

Report of the 20th Annual Meeting of Tamil Nadu Canonists' Association

The meeting began with the invoking of the Holy Spirit, Bible reading, prayer and the lighting of the Kuthuvillakku led by Rev. Frs. Francis Joseph and Johnson. The President Rev. Fr. A. Rayappan welcomed Rev. Fr. Sebastian, the Rector of the St. Paul's Seminary and the participants. In his inaugural address, Fr. Sebastian commended that 'Every law protects the good' but who's good? Where do I stand? Where I sit? Fr. Rayappan replied with his reflection "The greatness of a person is known from how he deals with persons who cannot do any good to him or who cannot retaliate to him". As canonist, he underlined the pastoral aspects of the canon law and emphasized more on the spirit of the law.

Out of 26 registered, 20 participants attended the meeting. The dioceses of Kottar, Chengalpattu, Vellore, Dharmapuri and Ooty had not made their representations.

In the first session, Rev. Fr. Y. Irudayaraj dealt on "Administrative process in Sanctions". The topic covered the need and special nature of Penal Law, medicinal penalties and censures (cc.1331-1333) and expiatory penalties (c.1336); the elements involved in an ecclesiastical offence (cc.1321-1326) and the application of penalties (cc.1341-1353). In short he explained the three parts including the penal Remedies and Penances (cc.1339-1340) on the book on Sanctions. There were lots of interactions, doubts and clarifications in this session. It lasted couple of hours and a fruitful discussion went on without any break till lunch.

The afternoon session was anticipated to 2.30 p.m. Rev. Fr. Xavier Devasagayam explained on "the Deceit and Fraud- A ground of nullity". A summary of the nine recent Rotal sentences' were taken for the study and used as coram. It was a useful material for writing of sentences on the basis of c.1098. Rev. Fr. M.R. Jesu, Sivagangai dealt on the Implications of the Right to Religious Freedom in the context of canon Law and Indian Civil Laws-Practical Applications and Difficulties. He developed his doctoral thesis and applied it relevant in today's context.

At the invitation of the silver jubilant Rev. Fr. M. Philomindas, 15 of us celebrated Holy Mass at 6.30 pm in St. Thomas Church, Irungalur for parishioners and had supper, hoisted by him in view of his silver jubilee of his priesthood. The team was grateful to his hospitality and generosity.

On the Friday 20th January, 2012 at 6.45.am, Rev. Fr. A. Rayappan, President presided over the community celebration of the Holy Eucharist and Rev. Fr. L. Sahayaraj preached the homily.

On the second day, Rev. Fr. Sathia Nesan dealt on the personal Ordinariates for the Anglican Catholics. There was an election after the completion of two terms of the president and the Secretary according to the Statues of the TNCA. Rev. Fr. Alagu Selvan was elected as president of TNCA; there were 14 votes out of 18 votes. Rev. Fr. Norbert was appointed as the secretary. Rev. Fr. M. Philomindas, Treasurer and Fr. Solomon, Vice-President are re-elected to continue for another term. Rev. Fr. Jeyaseelan, SJ dealt with the recent updates on Civil Law in reference with Canon Law.

After the tea break, there were discussions on fixing the dates and topics for the 21st Annual Meeting of the Tamil Nadu Canonists' Association. The proposed dates for the

21st Annual Meeting are 9th and 10th January, 2013 (Wednesday & Thursday). The following are the topics proposed for our next meeting: 1. Exclusion of Bonum Coniugum - Rev. Fr. Y. Irudayaraj, 2. Domestic Violence in the context of the good of the spouses - Rev. Fr. Alagu Selvan, 3. Succession, Inheritance and adoption and civil Updates - Rev. Fr. Jeyaseelan, SJ 4. Church disputes in reference to civil law- Rev. Fr. L. Sahayaraj, 5. Mutual Relationships between Religious and Diocesans - Rev. Fr. M. Philomindas and 6. Canonical Updates - Rev. Fr. A. Alagu Selvan.

Rev. Fr. A. Rayappan uploaded the emerging new penal laws and brought to the light of the understanding with the mind of the Church to the participants. What would be the just penalty will be described in the law itself for the particular offence. It is expected in the near future to be published and added to the canon law.

There was a discussion on marriage cases and other matters prevalent in different dioceses in Tamil Nadu. Rev. Fr. A. Rayappan President of the Association proposed the vote of the thanks. Rev. Fr. S. Pascal Raj and Rev. Fr. Norbert, the new secretary also thanked the gathering and the response of the participants. The meeting came to a close with prayer and hymn to our Lady.

21-01-2012

Rev. Fr. S. Pascal Raj, TNCA-Secretary