

**REMARKS OF HIS EXCELLENCY ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE
APOSTOLIC NUNCIO TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
INDIAN AMERICAN CATHOLIC HERITAGE DAY
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA, SEPTEMBER 15, 2018**

My Dear Friends,

I am very honored to be here this evening. Again, as the Holy Father's representative to the United States, I want to express his closeness to all of you as you celebrate your heritage as Indian American Catholics. Your organization, with its motto, "One Faith, Many Traditions," brings together the Indian community to witness to the unity of the Catholic Faith in the diversity of its expressions.

A popular book entitled, *The Other One Percent: Indians in America*, describes the waves of Indian immigration to the United States. The authors note that Indian immigrants are among the wealthiest and highly-educated group of migrants. Beginning in the mid-1960s, waves of Indians came here, engaged in the fields of medicine, engineering, computer science and technology. They have shown an entrepreneurial spirit, contributing to the economic vitality of this country. Their story is one of mutually-beneficial migration. Indian Americans now make up one-percent of the United States population and have integrated well into society.

As the Indian community continues to integrate and grow, we should ask: Is that all there is? There is a risk of adopting some of the materialistic attitudes and worldly spirit of the culture, losing sight of the values of faith and family. The Indian American Catholic community has much to offer from the perspective of faith. You are a distinct minority in India and in the United States, yet your rich liturgical and cultural traditions can direct others to the Transcendent, to the Mystery of God.

Therefore, in the task of evangelization, I invite you to think about what you as Indian Catholics can enrich the Church in the United States through your gifts and talents. Certainly, you know about authentic pluralism, dialogue, and proclamation. You have also successfully navigated the challenges of migrating. What hope can you offer to those coming from other nations? How might you be a force for the new evangelization or an antidote to secularism and materialism?

An organization like yours will have a great impact in keeping our young people rooted in their traditions and faithful to the Lord and His Church. I am pleased to learn that you will be starting a youth group that will incorporate members from all your communities. Young people are very dear to the heart of the Pope. As the upcoming Synod on Youth approaches, I want to encourage you along this path. Already, there are many Indian priests working in parishes throughout the United States trying to evangelize and hand on that which is most precious: our Faith. May each person here accept his or her responsibility in bringing the joy of the Gospel to others. Thank you and God bless you.