

**A CALL TO CHURCHES
TO BE COMMITTED
TO A CAMPAIGN
TO DEFEND DEMOCRACY
&
PRACTICE NON-VIOLENCE
(REMEMBERING AMBEDKAR & GANDHI)**



26th to 30th January, 2018

In continuation to the Church's contribution to and participation in Nation-Building, drawing inspirations from the teachings of Jesus Christ, and our pledge to uphold the principles and values enshrined in the Constitution of India,

AS FREE CITIZENS OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA

WE OBSERVE

THE REPUBLIC DAY

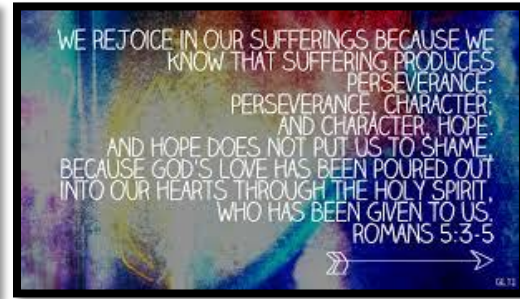
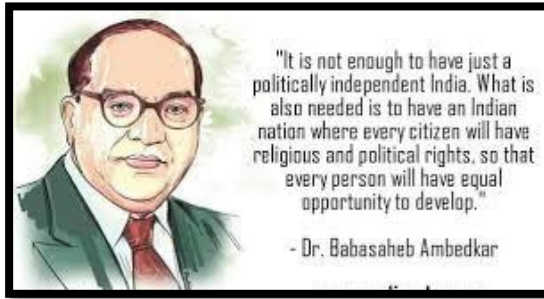
(26th January)

&

THE MARTYR'S DAY

(30th January)

- To uphold and sustain the basic principles enshrined in the Constitution of India;
- To conscientize Christian congregations, and other patriotic citizens in the neighbourhood towards strengthening the secular-democratic polity in the country, and to follow non-violent and peaceful ways and means to do so;
- To unitedly work in the direction of development with justice and, in turn, demonstrate social activism aimed at establishing of a society based on equality, liberty and dignity for all;
- To galvanize our resources – both ideological and institutional – and forge a broad-based alliance to defend democracy, combat communalism and promote peace and justice through parliamentary and non-violent means.

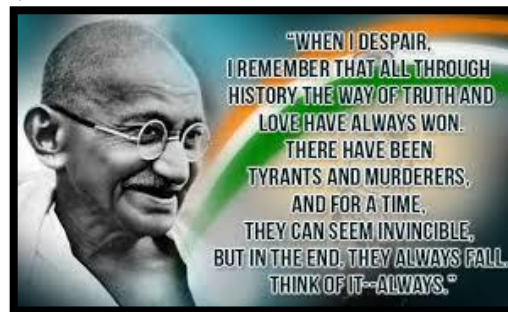


As a first step in this direction, we have to

□ Establish peace and justice, organize people's forum to identify threats and challenges to the secular-socialist-democratic fabric of our polity; create conducive and healthy environment for collectively celebrating national, social and religious events; and recognize the great contribution of great social reformers: and above all that of *Babasaheb Bheemrao Ambedkar* (in the context of Republic Day, his contribution to the drafting of the Constitution of India is widely recognized) and of *Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi* (whose unflinching faith in Non-violence motivated many in India and abroad);

□ To provide substance to the social movements/campaigns and free the country and society from poverty, illiteracy, hunger and starvation, diseases and malnutrition, unemployment, discrimination in all its forms, communal, caste and gender violence and hatred, social evils such as alcoholism/drug addiction etc., child-marriage, child labour, dowry, untouchability, police atrocities and repression, corruption, discrimination, superstition, etc.

Threats looming large over the Indian Democracy have become more real today than ever before; and the country is witnessing an escalation in the violent attacks on minorities, dalits, adivasis, intellectuals, workers, writers, journalists, artists, students and community leaders who raise their voices honestly and express dissent and disagreement.



Proclamations by the fascist and corporate forces to alter the Indian Constitution is part-and-parcel of a grand design to establish autocracy, especially with regard to removing "Socialism" and "Secularism" from the Preamble, and are also definitely designed to change the basic character of the Indian Constitution & Sovereignty of the State and, in turn, pave the way for establishing the 'Hindu Rashtra' in its place.

This uprising against the fascist and corporate agenda is to be viewed in the context of many democratic and peaceful people's movements for justice, freedom, peace, equality and dignity; most of it being led by working class, adivasis, dalits, women and students asserting their fundamental right to Life, Livelihood and Liberty.

The repression and violence unleashed by both State and Non-State Actors on the citizens in general, and on suffering and struggling people in particular, has led to a situation which can definitely be described as the 'undeclared' Emergency Rule in India.

