may the digital magazine grow and flourish, reaching new heights with each issue. As you continue to inspire and inform through the pages of the digital magazine, may your efforts be blessed with success and fulfillment. In today’s rapidly evolving digital landscape, the power to connect, educate, and uplift has never been more profound. Through your work, you are not just creating content but fostering a community that reaches beyond borders, touches lives, and ignites positive change.

May you continue to be a source of inspiration, offering insight, creativity, and valuable perspectives to all who read your magazine. As technology advances, so too does the opportunity to spread knowledge and make an impact in ways that were once unimaginable.

“The word of God is living and active” (Hebrews 4:12) – may it continue to resonate deeply through every page, every article, and every digital interaction. May your journey be filled with growth, creativity, and the courage to embrace new challenges. Best wishes for the continued success of your magazine, and may it continue to shine as a beacon of truth and innovation in the digital world.

As you boldly move forward in this new frontier of evangelization, remember that *“For nothing will be impossible with God”* (Luke 1:37). All the very best and my blessings to your effort.

Yours in Christ,

+ Aldo BERARDI, O.S.S.T.
Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia



CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

*A little child,
A shining star,
A stable rude,
The door ajar.
Yet in that place,
So crude, forlorn,
The Hope of all
The world was born."*

—ANONYMOUS





النيابة الرسولية لشمال شبه الجزيرة العربية
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE OF NORTHERN ARABIA
BAHRAIN . KUWAIT . QATAR . SAUDI ARABIA

Prot. N.: 145/2024

Date: November 30th, 2024

Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ this Christmas, we are reminded of the immense gift of love and grace that was given to us so many years ago. This season is not just a time for celebration, but a time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas; the coming of our Savior into the world. The Bible tells us in Luke 2:10-11, But the angel said to them, *'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.'*

Christmas is more than a celebration of a historical event; it's the joyful realization that God chose to come to us in the humblest way, as a baby, to show us His love and grace. John 3:16 reminds us of this extraordinary love: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* Jesus Christ is a gift to us, the outcome of the love of the Father; a gift of hope, peace, and salvation for all who believe.

Christmas is a time to remember that the joy we feel is not just about the presents we give or receive, but about the presence of Christ in our lives. In a world that often feels uncertain, Jesus brings us peace — a peace that goes beyond understanding and guards our hearts. Let us also remember the power of giving this season. In Acts 20:35, we are reminded by Jesus Himself, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* True joy comes when we share our blessings, whether it's a kind word, a generous gift, or simply being present for someone who needs it. This is the spirit of Christmas — a celebration of love, not just for ourselves but for everyone around us.

As we reflect on this miraculous season, may we open our hearts wide to the love of Christ, and let that love overflow into the lives of those we encounter. Christmas is a time of great joy, for God is with us. And as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, we also look forward with hope to the day when He will return, and all things will be made new.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas filled with the peace, love, and joy that only Christ can bring. May His light shine brightly in your heart today and throughout the coming year.

Yours in Christ,

+ Aldo BERARDI, O.S.S.T.
Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia





Silent Night, the most beautiful and soothing carol, is once again around the corner, reminding us of heavenly peace. This Carol song was written by Fr. Joseph Mohr, a young priest from Austria (1816). After the horrors of the long Napoleonic wars (1803-1815), he admired how beautiful and peaceful the night in his Austrian village had been. This was what inspired him to write the ever-famous Christmas carol, the hymn that, up to this day, brings people peace and comfort from above. The young priest wrote the lyrics and played the guitar himself and sang this beautiful song along with Franz Xavier Gruber, the music composer of the hymn. This carol was performed for the first time in 1818 on Christmas Eve in St. Nicholas Church in Oberdorf, Austria.

Since that day, the world lovingly embraced the song and has won millions of hearts over the years. It has several renditions and has been translated into more than 300 languages and is a staple in churches, towns, shopping malls, and soon. It is equally loved by people of all ages, grown-ups, youth, and children alike. It was even sung on the battlefield of the first world war in 1914 during a short truce on Christmas Eve. The German and British troops sang in one voice, "Silent night, holy night, all is bright, all is calm." And as they sang, the nations stood still and united. It had the power to hold everyone together in peace and harmony.

We are in the 21st century and our wars continue, it creates fear in the lives of the people, it has robbed the peaceful atmosphere in the families and in social life, it has paralyzed the integral growth of each individual. The hope and future of our children in the war zone is wounded by knives, bullets, bombs, missiles and mostly by our weapon of pride to be powerful have destroyed the other. Our children's memories are chaotic ones. Please can you stop and reflect and exchange peace to your brother, family, nation and world. Are you afraid to love and to heal? May shalom [peace] be with you. Let everyone experience the silent night- holy night without fear and war as experienced by Fr. Joseph Mohr in his village after the end of the war.

This Christmas let us take a minute to thank God for all the blessings he has bestowed upon us, big and small, and pray for the little ones all around the world crying for help. May God fill our hearts with peace and put an end to all the battles, the ones within us and around us, and bless us with a Silent Night once again.

Happy Christmas to you and your Family!



Tia Joseph



Celebrating the Spirit of Christmas



ROGY JOSEPH
Coordinator,
Ministry of Catechists

*“Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those
with whom God is pleased.” - Luke 2:14*

Celebrate the Spirit of Christmas with Our Wonderful Catechists & Children!
Greetings, my friends!

The holiday season is almost here, and at our cathedral, we are buzzing with excitement for the upcoming Christmas celebrations! This year, we have a lot to be thankful for, especially the blessings and guidance we’ve received in our classes. Each week, our amazing catechists work hard to share the teachings of Jesus and his incredible love for all children.

A Symphony of Faith

Imagine our Ministry of Catechists as a beautiful symphony, where every member plays a unique and important part. Our catechists are like passionate performers, shining brightly as they help nurture the spiritual growth of our community. They gather together in meetings that feel like magical brainstorming sessions, sharing ideas, inspiring one another, and creating a supportive atmosphere that helps everyone grow.

Every catechist is not just a teacher; they’re mentors on a special journey, guiding our young learners with care and dedication. They craft lessons that blend tradition with creativity, ensuring that the teachings resonate with everyone. With their enthusiasm, the Cathedral fills with the joyful sounds of engaged learners, all embracing the wonders of faith.



A Creative Christmas Celebration

“This Christmas, the fun will be even more special! Here’s a sneak peek of what we have planned for our festive celebrations:

- **Christmas Party:** Get ready for a jolly good time filled with laughter, music, and delicious treats. We'll come together to celebrate the joy of the season and the spirit of community.
- **Christmas Greeting Card Making Competition:** Unleash your creativity! Like we did last year join us in crafting beautiful greeting cards that spread holiday cheer. Show off your artistic talents and maybe even win a prize!
- **Games Galore:** Join in on fun and exciting games that will bring everyone together.
- **Christmas Tree Decoration:** Let’s make our cathedral sparkle! We’ll decorate our Christmas tree with colorful ornaments, twinkling lights, and handmade decorations, creating a magical atmosphere for all.

Together in Celebration

As we prepare for this joyful season, we’re reminded of the unwavering support from our Cathedral leadership, our Bishop Aldo Berardi, Rector Fr Saji Thomas along with Fr Desideri, Fr. Marcus and Fr Lijo. Their encouragement fuels the passion of our catechists, making it possible for us to share the spirit of Christmas with all of you.

So, get ready to join us in celebrating Christmas filled with joy, love, and community spirit. Let’s make this Christmas season one to remember, as we continue to grow together in faith and friendship!

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!

Christmas with the Office of Care

Christmas harks to us the birth of a redeemer, the Son of God, Jesus Christ. After the sin of disobedience, God the Father was busy sending prophets, kings, and spokespersons, foretelling about the arrival of His Son to save people from the pitfall of debaucheries committed by the first parents. Challenges to find out good and holy parents to bring about Jesus took around thousands of years. God's search ended in the best parents, Joseph and Mary. As narrated in the Holy Scripture, King David's genealogy goes up to Joseph the best watchtower, and an adequate foster father to welcome the Son of God. One of the biggest findings of Christmas is Mother Mary herself – sinless and spotless. She proved worthy to conceive Jesus Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Deceptively, Christmas looks like a story of three individuals – Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. However, it is more like a story of the fulfillment of God's promise to bring his begotten Son, who is the merging of a priest, king, and prophet. God made in His son Jesus making salvation possible. Days related to Christmas speak much about the caring aspects of many people. At the same time, Christmas points towards several things such as traveling through dangerous terrain, escaping from conspiracies, searching for shelter, in the company of the shepherds and angels, the appearance of new stars, and the visitation of three wise men.

Days have passed. Seasons went off to memories. Time is running short of our life's length. We are yet at the threshold of another Christmas spell. Thank you, little Jesus, for expanding our life span amidst the wars and natural calamities to witness your marvelous nativity again.

Christmas is not just about stars, cribs, and carols. It is beyond those rudiments. Christmas invites us to open a big scroll of stories related to the caring aspect of a mother and father, shepherd, cattle, three wise men, and heavenly angels. A long stand of centuries of preparation speaks about the prophecies and journeys of fortune-tellers and spokespersons of God who came one after another enlightening the minds of people. On Christmas eve, Jesus the authority and source of all powers was born to the world, he is the first administrator of all care and concern, affection and love, mentor and tutor of everyone in the world. He came to this world to remove blindness from the minds of the people.

Mental blindness is more treacherous than corporeal sightlessness. In the modern world people mentally go blind. Thus, mental blindness including covetousness, manslaughter, discrimination, confrontation, sense of self, mugging, etc are extensively exercised within the human inhabitants. We are at the peak of such a season. The Holy Father, Pope Francis specially commanded us to pray for some countries that suffering from above mentioned activities. As part of his mission on earth, Jesus the Caretaker manufactured a beautiful umbrella, the Holy Catholic Church to accommodate everyone under it. No matter whether one is a sinner or saint, sick or healthy, good or bad, he or she has a specified place in his lodging. The Catholic Church never looks at our merits, but it's doors are always opened wide to provide somewhere to stay for each son and daughter. The references to all points of these cares end and begin at Christmas.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2025
Fr. Dr. Stephen Kachappilly Cap
Director, Office of Care, AVONA





Do you have a favorite story? I am sure that each of us do have one. We read the same book over and over again until we know the story by heart. Sometimes, we get so excited that the story changes as we cannot wait to reach the exciting parts and in that hurry, we miss the bits that lead us up to the important one.

The Christmas story is no different. When you read the story in the Bible you are sometimes surprised by what you find. Sometimes things get changed all the time when it is acted out in a play. Characters get added to make more parts. The story told in plays ends with Jesus being visited in the manger. Everything is set for a happy ending. However, as the story in the Bible continues, we hear about Herod, who was the King of the land in which Jesus was born. He heard from the Wise men that a new King was to be born and he set out to kill him. While he was trying to find the baby Jesus, Herod ordered the deaths of many babies. So Mary and Joseph fled with Jesus to Egypt, until it was safe to return.

It is terrible to see this part as the part of the story of Jesus' birth. His family were forced to live as what we would now call refugees. We think that the birth of Jesus would be something great, and there would be great celebration with Mary and Joseph staying in luxury as Jesus came into this world. It was not. There was no room at the inn so Mary had to give birth in a stable, a pitiable place for any person to stay in, surrounded by cattle. The story where we see God's great light coming into our world also has darkness in it. Jesus coming to earth did not end the darkness.

But it did point to a time when the darkness would end, as Jesus brought light wherever he went.

It feels like there is a lot of darkness in the world right now. I'm sure that you are worried about the news we see from places like the Holy Land, Yemen, Syria and Lebanon. I'm sure, like me, you pray for peace in those places, and that God will help those who are suffering and those who have had to flee to safety, leaving behind their homes and people they love. Looking around, we see people who have no money, no jobs, no families, no one to be with during this most special time of the year. There is so much sadness around us when there should be joy and celebration at Jesus' birth.

Sometimes, when we think about it, it is hard to know what to do about it. Fortunately, Jesus' life brought light by doing good. He helped those who no one would help, sat with people no one would sit with, and challenged those that caused suffering and injustice. By doing that, he brought light into the world back then, and also pointed to a time when the darkness would finally end.

Can we do the same? Can we be people who bring the light of Christ into the world we live in, and point to that time when the darkness will finally end – by helping those who need help, sitting with those who no one will sit with, and speaking out against those things that cause suffering: like conflict, the climate emergency and homelessness.

Let us look with hope towards the future, with trust in God.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2025



Fr. Nicolson Supreme Bien-Aime

Silent Night-Holy Night
Mission of Hope, Light of Faith



A CHRISTMAS STORY

In Alphabetical Order

I would now like to share a Christmas story with you in the form of the Alphabet.

- A** is for an angel, Gabriel, who began the story with a greeting: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" Luke 1.28, The Message
- B** is for Bethlehem, where our story takes place. People traveled from far and wide to arrive in the city; it was a very busy place.
- C** is for a census (that's a counting of all the people) the reason so many people filled the city of Bethlehem.
- D** is for the donkey that carried a family on their long journey to Bethlehem to be counted.
- E** is for exhausted, that's how everyone felt when they arrived - tired from all the travelling.
- F** is for family: Mary and Joseph and their new baby Jesus, who was born that night in Bethlehem.
- G** is for the Good News about to be shared with all the earth. This is what was said: Scripture Reading: Luke 2.8-16
- H** is for herds, all the animals that were present in the stable, and the flocks of sheep in the field with the shepherds when they heard the good news.
- I** is for our imagination, stirred by this story!
- J** is for joy the excitement and happiness that a new baby, and now, this special night brings.
- K** is for kindness, shown by the innkeeper that night, allowing a tired family to stay in the stable when there was no room in the inn.

L is for the love we share with one another all through the year and especially at Christmas.

M is for the manger, it is usually used to hold food for animals, but this time it held the baby because he had no crib.

N is for Noel, another word for Christmas. It means new birth, that's what happened in our story, and it happens every year.

O is for offering, there were many gifts for the baby; we even have some to share now!

P is for prayer and praise and pondering, all different ways people reacted the amazing thing that happened. We pray and praise and ponder together:

Q is for quiet, the deep peace that Christmas brings - knowing that God is with us.

R is for revelation, God showing us who God is (in a little baby born one night)

S is for one special star that shone bright in the night showing wise ones the way to Jesus.

T is for trust; the confidence we have in God.

U is for unity, all different people brought together tonight to celebrate God's love!

V is for vulnerable, a little child needs to be cared for, protected- that's our job.

W is for wonder- our amazement at the beauty of how much God loves us.

X is for Xmas (abbreviation for Christmas), the x is actually the symbol for Christ - X is the Greek letter chi, the initial letter in the word Christos.

Y is for You! here to celebrate and worship.

Z is for zeal, the passion with which we share the Good News and God's love, tonight.

Finally let me finish by wishing you a very happy Christmas. I pray God's blessing for you and those you love.

Fr. Nicolson Supreme Bien-Aime.



The Sacred Heart Church, Manama- Bahrain is a vibrant church (founded 1939) which continuously gives hope to all walks of life as a Synodal church: in communion, participation and mission. The pilgrim church's faithful share their Christian love, hope and respect to the migrant brothers and sisters as we journey from Home away from Home.

Every year, on December 25th, the Legion of Mary organizes a heartwarming Christmas Day program dedicated to migrant workers and less fortunate individuals from all walks of life. This event extends beyond parishioners, warmly welcoming anyone from the poorer strata of society.

The program serves as a joyous Christmas celebration and is thoughtfully divided into two sessions: the morning session from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., followed by the afternoon session from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Throughout the day, participants enjoy a festive atmosphere filled with love and kindness, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Legion of Mary members, the POSA team (Poor of Saint Anthony), and the energetic Jesus Youth volunteers.

The day begins with a welcome hymn to the Holy Spirit, setting a reverent tone for the celebration. All priests along with Fr. Francis Puvarakkal (the parish priest at present), then blesses all those gathered.

Last year, the event was further honored by the presence of His Excellency Bishop Aldo Berardi, who graced the occasion and mingled freely with the participants, adding a special touch to the celebration.

What makes this program truly special is the selfless dedication of the Legion of Mary members. On this day, they embody a spirit of true humility, serving not as patrons but as servants to those in attendance, ensuring everyone feels welcome and cared for.

The vibrant participation of Jesus Youth further enhanced last year's event with their contributions to entertainment and ushering services. Gifts for the event were generously donated by parish communities during the Dawn Masses, with the Filipino community playing a significant role as major contributors. These gifts were later distributed to all participants, spreading joy and festive cheer.

This beautiful initiative continues to highlight the spirit of giving and unity, bringing smiles to those who need it most. All are cared and made feel at home by the Home away from Home initiatives.

Happy Christmas 2025.



Fr. Francis Puvarakkal OFM. Cap.
Parish Priest
Sacred Heart Church,
Manama-Bahrain



As we step into this New Year, the call for peace in our hearts, homes and world feels more urgent than ever. Amid the chaos and divisions that often surround us, we hold the power to be instruments of change. True peace begins within—by nurturing tranquility in our hearts, we can extend it to those around us. Let us dedicate ourselves to praying for peace—not just locally, but globally—mindful of the struggles faced by countless individuals across the world.

Kindness and generosity are profound forces for good. A single act of kindness can uplift someone's spirit, while generosity—whether through our time, resources, or support—creates a culture of compassion that mirrors Christ's teachings. By choosing to be kind and generous, we spark a chain reaction that inspires others to do the same, helping to build a world grounded in love and understanding.

The Holy Family offers us a timeless example for our own lives. Like St. Joseph, we are called to embrace responsibility and strength, providing security and love for those entrusted to us. Mary's unwavering faith and acceptance of God's plan inspire us to trust His guidance, even in uncertainty. Jesus' teachings on forgiveness remind us that love is an action—a daily choice to be patient, compassionate, and merciful.

Let us nurture our families by fostering environments rooted in love, understanding, and service. Prioritize open communication, celebrate each other's achievements, and stand together through life's challenges. By doing so, we honor the Holy Family and grow in unity and grace.

This New Year, let us recommit ourselves to being channels of peace, kindness and love. Through our actions and words, we can spread Christ's message and bring hope to a world in need. May this year be a journey of personal growth, service to others and deepening faith for us all. Together, let's build a future illuminated by compassion, unity and the light of Christ.

Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed and peaceful New Year

Kuwait Fathers wishing Happy New Year 2025

From HOLY FAMILY CO CATHEDRAL, KUWAIT.





Dear Children

Christmas is around and we are getting ready to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. It is a joyful season: we sing carols, we receive gifts, we give gifts to our friends and visit them. This advent season let us prepare to celebrate the Christmas by preparing a Spiritual and prayerful Christmas to a secret child. What you have to do is as follow:

Step 1: choose a child (secret) who is less fortunate....write his or her name on the this page.

Step 2: Every day pray a Hail Mary to that child.

Step 3: Do one good action and offer it to the child.

Step 4: Every day sacrifice something for that child

Step 5: On Christmas day: take this paper of prayer card decorated with prayer, Sacrifice and action for that child...give a small gift. Tell him that you have prayed for him. Happy Christmas....



Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia (AVONA)
Bishop House, P.O.Box 25362, Awali, Bahrain
Email: cur.missions@avona.org

I am Master/ Miss: _____

I am praying for Master / Miss _____

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15
Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20
Day 21	Day 22	Day 23	Day 24	





The Pontifical
Mission Societies are
"One Family in Mission"



MISSIO-AVONA
THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES



GROWING IN
GRACE
WALKING IN
FAITH



MESSAGE

The mission of the Church is at the heart of its identity and purpose. It is rooted in the Great Commission given by Jesus Christ: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). This divine mandate calls us to spread the Gospel, witness to the love of Christ. We are all called to be missionaries by our vocation and our mission involves evangelization. The Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia stands as a beacon of hope through our mission in the Gulf region, a community where God’s love is made tangible through our actions and words. Therefore, this initiation by our Vicariate is all the more relevant and important. Our Vicariate provides a spiritual home where believers



Bishop Aldo Berardi O.S.S.T.

Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia

are encouraged, equipped, and sent forth to fulfill their unique vocations in the world. As we embrace this mission, let us be inspired by the Holy Spirit, work in unity, and strive to build a world that reflects God’s kingdom of love, justice, and peace.

+ Aldo BERARDI, O.S.S.T.

Apostolic Vicar of Northern Arabia

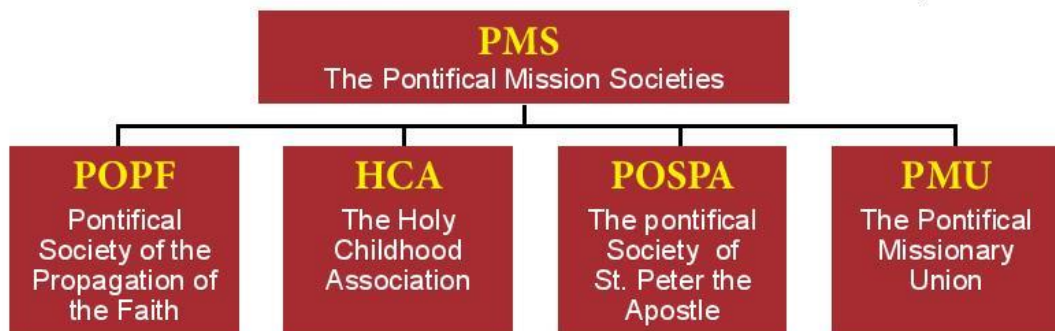
The Pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature (cf. Ad Gentes 2). Thus H.E. Aldo Berardi, O.S.S.T. the Apostolic Vicar of the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia has taken the initiative to promote the missionary zeal among his faithful. (cf. Ad Gentes 38).

In the vicariate he introduced the Pontifical Missionary Societies through the formation of the priests by inviting Fr. Dinh Anh Nhue Nguyen, the General secretary of Pontifical Missionary Union in October 2023. From there he took a step forward by welcoming Sr. Roberta Tremarelli, the General secretary

to Pontifical Holy Childhood Society in January 2024 and who in turn gave the sessions to the catechists in the Cathedral, Awali and the Sacred Heart Church, Manama. In the same month, our Bishop proposed a delegate in the person of , Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM Cap. for the formation course at CIAM in Rome representing AVONA in the month of April 2024. Now our vicariate is getting geared up to open the mission of the Holy Childhood Society.

Oh, Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Arabia, the first missionary of the Word of God, help us in our mission. Pray for us.

THE FOUR SOCIETIES OF PMS



Pontifical Society for the Propagation of Faith (POPF)



Founder: Pauline Mary Jaricot from Lyons in France started in 1816, but officially founded on 3rd May 1822. After hundred years in 1922 Pope Pius XI declared the society- as Pontifical.

Inspiration: During Napoleon regime (1804-1815) Foreign Missions of Paris managed to send only two missionaries to far east. So the inspiration was born to support missions.

Plan: to form groups of ten persons into circles, each of which would organize another group of Ten.

Each member was expected to make a weekly offerings and pray daily for the missions. The first collection in 1822 was sent in the mission of China.

Mission Sunday: 2nd Last Sunday of October. Two- Purposes:

1. Support mission through prayer.
2. Support mission through contribution.

Holy Childhood Association (HCA)



Founder: Bishop Charles de Forbin- Janson.

Founded in the year 1843-in Nancy diocese, in France. After his mission trip to USA he met his friend Pauline Mary Jaricot and shared his dream – to help

the children in mission. So he appealed the France children to reach out in Love and faith to needy children in mission.

Inspiration: to help Chinese children

Holy Childhood day on 6th January.

Three-Purposes:

1. Children praying for children.
2. Children helping children
3. Children sharing the Gospel with children

POSI in brief, the society of Missionary childhood or of the Holy Childhood, leads children to discover the missionary spirit and teach them to help children of their same age around the world through prayer and small material sacrifices.

Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle (POSPA)



Founder: Jeanne Bigard from Normandy (France). Jean and her mother Stephanie were reading the stories of the missions from the propagation of faith. Thus they were inspired to pray, sacrifice and

provide financial aid to the missionaries to spread the Gospel through the formation of the priest. They helped the Fathers of the Society of Foreign Mission of Paris (MEP). Their first contribution was to build a Church of St. Francis Xavier in Kyoto, Japan.

Founded in 1889. On July 12 1895 Pope Leo XIII granted apostolic blessing to the Society of St. Peter.

Inspiration: to support the indigenous clergy to proclaim the gospel.

Good Shepherd Sunday or vocation Sunday on 4th Sunday of Easter.

Three Purposes:

1. To promote local vocations
2. To support through prayer
3. To help financially.



Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia (AVONA)
Bishop House, P.O.Box 25362, Awali, Bahrain
Email: cur.missions@avona.org

Pontifical Missionary Union (PMU)



Founder: Bl. Paolo Manna is an Italian priest. He had a great desire to be a missionary. He went to Burma and served there for ten years. Due to his sickness he returned back. He thought

his mission was a failure. Later in Rome he became the director of the magazine called "Catholic Mission" Through it he brought the missionary dimension in almost every issue by promoting missionary books, pamphlets, calendars, appeals for missionary vocations and exhortations to pray for missionaries. He promoted the societies of the propagation of faith (POPF) and of Holy childhood (HCA) now Mission Together.

PMU was created on 31st Oct. 1916 with an aim to form and animate the baptized faithful in their missionary responsibility through the pastoral service of Bishops and Priests. The missionary union which he founded received its "Pontifical" title from Pope Pius XII in a 1956 decree.

Motto: "All the church for all the world".



Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM Cap.
Avona's Delegate for PMS
Kingdom of Bahrain

First Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood in AVONA, Manama,



Leading The Way By Example

Mrs. Aldita Da'Costa

The Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood (PSHC) was officially established at Sacred Heart Church in Manama on Friday, 21st June 2024, with a special Holy Mass at 9:45 AM, celebrated by Fr. Victor Prakash, the Spiritual Director. The Mass marked the beginning of a new chapter in the parish's commitment to serving children in need, both locally and internationally.

The children, dressed in white, red or orange T-shirts and black trousers, joyfully waved **Pontifical flags, a symbol of their enthusiasm and unity to be the part of the mission along with Pope. Mrs. Saivitha Corda introduced the Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood to the parishioners, explaining its mission to promote prayer, sacrifice, and charitable actions to assist children who suffer from deprivation.

After the homily, all the children present took a heartfelt pledge to make a difference in the lives of children deprived of happiness and basic necessities. They committed to praying daily, starting with the recitation of one Hail Mary each day. Additionally, the children promised to make personal sacrifices, including collecting a coin over the course of a month—or longer, according to their individual will and ability—with the intention of using the funds to help children in need. These simple yet profound acts of sacrifices are a part of their commitment to living out the Gospel and the values of the Pontifical Society of Childhood.

Following the Holy Mass prayer service was held with the theme, “Let the Children Come to Me” Mt.19:14. The children participated in the service with great devotion, praying for the welfare of children worldwide, especially those suffering from poverty and hardship. The children were also introduced to the founder of the Pontifical Society of Childhood, His Excellency Bishop Charles de Forbin (France), through a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the society’s global mission and its motto. The event concluded with a renewed sense of purpose, inspiring all those present to work together and pray for the wellbeing of all children while supporting the cause of the Pontifical Society of Childhood.

These children are the part of the Pontifical Society of the Holy Childhood. They are supported and guided by their Parish Priest Fr. Francis, Spiritual Assistance Fr. Victor Prakash, Mrs. Aldita the co-ordinator, Sr. Roslyn from the consecrated life and few lay people are part of the animation of the Holy Childhood.



A Missionary: Called To Serve!



Miss. Leoj Neelia
Grade 4

Holy Childhood member writes about a Missionary

A mission is a special job or task given to person or group to achieve a particular goal. Mission can be about many things, like helping people, spreading knowledge or protecting the environment.

A missionary is someone who goes on a mission to share one's beliefs, help others and make the world a better place. They might work in different countries, helping with education, healthcare and community development.

As student, we can contribute to missions by learning about different cultures, being kind and helpful to others and participating in local community service projects. We can also support missions by donating supplies or raising awareness about important causes. Every small effort counts in making a positive impact in the society.

Come and be the part of the Pontifical Society of the Holy Childhood...Let us be the young missionaries of Jesus.



A Little More Like



Sr. Roselyn Thomas A.C.

Wishing everyone all the blessings of Baby Jesus at this Christmas time and a New Year filled with hope and grace.

Jesus is indeed a remarkable and a powerful model for children. His teachings emphasize values such as love, kindness, compassion, humility, and forgiveness, which are universal virtues that can guide children to grow into kind-hearted and empathetic individuals. These principles can help children develop a strong moral compass and a compassionate outlook on life.

Forgiveness is a beautiful virtue that we need to inculcate in children. For St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians 4:32: states "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Only a kind and compassionate person can forgive another person.

Humility, the mother of all virtues, is one, that children need to be taught. In the current days, where self-affirmation takes limelight and 'might is right' is the attitude that is proclaimed loud, humility has very little place for humanity. However, if we want to help children to be a little more like Jesus, we need to teach them this virtue. St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians 2:3 says "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."

Gratitude is a virtue that is swept away gradually from the lives of children and adults. "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). As the culture of 'use and throw' has already crept into the lives of all, we need to make efforts to teach our children this great virtue.

In the Gospel of Matthew (7:12) Jesus gives a Golden Rule: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you". Everyone wants to be loved and cared for. Everyone needs to be understood and supported. Children are the best ones to be taught this attitude of love and care. If our children make this golden rule as rule of their lives, they are truly becoming more like Jesus.

May the words of this hymn "Put A Little More of Jesus In Your Life" inspire all, especially our young generation to be more like Jesus.

**Put A Little More of Jesus In Your Life
The World Will Be A Happy Place
No More Fighting, No More Strife
Everyone Would Have A Smiling Face.**



Infant Jesus the Patron of Pontifical Holy Childhood Society
Pray for us

REPORT

World MISSION Sunday '24

**Go and invite everyone
to the banquet.**

Cf. Matthew 22:9



**Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM. Cap.
Delegate of Missio-Avona to PMS**

The month of October in the Catholic Church is a month of Rosary and Missions. The church reminds its faithful about their missionary vocation. The new office Missio-Avona in the Northern Apostolic Vicariate introduced the Pontifical Mission Societies.


This year the world Mission Sunday 2024 was celebrated on 20th October with the theme: “Go and invite everyone to the banquet” (Mt. 22.9). We in our Northern Vicariate celebrated from 18th-20th October 2024.

The celebration of the mission and Rosary month was begun with a lot of preparation. Every day during the month of October the faithful were asked to pray for the missions and missionaries during their Rosary. The following way the awareness of Mission month was created:

1. The video message on You Tube from H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi.
2. On the First of October St. Theresa of Child Jesus, the Patroness of Missions was celebrated.
3. Through the Pontifical society for the Proclamation of Faith, the foundress of the Society Pauline Marie Jaricot and her spirituality of decimal group system: Prayer and contribution of a penny towards missions was made known to the faithful.
4. A special video was made on the historical facts: First world Mission Sunday, First World Mission Collection and First Papal message for the mission Sunday.

5. The letter of information about the Mission Sunday 2024 was sent to the priests of Avona.
6. Special Liturgy for the Mission- Sunday with the reflection on the message of Pope and the link of the message was provided.
7. Mission Sunday Posters
8. Mission Sunday collection.

Our Apostolic Vicar H.E. Bishop Aldo Berardi gave all his support to awaken the missionary spirit in our Vicariate and Ad Gentes.



WORLD Mission Month

18th-20th October 2024

THEME:

Go and invite everyone to the banquet


The mission for all requires commitment of all

Prayer

Sacrifice & Witness

Contribution

FIRST WEEK



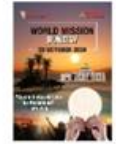
Proclaim Gospel:
Free Jesus who is knocking within you

SECOND WEEK




Go and Invite:
Tirelessly going out with the Gospel Invitation

THIRD WEEK



Come to Banquet:
The marriage feast of Lamb

FOURTH WEEK



Heart of the mission:
Invite everyone.



missio

Today. Tomorrow. Together.

REPORT

The Pitching of the Pontifical Mission Societies in Kuwait Churches (AVONA)

Through the office of Missio-Avona we are creating an awareness of Pontifical Mission Societies. Recently I was in the Church of Kuwait from 8th to 15th of November 2024. The Church in Kuwait is the part of the Apostolic Vicariate of Northern Arabia. There are four churches under our Apostolic Vicariate (Kuwait). They are Our Lady of Arabia Church, Ahmadi, our Lady of Rosary Co-cathedral in the city, St. Therese of the Child Jesus in Salmiya and St. Daniel Camboni in Abassiya. The faithful are especially expatriate (migrants) from different parts of the world and we have different rites: Roman Catholic Latin rite- Syro-Malabar rite, Syro-Malankara rite, Melkite rite, Coptic Catholic, Maronite rite etc.

During my mission trip the people are made aware of the new office of Missio-Avona. It's historical background and basic understanding of each Pontifical Mission Societies was explained to the faithful during the English masses in the Co-Cathedral, Abashiya and Salmiya churches. But specially for the catechism children the Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood was unfolded.

The three mottos of the Holy childhood society were presented in a very simple manner: 1) Children praying for children (one Hail Mary), 2) Children Helping Children and 3) Children sharing Gospel with Children. We would like to implant this spirituality in the young ones so that they become the missionaries of the Gospel, the friends of Jesus.



Fr. Marcus preaches, Fr. Joe SDB, the celebrant of the Holy Eucharist and Children



St. Therese Parish, Salmiya-Kuwait



Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM. Cap, demonstrating the group of 12 spirituality of the Pontifical society of Holy Childhood to the children at Abassiya- in Kuwait



Catechist and Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM. Cap. Sharing the plan of Pontifical Society of Holy Childhood in Avona (Abassiya-Kuwait).

REPORT

Missio-Avona's Awareness in the Church of Qatar

Our Lady of Rosary Catholic Church in Qatar (2011) is a very vibrant church. It is really an Oasis in the desert where people long to quench their spiritual thirst. It's faithful are from different rites and nationalities who come to worship and build a fraternal communion. The priests cater to the faithful with the sacraments, the catechists form the children in faith and the liturgical celebrations are well-organized. It's a beautiful experience to hear that the people are finding their encouragement, spiritual nourishment and a space to connect with God, self and others.

Presentation of Missio-Avona

From 29th of November to 1st of December 2024, I had three days' Missio- Avona campaign in Qatar. The would be Parish Priest Fr. Paul Raj OFM. Cap provided me ample space and opportunities to create an awareness of Missio -Avona in our Apostolic Vicariate.

Historical Presentation

During the first advent Sunday (2024) the sermon was divided into two parts. Firstly, the Word of God was explained in line with Hope from the book of Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan: **The Road of Hope: A Gospel from Prison** and secondly the historical development of traditional mission from the end of the 15th century-the age of colonization (Portugal- *Padroado Real* and Spain- *Padronato Real*) and evangelization by Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans and specially the dawn of the congregation of the Propaganda fide (proclamation of Faith) by His Holiness Pope Gregory XV in the year 1622 was briefly presented in creating Pontifical Mission Societies.

Propaganda Fide, MEP and France leaders

The secular missionaries of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris (MEP) played an important role to carry out the teachings of the propaganda fide: promoting the local vocations, liturgy in local languages, re-inviting the Christians to Catholic faith etc.

They (MEP) served in Asia. While they were facing difficulties in mission, the people of France whole heartedly played an essential role in 19th century (1822) to support the missionaries through prayers (Rosary) and funds. In 1822 the decimal group system under the Society of Proclamation of Faith (Propaganda fide) was founded by Pauline Marie Jaricot, in Lyons-France (to support the missionaries), in 1843 Holy Childhood Association in Nancy-France was founded by bishop Charles Forbin (to support Children) and in 1889 The Society of Saint Peter the Apostles, at Normandy –France was founded by Jeanne Bigard (to support local Vocations).

Response of the people

After the presentation the people's opinion is that they are enriched by the new information and they are now aware of their role in the missionary activities of the church. A sincere appeal was made to pray, to contribute and witness Jesus through their life. An open invitation was extended to allow the children to be the part of the Pontifical Holy Childhood Society to grow in grace and walk in faith.



Catechism children and teachers: listening to the Pontifical Holy Childhood Society presentation in Qatar



The Eucharistic celebration in the Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Qatar
(30th Nov 2024)



Fr. Marcus Fernandes OFM.Cap presents the Pontifical Mission Societies
to the general congregation in Qatar.

Holy Jubilee Year 2025



“



REGARDING EVANGELIZATION IN THE WORLD

Introducing the Jubilee Year 2025

‘Pilgrims of Hope’



During the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord into Heaven, on May 9, 2024, Pope Francis, issued a Declaration of the Celebration of the Jubilee Year 2025 which was publicly read for the first time on the same day after the Evening Prayer. This document provides detailed explanations on how to live the Jubilee Year 2025, ready to draw grace and blessings in life as disciples of Christ Jesus.

The Jubilee Year 2025 is adorned with the theme "Peregrinantes in spem," which means "Pilgrims of Hope." After the storm of the widespread infection of the Coronavirus Disease, COVID-19, along with the turmoil caused by ongoing wars in various parts of the world, this Jubilee is an opportune time to renew faith, hope, and steadfast love, by living as one family, while listening and responding to the cry of Mother Earth and the Cry of the Poor.

Jubilee is a time for repentance calling for inner and ecological conversion. It is a fitting time to be ready to stand firm in protecting and preserving the environment, which is the common home of us all. It is a suitable time for believers to focus on proclaiming and witnessing faith and hope embodied in the service of love for God and Neighbor.

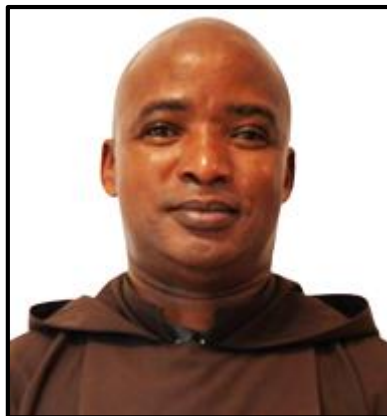
Jubilee is an acceptable time by Almighty God (Isiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-22). during which believers strive to exemplify their gifts and talents for the well-being, development, and benefit of many. The goal is to proclaim and witness faith and joy of the Gospel to the nations. In order to coordinate these celebrations effectively, each diocese and each nation will be required to have a Jubilee Committee responsible for coordinating these celebrations.

The Church Fathers say, Prayer is the life of a new heart; it is a dialogue between the believer and God, the highest expression of benefits in human life. Prayer is a light in the heart of man, giving him a taste of the divine."

Praying is something that requires careful formation, creativity, and culture. Prayer should never become a routine! Therefore, Pope Francis has declared that the Year 2024 will be a year of Prayer as part of the preparations for the Jubilee of the Year 2025. Christians are encouraged to focus on prayer, which is the source of all blessings and graces.

Pope Francis says, the Jubilee should be a time to renew hope after many people have lost hope in life due to difficult circumstances, wars, and social divisions, not to mention the effects of climate change. This pastoral activity strategically aims to restore hope to the people of God.

The declaration serves as is an invitation for each diocese and vicariate, after reading the signs of the times for its people, to prepare a catechesis aimed at helping the faithful fully prepare to enter the gate of the Jubilee, which is Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God. (Jn 10:1-10)



Fr. Desideri Chuwa OFM. Cap

Capuchins : *The Pilgrims of Hope*



The Capuchin Franciscans in the Northern Vicariate of the Gulf: A Legacy of Hope and Ministry

The history of the Capuchin Franciscans in the Northern Vicariate of the Gulf is a testament to the enduring spirit of mission, service, and faith. Since their arrival in the region, the Capuchins have faced various challenges but have also played a vital role in bringing the message of Christ's love and compassion to diverse communities in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain especially to the migrants from various parts of the Catholic world. Today, they are widely regarded as the "Missionaries of Hope" in the Gulf, continuing a tradition of care, outreach, and pastoral presence that has shaped the Catholic community in the region for decades.

The Arrival and Early Ministry

The Capuchin Franciscans first arrived in the Gulf region in the mid-20th century, during a period of significant social and economic transformation. The discovery of oil in the region had begun to attract a wave of migrant workers from various countries, many of whom were Catholics. The Vatican, recognizing the spiritual needs of these new communities, sent missionaries to serve and tend to the growing number of expatriates in the Gulf. The Capuchins, known for their deep commitment to simplicity, poverty, and humility, were called to undertake this mission in 1950, establishing their presence in the Northern Vicariate which encompasses the countries of Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain.

In their early years, the Capuchins focused primarily on providing pastoral care to the Catholic migrant workers who made up a significant portion of the population.

They celebrated Mass, administered the sacraments, and organized religious education programs for children and adults. The communities they served were often living in difficult and harsh conditions, far from their homelands, and the Capuchins provided not just spiritual guidance but a tangible sense of solidarity and companionship in a foreign land.

Challenges Faced

The Capuchins faced numerous challenges in their mission. First and foremost was the challenge of evangelizing in a region with a predominantly Muslim population, where the freedom to publicly practice Christianity was limited. The Gulf countries, while allowing religious tolerance for expatriates, often restricted the public expression of faith. Churches and religious gatherings had to be discreet, and missionary activity had to remain largely behind closed doors. This created a unique set of obstacles for the Capuchins, who were determined to continue their mission without drawing undue attention to their work.

Another significant challenge was the constant movement of migrant workers, which meant that the pastoral needs of the communities were always changing. People came and went, often staying for only a few years before returning to their home countries. This made it difficult to form lasting, stable communities, and the Capuchins had to remain flexible and adaptable in their approach to ministry.

Financial difficulties were another hurdle, as the Capuchins had to rely on the generosity of the local faithful and international donors to support their work. Despite these challenges, the Capuchins were undeterred, and their dedication to the people they served became a source of inspiration to both the expatriate communities and the broader local population.

Missionaries of Hope

In recent decades, the Capuchins have become widely known as the "Missionaries of Hope" in the Northern Vicariate. Their commitment to the well-being of the faithful has expanded beyond just spiritual care to include social services, healthcare, and education. The Capuchins have worked to establish strong, thriving communities where Catholics from all over the world can come together to worship, learn, and support one another.

One of the most significant contributions of the Capuchins in the Gulf has been their focus on interfaith dialogue and fostering mutual understanding between Christians and Muslims. Their pastoral presence, often characterized by humility and respect, has helped build bridges in a region where religious identity is closely tied to social and political life. By focusing on service to others—regardless of their faith—the Capuchins have built a reputation as peacemakers, working to heal divisions and foster harmony in a region often fraught with tensions.

Additionally, the Capuchins have become involved in charitable initiatives, such as providing aid to the poor, organizing medical camps, and offering support to migrant workers facing exploitation or hardship. Their work has transcended the boundaries of religious affiliation, as they have reached out to all those in need, reflecting the compassionate heart of St. Francis of Assisi.

In the present day, the Capuchins continue to serve as a beacon of hope in the Northern Vicariate of the Gulf. They have established parishes and shrines that serve thousands of Catholics across the region, and their ministries remain vital for those who seek solace and strength in an often challenging environment. The Franciscan charism—emphasizing humility, peace, and service to the marginalized—remains at the core of their mission, and their work continues to inspire and uplift the Catholic community in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain.

Today, the Capuchins are not just missionaries in a religious sense, but also missionaries of hope in the social and cultural fabric of the Gulf. Their mission endures, a living witness to the transformative power of faith, love, and service in a region that continues to experience rapid change.



Missionaries of Hope...Pace e Bene



Fr. Michael Fernandes OFM. Cap

MERRY Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

2025

UNTO US
A CHILD
IS BORN.
ISAIAH 9:6



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MISSIO-AVONA
THE PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES