

Republic Day, 2018 - Eucharistic Adoration

Introduction:

Dear sisters, today on 26th January 2018, India celebrates her 69th Republic Day. Today we are going to spend this hour of adoration in thanking the good Lord for the great nation into which we are born, and to ask Him to bless our country with its vast number of people. It is a happy occasion when our Republic Day follows the Unity Octave. For, the spirit of ecumenism embraces not only Christians, but all people who seek their destiny with a sincere heart. Let us today express the spirit of universal brotherhood and celebrate this Eucharistic adoration united in a special way with all the citizens of the Republic of India.

Exposition:

Lord Jesus, you who reign over the universe as our Creator and our Redeemer God, we praise you and thank you for the marvelous way of looking after your children. We thank you for giving yourself to us, we thank you for serving humanity and redeeming it through your ministry that you took up to liberate your people, to bring justice and peace on earth, to bring equality among the genders, to teach us to love God our Father and our neighbors. Thank you for giving us a beautiful world to live in, thank you for placing us in this beautiful country with its rich heritage, in the midst of her diversity - various religions and traditions, multi cultures and languages. Thank you for making us citizens of the Indian Republic.

26th January, 1950 is one of the most important days in the history of our nation. It was celebrated as the Republic Day of India, because on this day the Constitution of India came into force and India became a totally republican unit. India's Republic Day celebrations have become world famous as one of the greatest shows on earth, drawing thousands of eager sight-seers from all over the country and many parts of the world. No other country can draw on such a wealth of tribal traditions and cultures, so many regional forms of dances and dresses. And, no other country in the world can parade so many ethnically different people in splendid uniforms as India's Armed Forces. But they are all united in their proven loyalty to the Government elected by the people and in their proud traditions and legendary gallantry.

In the republic of God in the Old Testament, we find uniqueness of each people manifesting the diversity of their genius and the universal rights to be enjoyed by all the citizens of the world. The Decree on the Missions of Vatican II exhorts us to earn by sincere dialogue what treasures God has distributed among the nations of the earth and asks us to try to illumine these treasures with the light of the Gospel, and thus gather them for the glory of God. (N.11).

It is our responsibility then to know deeply our own heritage and cultivate a genuine respect and appreciation for the values cherished by our tradition. For, unless we are rooted in our heritage we cannot contribute our share to the universal heritage of the nations. But rootedness in the soil of the country does not imply isolation from other traditions and influences. In today's world, no people are an island, but a people without self-identity are no people.

Lord Jesus, light of the East! You are the dispenser of India's destiny- your name rouses the hearts of Punjab, Sind, Gujart, Maratha, Dravida, Orissa and Bengal. It echoes in the hills of Vidhyas and Himalayas, mingles in the music of Jammu and the Ganges, and is chanted by the waves of the Indian sea. They pray your benediction and sing your praises. As we join in singing the hymn we express our aspirations for our country India.

Hymn: Where the mind is without fear....

Readings: Is. 60:1-5 and Mt. 22:15-22

On this republic day the Word of God spoken by Isaiah reminds us of our responsibility, as the citizens of the Indian Republic. To safeguard and develop our national and cultural genius so that we may not go empty-handed into the New Jerusalem.

In the Gospel reading too we hear of the same Christian responsibility towards our nation; we are urged to involve ourselves in the national life; this must be done not only because we have to wield Christian influence and power in the country for the sake of prestige and name; but because we believe in our Christian call to cooperate with God who is actively present in history, guiding peoples to their destiny. It is our responsibility to struggle with God who is shaping and uplifting the nations.

Our Father Founder was a true patriot, though an American by heritage, he did not hesitate to be a true Indian. His spirit of citizenship was clearly evident when he took the Indian citizenship. He said in a historic occasion, "I have chosen India to be my homeland. In times of need, whatever it may be, I will stand by you and promise to do whatever I can. In return I ask nothing from you but a tiny 18 square-foot plot of land where I can have my eternal reward". He believed that a good Christian, a good shepherd, a good pastor cannot afford to be a bad citizen. Deeply rooted in the Indian culture, adapting to the local customs and traditions, adjusting with different food habits and climate he proved that he could be really inserted and enculturated into a different life style altogether. His public services are true examples that express how much he loved Indian people. According to him true spirit of patriotism was an expression of our co-responsibility with God, who calls all the citizens to work together for promoting the common good of the Republic. He had joined hands and heart with other religious leaders and officials to work for common good, especially for the poor and less privileged in our society. He has stood by people when there was great conflict among our Muslim and Hindu brothers and sisters during the partition of our country; he was a reconciler and a mediator during those communal clashes. He has instilled in us too love for peace and deep spirit of patriotism.

Dear sisters, as we adore the Lord, we reflect on the Preamble to the Indian Constitutions - to know more about our rights and responsibilities as Indian citizens. And as we reflect and pray to the Lord our prayer may be: Fill India to the brim with the glory of God, let her offer to the world the spiritual bliss that she has found. That all may stand together for the common good and wellbeing of all God's children.

On the first 'REPUBLIC DAY' 26th January 1950 "Constitution of India" was enforced. The Constitutions gave the people of India and her rulers certain guidelines for the preservation and development of her peoples. India became a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, REPUBLIC and assured Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity to all its citizens. The Preamble to the Constitution of India is an Introductory statement on the guiding Principles of the document. It embodies the fundamental values on which the Constitution is based, its aims and objectives which the founding fathers of the Constitution enjoined. The Preamble declares, in undeniable terms that the source of all authority under the Constitution is **the people of India** and that there is no subordination to any external authority. It means a government by the people and for the people. With a hymn let us entreat the lord that we may enjoy fully the obligations and rights that are underlined in our Indian Constitution.

Hymn: Lord, we pray for golden peace....

Preamble of the constitution of India

We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic and to secure to all its citizens: justice, social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation.

As we offer our petitions to you Lord Jesus, reflecting on the preamble to the Constitutions we ask you Lord, to bestow on us the wisdom to preserve the noble principles prescribed in the Indian Constitutions. **Our response: Lord! Bestow on us your wisdom.**

Reader 1: Sovereign -

The word sovereign means supreme or independent. India is internally and externally sovereign - externally free from the control of any foreign power and internally, it has a free government which is directly elected by the people and makes laws that govern the people.

Prayer:** India faces threats to its sovereignty more from inside than from outside. The country is now rocked by the problem of religious and various terrorisms, rise of communalism, casteism and social disharmony, and has recently witnessed communal riots and tensions. Rampant corruption and politicization of the services have retarded the progress of lot of the downtrodden and economically deprived. Lord, we as citizens of our country we pray that good sense may prevail in the minds and hearts of extremists who are bent on spreading chaos and destruction, and that we may not be influenced by such destructive ideologies and practices. **Our Response -

Reader 2: Socialist -

It implies social and economic equality. Social equality in this context means the absence of discrimination on the grounds of caste, colour, creed, sex, religion, or language. Under social equality, everyone has equal status and opportu

nities. Economic equality in this context means that the government will endeavor to make the distribution of wealth more equal and provide a decent standard of living for all.

Prayer: *Lord, our Constitution gave us four rich ideologies of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. Unfortunately we have more than often viewed our among our fellow citizens and among ourselves prejudices against their backgrounds. We distinguish them on the basis of their back ground, caste and creed and class. Lord, we seek your divine assistance to give us the strength to treat everyone equally and lovingly. **Our Response -***

Reader 3: Secular -

It implies equality of all religions. India, therefore does not have an official state religion. Every person has the right to preach, practice and propagate any religion they choose. The government must not favour or discriminate against any religion. It must treat all religions with equal respect. All citizens, irrespective of their religious beliefs are equal in the eyes of law.

Prayer: *It was on this Republic Day that India was made into a Secular State, thus giving freedom of religion to all Indian citizens. But Lord, we live in an ambience of mistrust and suspicion. Several states have passed the anti-conversion bill. Rivers of blood have stained the secular fabric of our nation in the name of religion. Lord, give us the grace to accept, preserve and promote tolerance and religious diversity. **Our Response -***

Reader 4: Democratic – India is democracy. The people of India elect their governments at all levels (Union, State and local) by a system of universal adult suffrage; popularly known as “one person one vote”. Every citizen of India, who is 18 years of age and above and not otherwise debarred by law, is entitled to vote. Every citizen enjoys this right without any discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, creed, sex, religion, or education.

Prayer: *Lord, it was on this day that India was made into a Republic bestowing utmost power to the people through a democratic system. Give your wisdom to the people of India to use always their voting power to elect good God-fearing, sincere, responsible and dedicated leaders to lead our nation ahead. **Our Response -***

Reader 5: Republic -

As opposed to a monarchy, in which the head of state is appointed on hereditary basis for a lifetime or until he/she abdicates from the throne, a democratic republic is an entity in which the head of state is elected for a fixed tenure. The President of India is elected by an electoral college for a term of five years. The post of the President of India is not hereditary. Every citizen of India is eligible to become the President of the country.

Prayer: *Lord, help us to be critical of totalitarian or dictatorial trends in our leadership. Help us preserve the republican texture of our nation. Inspire our people to nurture values that would undoubtedly stand us a chance to serve our nation in its highest capacity of leadership. **Our Response –***

Lord Jesus, in the following hymn we wish to express our age-long aspirations for our country - lead us all to love one another irrespective of who we are.

Hymn: Let there be love shared among us....

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord, once again we thank you for our mighty nation - India. We ask you to keep our nation always united. Let not our political leaders separate our people on the basis of religion, and caste and classes. Protect our nation from floods, droughts, famines, plagues, and most especially from human selfishness and indifference which perpetuate a state of injustice, terrorism, violence and poverty. We seek your powerful intercession on those forces who are trying to disrupt our unity and hinder the development of our nation. May we preserve our rich heritage and promote the values that India holds so dear. We make this prayer to your Eucharistic Lord, in your most holy name, Amen.

Concluding Hymn: When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound....