

Family Apostolate Core to Church: Cardinal Ranjith

By Santosh Digal

Negombo, Sri Lanka: Family apostolate is the core to the Church, says Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith of Colombo.

It is true that the mission very often looks difficult. The first apostles found their mission extremely difficult because it was not a rosy situation into which they carried the message. The sufferings that the early Church had to go through, the sufferings of the Apostles themselves were extremely painful; this cross that they had to carry. All of that was difficult. But with confidence in the assurance that God gave them and Jesus gave them they just went and they did whatever they could,” said Cardinal Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo, while leading the Mass on Nov 30, the feast of St. Andrew, the Apostle, for the participants of the eleventh plenary assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC).

“The important thing in all of this therefore is, dear brothers and sisters, as we deliberate these days on our care and concern for our families and also for the Church in Asia, the need for us to be always convinced that the results will not be necessarily to our satisfaction as St. Paul so many times told us that He planted, Apollo watered and God will give the fruits,” he said.

“What we have to do each day in our mission, in our dioceses, in our different countries, in Asia where the context is of the small flock, we have a small flock in the midst of a huge population, is to move on in confidence that the Lord himself will bring to completion what we do. We often forget that it is not we who are going to achieve this; it is God in His own time who will do that,” the cardinal said.

“We see a lot of good things being practiced by in brothers and sisters of the other faiths in Asia the presence of the seeds of the word and many who believe in all these religions, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam. The seed has already been planted by God. Therefore, these are not challenges to us, these are only the way that God is preparing for that moment of evangelization of all people to Him. He has His own plans, we don’t have to break our heads, but what we have to do is, do what we can at this moment and achieve the goals that He has set for us as apostles. The mission of the Church is unending. It has no limits,” he said.

Yes, we may be broken vessels, we may be poor, we may be unable to achieve these targets now, but surely God is able to achieve this, that confidence should make us move along, go forward, and carry out our mission without any fear,” the cardinal said.

The important thing is to have that consciousness, it is the Lord’s work, the Lord’s mission. Therefore, let us have this confidence as we face the huge challenges that come to us in the context of our vast continent and work for it and have confidence in God, he concluded.

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