

13th November 2013

My dear Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and Lay Faithful,

1. Feast of Christ the King - Closing of the Year of Faith:

The Solemnity of the Feast of Christ the King will be celebrated this year on 24th November. On the same day will be the closing of the Year of Faith. On that day, we will have the Concelebrated Eucharistic Celebration in our Cathedral at Balasore at 4 p.m. All the Priests working in Balasore diocese are invited to join the Concelebrated Eucharistic Celebration in the Cathedral and thank the Lord for the Year of Faith, inaugurated by the former Pope Benedict XVI. After the Celebration of the Eucharist, we will have the procession of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Feast of Christ the King was established in 1925 by Pope Pius XI, at a moment when several nations thought that the moment had come when man could do without Christ. The purpose of the Holy Father in establishing this Feast was to recall a double fact:

- No matter how much one tries, he cannot escape the dominion of God: “we live and move because of him” (Acts 17, 28).
- Man should not resent to submit to Christ; it is the best thing that can happen to him: in doing so, he is saved.

At the celebration of the Feast of Christ the King, we can recall to our mind:

- Throughout our life, Jesus is for us a king-shepherd.
- At our death, he will become a king-judge, but the purpose of his coming will be no other than to give us his reward.
- In life or in death, Jesus will always be for us the one who died to save us, and rose that we may live for ever.

St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. (1 Cor. 15, 21). No danger will threaten the kingdom of God in heaven; sin and death, the two great enemies of God’s kingdom on earth, will disappear; in heaven all will be joy, everything life, all will be holiness.

The Kingdom which Christ established through His sufferings, death and resurrection was a Kingdom of justice, love and peace. As followers of Christ the King, let us make constant endeavours for promoting the values which are rooted in Christ’s Kingdom.

At the conclusion of the Year of Faith, let us thank the Lord for the gift of faith and grow in our faith specially through our good deeds, as per the words of St. James: “So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead” (James 2, 17).

2. The Season of Advent:

This year the Holy Season of Advent begins on 1st December. This period of four weeks is a time for preparing ourselves for the coming of the Lord. "Now we watch for the day hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours when Christ our Lord will come again in his glory" (Preface of Advent). The Church exhorts that we prepare ourselves for the meaningful celebration of Christmas. Let us listen to the words of St. John the Baptist who was preaching in the desert of Judea: "Reform your lives! The reign of God is at hand. Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths" (Mt 3, 2-3).

May the Season of Advent spent specially through prayers, reading of the Scripture, participation in the Eucharistic celebration, penance and good deeds help us to celebrate meaningfully the great Solemnity of Christmas.

3. Christmas get-together:

A Christmas get-together for the Priests, Brothers and Sisters will be held in the Bishop's House, Balasore, on 27th December (Friday). All the Priests, Brothers and Sisters working in the Diocese are cordially invited to participate in it. The programme for that day will be as follows:

- 10.30 a.m. to 11.15 a.m. - Talk by the Bishop
- 11.30 a.m. - Eucharistic Celebration in the Cathedral
- 12.30 p.m. - Blessing of the new Chapel for the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- 01.00 p.m. - Lunch

4. Collection for the Formation of the Seminarians:

Last year in our Regional Bishops' Council Meeting, it was decided to have a collection every year in all the parishes on the Second Sunday of Advent towards the formation of our Seminarians. Accordingly, this year on the Second Sunday of Advent (8th December), a collection will be made in all the parishes of the diocese. The Parish Priests are hereby instructed to send this collection to the Diocesan Treasurer on or before 31st December 2013.

5. Relief works in the Diocese:

As you were informed in my previous Circular dated 26th October, due to cyclonic storm "Phailin", the torrential rains and the consequent floods mainly in the Districts of Balasore and Mayurbhanj, we organized some relief works among the victims of this disaster. The afflicted people appreciated very much our presence and services to them in different ways during those painful days. I thank you very much for your timely collaboration for the relief works among the victims of the floods. I am also very grateful to the Donor Agencies – Caritas India, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) for their timely visit to the flood affected areas and for the immediate relief help and for the assurance of their assistance for the rehabilitation and livelihood measures.

6. Priestly Ordination of Deacon Eric Soreng:

I am glad to bring to your notice that the Priestly Ordination of our Deacon Eric Soreng is scheduled to be held in his home parish Jhunmur, in Rourkela Diocese, on 16th January 2014.

Devotedly yours in Christ,

**Thomas Thiruthalil, C.M.
Bishop of Balasore**

Bishop's Programme

November 2013

- 20 - Udula - Blessing of the Foundation Stone of the new School
- 24 - Balasore - Feast of Christ the King – Closing of the Year of Faith
- 27 - Guttiduba - Feast of the Parish
- 28-29 - Bhubaneswar - Raikia - Platinum Jubilee of Cuttack Mission

December 2013

- 4 - Udula - School Day Celebration
- 8 - Barbil - Feast of the Parish
- 9 - Barbil - School Day Celebration
- 10 - Keonjhar - School Day Celebration
- 16 - Balasore - St. Vincent's School Day Celebration
- 25 - Balasore - Christmas
- 27 - Balasore - Christmas get-together for the Priests and Religious
- Blessing of the newly constructed Chapel for the
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
