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## The situation in SRI LANKA

Dear Sisters and all the members of the Holy Family

Sri Lanka is in a very critical situation as a country. The reason for this is the fact that, over 74 years, the political leadership has been uncommitted. One family dynasty has followed another: Senanayakes, Bandaranayakes and finally the Rajapaksas. The sad truth is that during the Rajapaksa years, corruption and waste have taken place on a massive scale.

The economy continues to deteriorate. There is no gas, diesel, petrol or electricity and essential medicines. There were weeks when there was a daily 13 hours' power cut, and the general public suffered a lot. It has been a hard time for students who had their 2021 yearend examinations. People have had to wait hours and hours at long queues to get fuel and gas. Unfortunately seven men were died in these long queues due to their physical weakness. In responding to this difficult period in the Sri Lankan history the nation's collective consciousness has heard one singular call





throughout the Island.

Three little words, Gota Go home became Sri Lanka's new national mantra. The young, the old, the poor, the rich, people of all genders, races and faiths all got together to rally as one to answer the nation's cry. They joined any protest they could find, bringing with them their handwritten placards all bearing the common message demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and the Government.



The March 31<sup>st</sup> demonstration at the Presidents' private residence spread people's power across the country and across the oceans. These protesters surrounded many houses of Government MPs and the Parliament. Significantly they also thronged Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's private residence at Tangalle. Most of the time the Government used its power through sudden imposition of an Island-wide 36 hour curfew, banning social media, and using tear gas, water cannons, batons against the people – waving and knocking at heads, creating confusion and misunderstanding among religions.



But neither Gotabaya nor Mahinda is unable to control the people's power. The unending protests now has turned into a village called "Gota Go Home"



The 9<sup>th</sup> of April marked a historical day in the Sri Lankan history. The protesters tried their best to gather millions to the Galleface. (South Colombo) There was a massive crowd and since then until now Galleface is flooded with people from around the country. Now they call it "Gota Go home Village"

They spend days and nights at the Galleface amidst heavy rains and the

scorching sun. The most beautiful thing is the solidarity, unity that they have among themselves. Anyone who goes to the 'Gota Go Home village' can experience the positive vibration of people's power. This will go down in Sri Lanka's history as unique for achieving something that the country has long been striving for.

Gota Go Home village is the heart of the revolution. People cook there, some bring their homemade eatables to share among people, there are different and creative efforts, such as singing, dancing, street dramas, painting, writing poems being used to express the people's anger and frustration towards the government. etc. There are food-stalls, medicine, medical & legal assistance, free phone-charge centers. Not only that there are even libraries, and a people's parliament to educate people about the current situation. It is surprising how a collective leadership is emerging from the people that are assembled.

Since Sri Lanka is a multi-religious country, this week is an important one for all main four religious communities. Sinhala – Hindu New Year, Holy week, and Ramadan fasting are taking place this week. It was first time in history all these rituals and celebrations were happening in one ground, participated by all in all. It was breath taking experience to witness. The Gota Go Home village has become the center of uniting all the races and religions in Sri Lanka.

We as the followers of Jesus' way of life have much hope and place our trust in the risen Christ; who stood for justice, spoke for the truth, embraced the poor. May the Lord teach us and show us the way to a New Sri Lanka where all people join hands to protect our country from corruption and destruction.

We are very grateful for all your prayers and thoughtfulness in this prevailing disastrous situation of our motherland.



**With love**

**Sisters from the Unit of Colombo, Sri Lanka**