



World Council of Churches

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Geneva, 31 August 2020

Rev. Maxcin John
Director
Department of Mission and
Evangelism, CSI Synod
No.5.Whites Road
Royapettah
Chennai-600014
India

Dear Father John,

Thank you for your message and for the prayers of the church for the World Council of Churches.

As you, your fellow CSI Synod members, and all in the Church of South India conclude your month of prayer for a COVID-free church, nation, and world, we, in the worldwide fellowship of the WCC write to share your commitment to "Pray in Tears for Others." We earnestly join your lament for the untold suffering occasioned by this pandemic, we join hands in your petition to the Lord for mercy and compassion, and we pray for strength and courage for the whole synod.

Of tears we have plenty. We know that the coronavirus has taken an enormous toll on India's people. We know that it has also caused tremendous economic dislocation, physical dislocation, and hunger. We know that it has exacerbated ethnic, religious and class tensions and tested the capacity and ability of governance to adequately address this many-sided pandemic.

Yet, we also know the tremendous power of the Church of South India's faith and witness since its founding nearly 75 years ago. We know that, with ecumenism in its very DNA, the church has championed a bold, engaged, utterly relevant Christian faith, working to address poverty and hunger, class and religious division, not even shying from the steepest ecclesial challenges of our day. We are so grateful that CSI remains a hub of ecumenical solidarity and an indispensable witness to Christ in today's India. India and the world need its witness and work.

One hundred years ago, at the Tranquebar Conference, V.S. Azariah pointed to the essential character of Christian ecumenical fraternity when he said "We believe that the challenge of the present hour...and the present critical situation in India itself, call us to mourn past divisions and turn to our Lord Jesus Christ to seek in Him the unity of the body expressed in one visible Church."

Grace, mercy, compassion: What we ask of the Lord we must also show to one another. So in this time of grave peril and real suffering, we unite with you in prayer to strengthen our bond, renew our courage, and serve all humanity with the example and power of Christ's love.

Yours in Christ's love,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ioan Saucă". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue background behind the text.

Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Saucă
Interim General Secretary