

Churches Week of Action on Food - 2018

Theme: **Zero Hunger Society: A Missional Agenda**

October 16th is World Food Day. The theme for this year (2018) is *"Zero Hunger World: A Missional Agenda"*. It has been chosen to highlight the role civil societies and faith communities in improving food security and contributing to the eradication of hunger by addressing climate change with the Gospel Values of Justice, Love and Peace.

Despite the economic growth achieved during the last 20 years, India continues to suffer from 'alarming hunger' and acute malnutrition among children below age five. The recently introduced National Food Security Bill tries to address some of these concerns seriously. The Government of India also has to improve the design and supervision of the welfare programmes like the Public Distribution System (PDS) which distributes basic commodities at subsidized cost to the people who live under the poverty line. However, food alone does not solve the problem of underweight children; it needs a multidimensional thrust through the right to health, right to hygiene, right to water and right to live.

Therefore, considering the seriousness of the issue, then Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation, of the National Council of Churches in India joined the World Council of Churches – Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance in launching a National Campaign on "FOOD-JUSTICE for LIFE" in 2012 and initiated missional interventions in promoting 'Life Giving Agriculture' as a commitment to facilitate their constituent members and communities of people to join the campaign to give expression in the entire world to the Gospel of Food-Justice for Life.

The week between, 11 - 17 October is considered as an important week! this week includes the *'International Day of Girl Child'* (11 October), *'International Day for Disaster Reduction'* (13 October), *'International Day for Rural Women'* (15 October), *'World Food Day'* (16 October) and *'International Day for Eradication of Poverty'* (17 October). Hence, the WCC - EAA has declared this week as *"Churches' Week of Action on Food"*. 'This Churches' Week of Action on Food', is a to advocate *Food-justice 'OF' all - Food Justice 'FOR' all*. This is part of the WCC -EAA's global Campaign on 'Food for Life' programme campaign area. The Members of EAA observe this week globally with the their networks and constituencies. The NCCI - Unity and Mission is facilitating the Indian Churches to observe the same for the past 8 years. This year (2018) the entire focus would be on 'Zero Hunger World'.

The National Council of Churches in India has been part of the World Council of Churches - Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance's Churches Week of Action on Food. This year also the NCCI joined the WCC EAA and developed an Order of Worship for the entire week with seven reflections based in the Un special days. Indeed! such 'Prayer' campaign is an urgent necessity to inform the world that food insecurity is sin caused by unjust systems and practices of the society. It is a call the entire society to campaign for just-production, just-consumption, and just-distribution on the basis of needs, necessity and equality along with practicing and promoting socially, environmentally sustainable agriculture. The Gospel imperative is that we all work together, irrespective of caste, creed, faith, ideology and philosophies to change the unjust practices, structures and systems of our society.

We request you to kindly use this worship order and reflection, disseminate and publish the same among your congregations and net-works and encourage them to join the campaign by observing the Week of Action for Food from 11 - 17 October 2018. Also encouraging you to observe Food Justice Sunday on the 14th October 2018 in your respective congregations.

The Campaign envisions "Hunger-free Society of all and Society for All!"

Yours in God's Mission

Most. Rev. Dr. P. C. Singh,  
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Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad,  
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Rev. R. Christopher Rajkumar,  
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## Introduction

The Churches week of Action on Food is a global campaign initiated by the World Council of Churches - Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (WCC - EAA). Through this campaign WCC - EAA invites, the global Ecumenical Movements and Organisations, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) to collectively involve and participate in this week-long campaign for Food-justice.

The week between, 11 - 17 October is considered as an important week! this week includes the 'International Day of Girl Child' (11 October), 'International Day for Disaster Reduction' (13 October), 'International Day for Rural Women' (15 October), 'World Food Day' (16 October) and 'International Day for Eradication of Poverty' (17 October). Hence, the WCC - EAA has declared this week as "Churches' Week of Action on Food". 'This Churches' Week of Action on Food', is a to advocate *Food-justice 'OF' all - Food Justice 'FOR' all*. This is part of the WCC -EAA's global Campaign on 'Food for Life' programme campaign area. The Members of EAA observe this week globally with the their networks and constituencies.

In India, National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) as a member of the WCC - EAA joining the other Participating Organisations of EAA in India, is part of this global campaign and facilitating the Indian Churches, Faith Based and Interfaith Organisations and Community Based Organisations to observe this week. In the recent past there are several congregations and communities meaningfully observe the same.

The United Nation's theme for 2018 World Food Day is "A #ZeroHunger World by 2030 is possible". Therefore the National Council of Churches in India has chosen "Zero Hunger World: A Missional Agenda" as a theme to observe the Churches Week of Action on Food - 2018'.

For this observation, we have developed one order of worship for all 7 days including the Food-Justice Sunday ( 14 October 2018) with 7 different reflections concerning the special days.

These worship resources shall be employed by using as strong advocacy tools for food-justice campaigns. Prayers, liturgies, songs powerful expressions for our faith and spiritual journeys indeed! Since spirituality is the heart of a person's expression of Christian faith, worship becomes a pivotal peak of expression.

We would like to record our sincere thanks to Ms. Jenifa Rani for her creative and theological inputs to the worship orders and to Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwad for his theological inputs to the worship and to the reflections

Since Food-justice is a life and death issue for our country, let us all commit ourselves to engage in this campaign thereby encouraging the constituent members, net-works and congregations to mainstream 'Food Justice for Life' in their respective Mission and Ministerial Agendas.

Your patronage, partnership and participation is solicited to promote the Food-justice 'OF' all - Food-justice 'FOR' all. Come.. join... promote...

Yours Sincerely,

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**National Council of Churches in India and WCC - Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance**  
**Churches Week of Action on Food (11 - 17 October 2018)**

**Theme: Zero Hunger World: A Missional Agenda**

**Common Worship Order for the Entire Week**

Introduction:

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The week between, 11 and 17 October is considered as an important week! This week includes the 'International Day of Girl Child' (11 October), 'International Day for Disaster Reduction' (13 October), 'International Day for Rural Women' (15 October), 'World Food Day' (16 October) and 'International Day for Eradication of Poverty' (17 October). Hence, the WCC - EAA has declared this week as "Churches' Week of Action on Food".

In India, National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) as a member of the WCC - EAA joining the other EAA Members in India, is part of this global campaign and facilitating the Indian Churches, Faith Based and Interfaith Organisations and Community Based Organisations to observe this week. In the recent past, there are several congregations and communities meaningfully observe the same. Therefore, in the name of the Triune God you are welcomed to be part of this global campaign. Come let us commit ourselves to the re-draw the bottom line of gospel affirmation of 'Life in Abundance' as our missional agenda in establishing the Zero Hunger World through our worship, prayers and actions. The theme for this observation is "Zero Hunger World: A Missional Agenda".

**Call to worship:**

Leader: Come let us worship God, the one who sent the life giving bread

**Response: Hoping the abundant life for the hunger**

Leader: Come let us follow the Words of Christ Jesus, that feeds our hunger and quenches the thirst.

**Response: Hoping the restoration of the weak and the Hungry**

Leader: Come let us worship accompanying Spirit, who strives us to establish food-justice

**Response: Hoping the 'kin'dom of God on earth**

## Opening Prayer

Leader: Creator God, Giver of Life, at your banquet of life, we are welcome to join in fellowships and share your generousities with our neighbours, praise you and thank you for all you gifts of life that, enhances our being, presence and purpose in this world. We thank you for this week of action on food, that, calls us to be reminded of the poor, strangers and food-less people and communities who live in our midst in this world.

Grant us the listening ears and obeying hearts to discern your word and message through this worship and reflections to set our missional agenda to work towards 'Zero Hunger World'. May this worship and the time prayer may, nourish our minds, may our spirits receive the energy to seek with them the justice they rightfully deserve by setting, our ministerial and missional visions to building communities of zero-hunger. **Amen**

### **Opening Song / Lyric / Hymn / Chorus: (In Unison)**

*(Please choose an appropriate one for all to sing together).*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving:**

Leader: O God, of Earth and Heavens, source and giver of all things,  
You manifest your infinite presence and goodness  
We give you honour and glory.  
For the sun and the rain,  
For the manifold fruits of our lands and fields:  
For the increase of our herds and flocks,  
We thank you.  
For the enrichment of our souls with divine grace,  
We are grateful.

All: **Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.** *(Ps 103: 2)*

Leader: God of the Farmers and of the harvest,  
Graciously accept us and the fruits of our toil,  
In union with Jesus, your Son,  
As atonement for our sins,  
For the growth of your Church,  
For peace and love in our homes.

All: **Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits** *(Ps 103: 2)*

**Scripture Reading:** *(Please Refer to the Reflection Sessions)*

**Inspirational Talk / Reflection :** *(Refer to the Reflection Sessions - Do it creatively)*  
**Affirmation of Faith:**

We believe in God who loved the world and sent Jesus Christ as the Bread of Life to establish the Zero-hunger World.

We believe in Christ who lived amongst us and fed the hungry through his life and work, who also motivates us to replicate his missional and ministerial interventions towards establishing the zero hunger world.

We believe in Spirit of God, the companion and friend, who advocates for the kingdom of God where there is zero-hunger.

We believe in God's resurrection created world,  
Where all things are fixed, and all creation fits together in vibrant harmonies with our hunger and thirst.

We believe in Community of God that follows the Commandment to love and serve one another in order to establish the reign of God where there is food-justice.

**Confession: (In Unison)**

**In the beginning God created the heavens and earth (Gen 1:1)**

**God you call us to care for the those who struggle for life by challenging the empires, policies and the system that cause, food injustice and insecurity, poverty, malnutrition, draught, migration for food and life. It is pity that, we forgot our calling and joining the empires and system that dis-power the people who live in the edges of the societies as un-employed, malnourished, poor and hungry.**

**Forgive us God of Life, for being and becoming the silent supporters and spectators of these oppressive policies and systems. Forgive us, re-direct us, lead us back to the path that leads to Eden where there is Zero-hunger.**

**Absolution:**

**Assurance of Pardon (Romans 5:5, Hebrews 4:16)**

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The proof of God's amazing love is this: While we were sinners Christ died for us.

Because we have faith in him, we dare to approach God in confidence.

May the absolution of God depart you from all your wrong notions and deeds.

**Amen...**

**Pledge: All**

*God 'OF' all - God 'FOR' all, I/we pledge to work towards the zero-hunger by not wasting food and water and share the surplus in us with the poorest, hungry and the needy.*

*Let me/us not just speak of justice, but let me/us act in just ways.*

*May the oppressed and needy feel justice and equality and experience a world without hunger and poverty though my/our words and deeds. Amen...*

**Time of Intercession:**

Let us tune our hearts and minds to intercede to God who hear and respond to our prayers. May our prayers be the woeful echoes and solidarity cries of those who deprived due to un-just policies and distribution of food. May this time of intercession, make us instruments to act for the zero hunger world. ....

God of All, we pray for the efforts in feeding of the world. Fill the policy makers with your wisdom to ensure the fair and just-share for all. Merciful God...

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

God of all Governments, we commit the inflating economy of our lands that, keeps the poor and needy away from the access and affordability to the available food. Help the Governments to pen-down and articulate the pro-poor economic policies. God of Economy of lives....

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

God our shelter, protect the farmlands and farmers from the urban sprawl and industrial development. Send the plentiful harvests to those who grow crops and raise livestock. Bountiful God....

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

Our God, our fort, we pray for the Church / organisations, feeding (y)our people with word and sacraments. Guide and bless our bishops, leaders, priests, deacons, social workers and development practitioners as they feed Christ's flock with wise teaching. May every celebration of the Eucharist be a rich banquet of your forgiveness and love to show us how to work generously and effectively, reaching out in loving service with emergency food relief and community feasts. Loving God....

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

God of all people, we pray for our country, local community and neighbourhood. Bless our local and street markets, food stores, vegetable vendors. Bless them with needed strength to help us in supplying our needs. God our Blessing...

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

Our God our liberator, we pray for the poor, the hungry and all prisoners, and for the people we love who need your care today. Bring healing, peace and hope to all who suffer due to malnutrition and other related sickness. Grant clean water and nutritious food to the poor in every land. Bring spiritual nourishment to all who are hungry for truth and justice. God of Life...

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

God of all times, we thank you for inviting us in Christ to the feast of the age to come. We thank you for those who have gone before us due to their hunger and starvations. Bring us, with all your saints, to rejoice with you forever. Eternal God.

**All: Hear Our Prayers.**

**Let us say the Lord's Prayer Together"**

**Closing Hymn:**

For the healing of the nations  
Lord we pray with one accord  
For a just and equal sharing  
Of the things that earth affords  
To a life of love in action  
Help us rise and pledge our word

All that kills abundant living  
Let it from the earth be banned:  
Pride of status, race or schooling,  
dogmas that obscure your plan.  
In our common quest for justice  
may we hallow brief life's span.

You, creator God, have written  
Your great name on humankind;  
For our growing in your likeness  
Bring the life of Christ to mind;  
That by our response and service  
Earth its destiny may find

**Benediction:**

May the love of God encourages us to strive for life in fullness for the hunger;  
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ empower us to just-food actions;  
May the fellowship of the Holy Spirit inspire us to expand the 'Table for all';  
May the triune God lead us to the Zero hunger world now and forever. **Amen.**

## **Theme: Churches' Action for Zero Hunger**

### **Day 1 : International Day for the Girl Children**

The United Nations declared October 11 as the International Day for the Girl Child, to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world. This day focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights.

**Theme: Life in Fullness; Nutritious Feeding**

**Bible Portion:** Mark 5: 35 – 43

**Context:** Basic human right and need is food. The intrinsic need for nutritious food is an essential requirement to have means of livelihood. India has the highest population of hunger. In 2014, over 190.7 million people were undernourished in India. Approximately 3.1 million (8500 per day) children die of hunger each year and in 2011 poor nutrition accounted for 45 percent of deaths of children under five. On the one hand, the production of nutritious grains in India is excess and food processing industries providing high nutritious food in varieties and on the other getting the basic affordable nutritious food is still a dream for millions. Four out of ten children in India (nearly 47 million) are not fully attained their human potential because of chronic under nutrition and stunting. As the result of this, they are subjected to chronic diseases, poor learning capacity and so on. The most vulnerable for this is girl child. The statistics of the weeks a girl child is breastfed is less than a baby boy. The malnourished or undernourished girl child is prone to chronic diseases at young age. In India according 2016 statistics, 47% of the adolescent girls are underweight. Good nutrition for the girl child goes in line with SDG 3 element Good health. Although every citizen as an individual and organization has specific responsibilities in regard to the violation of human rights to nutritious food, it is the primary duty of the national governments to ensure nutritious food to all facilitating possible environment that allows people to provide for themselves.

#### **Reflection:**

Jesus' healing of Jairus' daughter is significant traditionally to demonstrate the faith of the Jairus. While he was making request to Jesus to heal his daughter, his household informed him not to trouble Jesus as his daughter is dead. Jesus challenged Jairus to keep his faith and reached his home. The gathering mocked at Jesus' assessment of the girl's condition that she is asleep and not dead. As she is healed, Jesus asked to feed the girl, which is prominent for our theme. Jesus attends his physical need also caring for her life in fullness. The lifeless state of the girl, though having life, depicts the woeful condition of girl children not only in India but around the world. Jesus' request to feed her to strengthen her is the principal message, which throws attention on our context. The reproductive care a girl child is highly depends on the nutritious food from her childhood. The consequences of the family's inability to earn a living and low economic access to sufficient nutritious food completely rested on the girl child or the women of the family affecting their access to nutritious food. Along with the reproductive health, the education of the girl child is affected as their concentration capacity become low because of malnutrition. Taking Jesus as exemplary, we as the faith community have the responsibility to give a life in fullness to the girl child through nutritious feeding.

#### **Points to Pray**

- For the economical and educational opportunities of the girls
- For the safety and good health of women and girl child

## **Day 2 - Theme: Life Giving Agriculture**

**Bible Portion:** Genesis 1: 11

**Context:** Agriculture is the backbone of the Asian land. Asian community is basically an agrarian society. The economy of life of this region in the globe is determined by the agriculture. For Asians agriculture is a tradition, culture and way of life. In this context the modern developmental model of growth or life killing technologies are slowly eliminating the Agriculture from the very life of the societies in India. Agriculture has moved away from the life oriented communities to business-oriented communities. The farming communities are forced to adapt the modern scientific technologies, genetically modified seeds and chemical fertilizers which ends in barren land. It also affects the biodiversity and concentration of the soil, land and water in due course. This causes migration, displacement, draught, and even self killing of farmers as the farm production and the related losses cannot compete with market as well as with the loans that are accumulated for agriculture and farming. Agriculture is on the fringes of its death due to the anti-agriculture, anti-people and anti-society in nature Regulation and Rehabilitation Bills, Food Security Bills and Energy Security Bills, which are purportedly used to harass the farmers and agriculture.

### **Reflection:**

Genesis 1: 11 "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it" is strictly Anti-GMO. Creation history demonstrates that no plants can be produced without seed and the origin of all plants should be by the means of natural provision of seed. It challenges the technological advancements in agricultural productions to produce seeds. "Seed is life. Seeds are creative, potent vessels of nature." Seed as life giving becomes the heart of agriculture. But the commercialization of agriculture has its impact in this issue. The agrochemical industries replaced the naturally provided seeds by Genetically Modified Seeds to preclude the farming community from having seed bank and seedy festive. The genetically modified seeds ruin the richness of the soil which in turn affects the small scale farming communities who use the harvested seed for the replanting at large. All sources for life for the plants to grow are available in the natural resources such as soil, water, sunlight. But life killing scientific advancements is against the natural order/process of agriculture. The divine made life giver is now in the hold of multinational industrialists. The urgent need of this hour to safeguard the life giving agriculture ought to knock the doors the faith communities to open up and save our life and the life of the future generations. Farmers' voice "I am a poor farmer. Industrialists snatched my land in the name of development. Unpredictable weathers, disrupted seasons caused by them failed crops. Now I belong to the class of have-nots. I am peeping into my empty pockets to pay my debts brought by hike of crop prices. Even if I hire a land for farming life-killing technologies thwarts my life-giving agriculture. I am the feeder of the entire world. But is there anyone in the image of God to bring justice to me?"

What kind of justice we are going to make for them?

### **Points to pray**

- For the favourable weather for farming
- To offhand the modern farming technologies
- To get their rights from the state and central government

## **Day 3: International Disaster Reduction Day**

The United Nations has started commemorating the International Day for Disaster Reduction from 1989 to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction. This day makes aware to reduce the exposure to disaster and the life with risks.

### **Theme: Life Enhancing Renewable Energy**

**Bible Portion:** Genesis 2: 6 & 7

**Context:** Renewable energy is the energy obtained from the available natural resources such as sun, water, soil and wind. Non-renewable energy such as Uranium, petroleum, Nuclear energy and Natural Gas, Coal are derived from the Fossil Fuels, which causes environmental pollution. About 90% of the global energy consumption is supplied by the non-renewable sources, which emits pollutants in the air and water and green house gases into environment. Though the renewable energy technology reduces the level of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions released in the atmosphere, which contributes to the reduction of green house effect, in 2010 only 11% of the global energy consumption is by renewable energy sources and are predicted only 15% by 2040. The primary forms of renewable energy from Sun itself can generate various energy flows such as biomass, and wind energy and create a living atmosphere. Non-renewable energy technology extracts the natural resources to get energy (For e.g. Nuclear power plant) and in turn, produces hostile weather conditions, drought, flood and hunger. World is in the urgent need to adapt the renewable energy as an alternative energy consumption method to save the Globe from global warming and green house gases.

### **Reflection:**

Naturally as by the creation order human beings themselves have the renewable energy as it is portrayed in Genesis 2: 6 & 7. As the water spread over the earth God created Human beings from the earth's dust and blew his air into his nostril. He used all the natural resources to give life to human. The reason for verse 5 that no plants appeared on the earth is in verses 6 & 7 that no rain and human to plough it yet. The providence of God to get energy for human is from the natural resources such as sun, wind, soil and water, which is already functioning at the creation. And the human is placed to cultivate the land through the available natural resources. This enhances the life of the human. When God placed Human in the Garden of Eden he required from them to use all the natural resources except the tree in the middle. But they contravene it and brought agony for them. Alike contravening the natural providence by overlooking the renewable resources because of the intervention of the globalization and industrialization we are forced to an extent to use the non-renewable energy resources, which extracts the natural resources to produce energy. Doing this we bring agony on us such as drought, flood, global warming which destroys the planet earth. The church as faith community is required to take up this call to affirm and promote life enhancing renewable energy. The victims of non renewable energy laments, "I am the victim of climate change. I am diseased because of the toxic air I inhale, contaminated water I drink, poisoned food I eat. I suffer rising temperatures, droughts, flood that makes my survival uncertain. Carbon emission, deforestation, greenhouse gas emission, plastic usage pushes my life in hell on earth. I am a climate refugee. Is there anyone in the image of God to provide me a green life?"

### **Points to pray**

- For the disaster survivors and climate refugees
- For the consciousness to make the natural renewable resources which keeps the eco-system sustainable

## **Day 4: Theme: Just-distribution: Way of Life**

**Bible Portion:** Exodus 16: 11 – 20

**Context:** The social inequalities take a prominent effect in the distribution of resources by economic policies. Just-distribution of money and materials facilitates a minimum quality of life for all to enjoy. It challenges the economic policies, which have disparities in distributing the money and materials. Unequal distribution hinders the access of basic minimum resources to the deprived. Pre independent and post independent India are the best illustration to demonstrate the Just and unjust distribution. Under British rule, the land was owned exclusively by Zamindars and in the post independence context; land reforms redistributed it to the peasants. Just-distributions provide the basic needs of life to all so that they can have equality and opportunity. Acquisition of un-owned resources without others disadvantage and voluntary transfer of ownership of resources to the one in the need are all the components of just-distribution.

### **Reflection:**

The recurring theme of the periscope Exodus 16: 11 – 20 is just-distribution demonstrated by God. Life of the Israelites in their newly found freedom, they faced many life realities. One among them is hunger having no means to cultivate food in the wilderness as refugees. God who feeds the hunger send provisions to them. In Exodus 16: 12 & 18, God's provision of food, fulfils the hunger of all as much as they need. The notion of just-distribution is introduced in this passage as God provided equally to all according to their basic need. When the greedy in the community gathers more than they need, the vulnerable will get less than they need. Therefore, God equalled out to meet everyone's need as it is said in verse 17 & 18. The more manna gathered by people because of their food insecurity become rotten next day. This life threatening reality prevails in our globe. The food security of the certain community brings food shortage for the depriving community. The notion of common sharing stresses the need of reformation in the usage of food resources and money. Without caring the public good the food resources are privatized by the group of food insecure. The act of Eucharist exemplifies the same sufficient and sharing nature of God's provision to all. Therefore it is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that all the community in need are getting as much they need in equal proportion as we get. The hunger cries "I am a hunger woman. I am exploited by the socio – economic politics. My natural resources are grabbed by the patriarchal greedy and unsecured. My bones are broken to feed the economically elite. I am made unworthy to desire a healthy survival. My tongues are dry in thirst. My nerves cease to flow blood. I am dying seeing my children die in hunger. I am craving for food and water. I ask for the 'justice of eating'. Is there anyone who is in the image of God to share your food with me?"

Will we respond to it?

### **Points to pray**

- For the life with common sharing of resources
- For the people centered life for the common good of all
- For the courage to challenge the exploiting economic policies

## **Day 5: International Day of Rural Women**

United Nations marks this day as the International Day of Rural Women. This day is to empower women and girls who labours to ensure the sustainability of rural livelihood and the wellbeing of all in totality.

### **Theme: Women for Water and Life**

**Bible Portion:** Genesis 24: 13 & 14

**Context:** Global water crisis is a widespread phenomenon that affects the well-being of the deprived especially women. Deforestation, urbanization, global warming causes the scarcity of water resources. Therefore, the vulnerable livelihood suffers from the lack of access to water and clean water. Water supply management is important to an extent to poverty reduction and to ensuring a sustainable future. In relation to water, gender is a crucial concern to be analyzed. Gender does not refer just men and women rather the different roles, rights and responsibilities assigned to them. Access to choice and resources are limited within this gender concept. With regard to water management, a stereotypical notion that women should have an important role in it prevails. And women are the most vulnerable for the water crisis as they are the one who takes the responsibility of collecting water going far away in the context of scarcity. They become the victims of additional risks of sanitation, health and hygiene issues unable to have access to clean water. As women, involve in 'reproductive work, productive work and community work', access to water near the home reduces their burden and increases the time they spent in income based developmental tasks.

### **Reflection:**

The passage Genesis 24: 13 & 14 describes the story of the servant of Abraham waiting at the well in the outskirts of the city to find a bride for Isaac. The issue of the women of the city coming out to draw water is deliberated in this passage. As it was accustomed that the women of the city go out to well in the outskirts of city to fetch water, Homer was waiting there knowing it expecting some woman will come. The life of the Israeli women is centred on the home in ancient world. All the house hold works are stressed on women and they attended to all domestic affairs (Leviticus 26; 2 Samuel 13:8), Exodus 11:5; I Samuel 8:13) and also spinning weaving (2 kings 23:7; Ezekiel 13: 17 – 18). They had the power to do the productive tasks. Their care and contribution to the households and to the economic well being keep sustained the family. The role of women is though constructive in all ways they are not considered with equal respect. With regard to water issue women are the one who do water management knowing the pain of taking water. But still they are vulnerable to water crisis. They suffer health risks because of hygiene issues while constructing the life of the family bringing clean water from far away. Women gives life in turn their lives are taken away. Women for water, Women for life; therefore the Churches' are invited to save women for water and life and water for women and life.

### **Points to pray**

- For the access to clean safe drinking water
- For the safety of the Rural women from sexual exploitation in the work places
- For the hygienic health of the women especially in rural areas

## **Day 6: World Food Day**

The United Nations has declared this day as World Food day. This day emphasizes on the need to end hunger and ensure a safe, healthy and nutritious food access to everyone. It also empowers to work together to bring a sustainable life style.

**Concern: Think: Eat: Save Zero Hunger**

**Theme:** Lamentations 4: 4 & 5

**Context:** UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon launched zero hunger challenge in 2012 to end hunger and to promote sustainable development growth. Food insecurity is an issue that hinders the zero hunger challenge and leads to food security. Improving methods of production of foods produces enough food to feed everyone. Food availability per capita has increased from approximately 2220 kcal per person per day in 1960s to 2790 kcal per person per day in 2006. The unfair supply/unjust-distribution of this production globally because of food insecurity ends up in the demand of food. Accessibility, Availability, and Affordability are the three main components in food security. Physical and economic accessibility are incorporated into the accessibility of food. Socially vulnerable and landless suffer the economic accessibility whereas physical accessibility includes diseased, disabled, women and children. Availability of food is a notion that involves the demand of food and facilitating to feed by themselves from the natural resources or farming. Affordability of food is another ecstatic state for many in the world. The price hikes because of the erroneous economic policies, weather changes, drought, and flood and so on unable a community to afford their food. Food waste management is another area need to be dealt with regard to food security. Nearly 40 % of the hunger will be fed by the wasting food.

### **Reflection:**

The starving of the children for bread and water is portrayed in Lamentations 4: 4 & 5. The mothers neglect the children as they are helpless to feed their children. Lamentations 4: 10 says that the compassionate women killed their own children for their food. Children unable to express their hunger suffered pleading for food, yet no one there to feed them. The painful tears of the children are pictured as they had no one to ask their need. The next verse says the before life of those children. These children were brought down to extreme poverty. They were born royal, fed well, and enjoyed the delicacies. Now they are hiring for food. Though, as the verse tells that once they were in their eminent places enjoying all the pleasures, their condition now is pitiable. The distressing condition of the children can be compared with the poverty stricken children in our context. The food insecurity causes these children to starve in streets. The wastage of food, food saving more than the need, less affordability, all these ended up in hunger of the many especially the children. Moving towards the zero hunger the churches' responsibility is to promote the food security and hear the silent cries of the children and make sure the availability of their food and get them their right to access food.

### **Points to pray**

- For the conscious use of the food
- For the just socio – economic policies that facilitates zero hunger society
- For the sources of accessibility, affordability and availability of food

## **Day 7: International Day of Eradication of Poverty**

The International Day of Eradication of Poverty celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. United Nations has recognized this day to work together towards overcoming the extreme poverty. This day pays attention to make a balanced economical life style for all.

### **Theme: Economy of Life: A Missional Agenda to Eradicate Poverty**

**Bible Portion:** Mathew 14: 13 – 21

**Context:** India is one among the largest poverty populated country in the world. The following are the major causes for the mass poverty in India: Climate change, hindrance to agriculture, biased economic policies, unemployment. “21.3% Indians live on less than ₹120/- per day. According to the index, globally almost 48 percent of the multi dimensionally poor are children in the age group of 0 – 17 years. Nearly 1.45 billion populations are termed as multidimensional poor. About 689 million of the population is children. Among these 31% of children, live in India.

### **Reflection:**

The first century Roman Empire was hierarchical in its socio structure, where the ruling influential enjoyed the abundance especially royal foods. They controlled the food resources with their power. Therefore food accessibility was unequal in the first century Roman Empire. Many suffered without adequate food and nutrition. Inadequate nutrition and immunity were widespread. In this context Matthew 14: 13 – 21, highlights Jesus' concern for the hunger. He confronts the food injustice and unequal distribution of food of the Roman Empire feeding the 5000 in the wilderness. He facilitated the disciples to see the people are not hungry. A large crowd gathered to hear Jesus. As it become dark disciples asked Him to send them for their food. Jesus in turn requests them to provide their food. They brought 5 loaves and two fish. Jesus accepted and blessed the effort of the disciples and shared it to the entire crowd. All are satisfied with the equal sharing and they took the remaining in 12 baskets that also shared with the community. The sufficient nature of God's provision of food in this event well illustrated the Jesus' approach of the economy of life. Economy of Life is an initiation to understand the relations between poverty, wealth and ecology. It proposes ways to bring about a just, participatory and sustainable economic system. It negotiates the cancellation of neo-liberal economy and affirms the hope to radically transform our socio-economic and ecological relations to enrich and strengthen the movement of life. The Economy of life ought to be the missional agenda to eradicate poverty. A poor child laments, “I am a poverty stricken child. My stomach longs for food. Tears of my parents become my water to drink. My eyes search for school going. My legs desire to play. But my body fed up of being sick. My place of lying is stolen. I am scared of human beings. Is there anyone in the image of God to drive away my poverty?”

Will Church respond to this cry?

### **Points to pray**

- For the smooth ecological environment that supports life of the poor
- For the spirit of concern to make our contribution to eradicate poverty and ensure a life
- To infuse hope within the deprived community that God of compassion cares for them
- For the health of the poverty stricken community