

H.E. The Most Reverend Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith
Archbishop of Colombo
Archbishop's House
Colombo, Sri Lanka

11 April 2021

Yours Eminence,

The National Director of Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS/Missio) in Sri Lanka, Fr Basil Rohan, has informed me of the blessing of the Monumental Chapel at Katuwapitiya on the second anniversary of the Easter Sunday terrorist attack upon the innocent people of Sri Lanka.

For some years now we have enjoyed a close working relationship with the Church in Sri Lanka through the energetic initiatives and good services of Fr Basil and his PMS Office.

On behalf of the Catholic people of England and Wales, I wish to express that a privilege it has been for us to offer prayerful support, as well as financial help, in solidarity with the Church in Sri Lanka, by contributing to the building of the Monumental Chapel and giving assistance to the victims of this evil act of horrific violence.

I had intended to be present at the consecration of this shrine of the martyrs but due to present COVID restrictions, this will not be possible. However, we shall certainly be with you in prayer and sacramental communion on the day itself.

I give thanks to God for the close relationship we enjoy through PMS with you, your Church, and your country, and I look forward to returning one day to visit those special people and places that inspired me on my last visit in 2016.

At the time of the attack, I received from a Religious Sister a reflection addressed to the terrorists. In it, she wrote the following:

'You may have achieved your aim of intended destruction, but you failed to incite hatred, fear and despair in us all. After all of that elaborate planning, and perverse and wretched efforts on your part, you still failed to divide us. What you have done has brought us closer together, and it has strengthened our faith and resolve'.

May these New Martyrs of Sri Lanka, whose blood is the seed of the Church, rest in peace and rise in glory.

I remain, Your Eminence, yours in the service of the Risen Christ,

Fr Anthony Chantry
National Director, Missio