

# IACA Pilgrimage Newsletter 2015

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Archbishop Filipe Neri  
Rosario Ferrao

Archbishop Filipe Neri Rosario Ferrao was born in 1953 in Goa, India. In 1969 he completed Preparatory Course in Latin and Humanities at the Diocesan Minor Seminary in Goa. He completed Baccalaureate studies in Philosophy and Theology at the National Papal Seminary in Pune, India and was ordained priest on October 28, 1979.

From 1980 to 1986 he was a teaching faculty member at the Diocesan Minor Seminary and then as the Director of Vocation Center

for the Diocesan Clergy. From 1986 and to 1990 he completed Licentiate in Biblical Theology in Rome and Licentiate in Catechetics and Pastoral Theology in Louvain, Belgium. From 1990 to 2004 he served as the Director of the Diocesan Center for Lay Apostolate and Episcopal Vicar for the North Zone

He was ordained Auxiliary Bishop of Goa and Daman on April 10, 1994. On December 12, 2003 Pope John Paul II appointed him Archbishop of Goa and Daman and Patriarch of the East Indies.

Presently, he is a member of the office for Clergy & Religious of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, Vice-President, Conference of the Catholic Bishops of India (Latin Rite) since 2011 and also the Vice-President, Catholic Bishops Conference of India since 2014.

## OUR LADY OF GOOD HEALTH, VAILANKANNI 18<sup>th</sup> Annual National Pilgrimage

Basilica of the National Shrine  
of the Immaculate Conception  
400 Michigan Ave, NE,  
Washington DC 20017  
Saturday, September 5, 2015

### Program

- 1:00 P.M.: Assemble in Memorial Hall (Lower Level)
- 1:30 P.M.: Confessions (Memorial Hall)
- 2:00 P.M.: Rosary – Crypt Church
- 2:30 P.M.: Procession to the Upper Church
- 3:00 P.M.: Holy Mass – Upper Church  
Main Celebrant Most Reverend  
Filipe Neri Rosario Ferrao  
Archbishop of Goa & Daman, India
- 4:15 P.M.: Blessing & Dedication of Children  
– Crypt Church
- 4:50 P.M.: Novena to Our Lady of Good  
Health, Vailankanni
- 5:00 P.M.: Community Reception – Caldwell  
Hall, CUA

# President's Message

Dear Friends,

Greetings! IACA is preparing for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC to be held on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The theme for this year's Pilgrimage's is "Mother Mary, Health of the Sick". The Pilgrimage Mass will be celebrated in English in the Latin Rite and the main celebrant will be the Most Rev. Filipe Neri Rosario Ferrao, Archbishop of Goa and Daman, India. I am pleased to invite you to join us with your family, friends, and neighbors to celebrate this feast.

Every year, this event attracts thousands of devotees from various parts of the country. This is significant evidence of our Mother's healing power and the success of IACA's activities and increased visibility over the past 22 years. IACA represents Catholic immigrants from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka and its main mission is to help South Asian Catholics to come together to share their common spiritual heritage and to pray to Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni to intercede for their needs. IACA also works towards promoting and preserving among the diverse Catholic communities and addressing emergency needs that may arise. This is accomplished by the many programs and events listed in this Newsletter.

We were indeed blessed to experience the power of our prayers. Through our Blessed Mother's intercession, IACA had an outstanding year since the 2014 Pilgrimage and we look forward to continuing the momentum on the progress we have made so far, for which we ask for your support. IACA is a Washington, DC-based organization that is operated solely through the services of volunteers. Any and all costs of activities are supported solely through the generous contributions from our well wishers. I thank you for your generous support and for making IACA a special family of faith and ask you to make this year's Annual Pilgrimage a memorable one with your presence.

God Bless you all.

Agnelo G. Gonsalves

President, IACA

## An Appeal

**Make a Donation:** IACA is a prominent organization in the nation, and consequently the demands and expectations of the members of the Asian Catholic communities have increased over the years. IACA's annual budget exceeds \$20,000.00, including approximately \$12,000.00 in expenses for the 2015 Annual Vailankanni Pilgrimage. We, therefore, ask you to make a special donation in support of the 2015 Pilgrimage. IACA is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization registered in Washington, DC and all donations are deductible for income tax purposes.

**Although some of IACA's activities are held at the National Shrine of the Basilica, IACA cannot solicit or accept any funds within the Shrine's perimeter. IACA, however, will accept donations in cash or checks at the Community Reception after the Pilgrimage at Caldwell Hall, Catholic University of America.**

Therefore, please make your donation check payable to: **IACA, Washington, DC** and mail or give to: Indian American Catholic Association, c/o Mariaselvam Chinnappan, 913 Hamilton Street, NE, Washington, DC 20011.

### For More Information

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Anil D'Souza	410 740 9054	David Pavanal	410 859 3980
Marielena Faria	682 558 9519	Flora Peri	240 478 4085
Manuel Fernandes	571 306 8518	Puthupparampil Scaria	301 404 7530
Dominic & Noela Francis	703 922 5826	Fred & Valeri Semendy	703 764 1450
T.C Geevarghese	301 552 9332	John & May Whittle	301 770 6087

# Events and Programs

**2015 Annual Vailankanni Pilgrimage and Community Reception:** Every September, the Indian American Catholic Association (IACA) holds its Annual National Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. This year's Pilgrimage will be held on Saturday, September 5, 2015 from 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm. The main celebrant for the Pilgrimage Mass will be His Excellency Most Rev. Filipe Neri Rosario Ferrao, Archbishop of Goa and Daman, India.

The Community Reception will be at the Caldwell Hall, Catholic University of America campus, immediately following the conclusion of the Pilgrimage.

The Annual Pilgrimage is a major undertaking for IACA that involves planning and preparation that begins more than a year in advance and requires participation of over 150 volunteers and a strong financial backing from our South Asian Catholic communities. This occasion also demonstrates genuine spirit and unity amongst the diverse cultures and traditions of our volunteers, benefactors and devotees who come together as one to honor our Blessed Mother. IACA is fortunate to be able to attract a vast and diverse pool of talented volunteers who make things look easy while others take on the financial responsibilities. We ask you once again to support the Pilgrimage by volunteering and/or making a financial donation to "IACA, Washington DC" and mail or hand it over to the IACA Treasurer, Mariaselvam Chinnappan. ***Please note that IACA does not get any part of any donations made out to the Shrine or those given during the Mass collections.***

**Monthly Devotions at the Basilica every first Saturday:** Ever since IACA installed the Valankanni Oratory in 1997 at the Basilica, it has been one of the most visited Marian Oratories there. On the first Saturday of every month, IACA organizes the Rosary, Holy Mass and Novena to Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni in the Crypt Church from 4.45 pm to 6.00 pm. Please mark your calendar to join us for the Rosary, Mass and Novena in the Crypt Church of the Basilica every first Saturday. All are welcome.

**Annual Mothers' Day Celebration in Emmitsburg in May:** It has been a tradition for IACA to celebrate Mothers' Day in the month of May on the Sunday following the Mothers' Day at Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, Maryland with Holy Mass at the Grotto of Lourdes, followed by a picnic at the historic Cunningham Falls State Park. Due to the construction of the new National Lourdes Grotto, the last two Mothers Day Masses were held at the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception in the University Campus. Next year's traditional celebration of Mothers' Day will be held on May 15, 2016. Please join us in celebration to honor Our Blessed Mother and all the mothers in our communities. All are welcome.

**Annual Christmas Celebration and General Body Meeting in December:** IACA's Christmas Celebration and Annual General Body Meeting are held in the month of December every year. The program begins with Holy Mass followed by the Annual General Body Meeting and election of the new committee for the following year, carol singing, a Christmas play and other festivities of the season. This year's event will be held on Saturday, December 12, 2015 from 6.30 pm onwards. The time and place will be announced later. Please "save the date" to join us to celebrate the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

First Saturday of each month

Crypt Church  
Basilica of the National Shrine  
400 Michigan Ave, NE  
Washington DC 20017

Rosary, Holy Mass, and  
Novena to Our Lady of Good  
Health

4:30 P.M. – Rosary  
5:00 P.M. – Holy Mass  
5:45 P.M. – Novena

Organized by:  
IACA, Tamils, Keralites, Anglo-  
Indians, Mangaloreans, Goans,  
Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans,  
Pakistanis, and other South Asian  
devotees

# Charitable, Disaster Relief and Social Concerns

As an established religious and charitable organization in the Nation's capital, IACA is regularly challenged to support both religious and charitable causes and matters of importance to our communities. During the past year IACA actively supported the following events:

1. The International Week of Prayer and Fasting at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception which concluded on September 30, 2014.
2. Meeting at the White House in February 2015: IACA, along with other Christian groups, participated in a signature campaign to alert the President before his trip to India about the on-going concerns of Christians in India. When the President addressed these concerns publicly in India, IACA joined other Christians to meet with members of his staff to present a Thank You to the President. Soon after that, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi publicly spoke on the subject and confirmed India is a secular country.
3. The thirteenth annual Marian Pilgrimage organized by the Asian Pacific Catholic Network on May 2, 2015.
4. Hindu-Catholic Dialogue on May 23, 2015 to highlight theological reasons for mutual respect and reverence: In this event, the first of its kind in North America organized jointly by the Vatican, the USCCB, the Archdiocese of Washington, the Diocese of Arlington, and IACA was invited to co-sponsor and publicize this event. Among those who spoke on the Catholic side were: His Eminence Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the current Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church since December 20, 2014; His Eminence Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington; His Excellency Most Rev. Paul S. Loverde, Bishop of Arlington; and Rev. Francis X. Clooney, S.J., Ph.D., Professor of Divinity and Comparative Theology at Harvard University. IACA was represented by ten Executive Committee members and Rev. Russel Raj.
5. Fund raising for disaster relief for the victims of the Nepal earthquake.
6. Sponsoring a monthly banquet for the residents and staff of the "Gift of Peace" – a hospice in Washington, DC run by the Missionaries of Charity.
7. Participating in the Asian Pacific Pastoral Plan Survey conducted by the USCCB, Office of Cultural Diversity, Asian and Pacific Island Affairs Subcommittee.
8. Planning the proposed Sanctuary for Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni at the National Shrine of Lourdes Grotto in Emmitsburg, Maryland. At the December 2014 Annual General Body meeting, a resolution was passed to approve the installation of the Vailankanni statue at the Grotto Shrine. The IACA Executive Committee (EC) has been in communication with the Grotto Director and a spot close to the main entrance has been designated for the statue. The EC is currently working on the feasibility and the costs of this project. Soon after the annual Pilgrimage, IACA will establish a separate committee to oversee this project.



# Volunteers and Membership

**Volunteers Needed:** IACA is supported through the generous donation of time and resources by individuals who believe in the devotion to our Heavenly Mother. We are always looking for individuals to assist in the rosary, novena, choir, music, altar serving and other liturgical functions; and for priests for the first Saturday and other masses organized by IACA. We also need volunteers for website development and management, e-mails lists and addresses databases, printing, labels, communications and fund raising. If you are interested in giving your valuable time, please contact the IACA President, Agnelo Gonsalves at [agg2100@gmail.com](mailto:agg2100@gmail.com)

**Membership:** IACA supports year round devotion to Our Lady of Good Health, Vailankanni. It also supports other religious events and charitable causes every year. These undertakings require a lot of volunteers' time and financial support to meet the incidental administrative expenses. Your annual membership fees help us to meet these expenses. We are always

## INDIAN AMERICAN CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION, Washington, DC

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM for 2015 (Annual Fee: \$20 for families and \$10 for individuals)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of check enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ Years, plus donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions, please contact the IACA President at: [agg2100@gmail.com](mailto:agg2100@gmail.com)

Please make your check payable to: IACA, Washington, DC

And mail it to: Indian American Catholic Association  
c/o Mariaselvam Chinnappan  
913 Hamilton Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20011