



Oswald Cardinal Gracias

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MESSAGE

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever." (Ps 107:1)

It gives me great pleasure to be informed that the Joseph Naik Vaz Institute is offering a Thanksgiving Mass on March 15, 2015, at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, to celebrate the Canonization of St. Joseph Vaz.

On this happy occasion, I extend my warm greetings and good wishes to Bishop Michael Barber, Filomena Saraswati Giese, and to all the priests and faithful gathered for this Mass. You can be assured that I will be close to you all in spirit and prayer.

The Canonization of St. Joseph Vaz was truly a moment of great joy not only for the Church in India and Sri Lanka, but for the Universal Church as well. I felt blessed to have personally witnessed that beautiful moment of his Canonization in Colombo, Sri Lanka, by Pope Francis, in the midst of hundreds of thousands of faithful who had gathered from different parts of the world. Let us truly give thanks to the Lord, as St. Joseph Vaz is today in the company of the Saints in heaven, interceding for us pilgrims on earth. I encourage you to continue your devotion and prayers to St. Joseph Vaz. The life and dedication of St. Joseph Vaz is most inspiring. He was a man ahead of his times and he had already thought of some of the pastoral initiatives suggested by Vatican II. The presence of the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka is due much to his untiring efforts.

While commending the Joseph Naik Vaz Institute to the intercession of St. Joseph Vaz, I gladly invoke God's choicest blessings on each one of you gathered for the Thanksgiving Mass in his honour.

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✠ **Oswald Cardinal Gracias**
Archbishop of Bombay

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President, CCBI
President, FABC

March 7, 2015