

8th April 2013

My dear Fathers, Brothers, Sisters and Lay Faithful,

1. The New Pope:

On 13th March 2013, the Conclave of the Cardinals in Rome elected Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, as Pope. The new Pope has taken the name **FRANCIS**. While congratulating Pope Francis, let us pray that the Lord bless our Holy Father in abundant measure and strengthen him to fulfill the Petrine ministry effectively.

Bio-Data of Pope Francis:

Date of Birth : 17th December 1936 in Buenos Aires, Argentina
Priestly Ordination : 13th December 1969
Provincial of the Jesuits
of Argentina Province : 1973 -1979
Episcopal Ordination : 27th June 1992, as Auxiliary Bishop of Buenos Aires
Archbishop of Buenos Aires: 28th February 1998
Created Cardinal by
Pope Blessed John Paul II : 21st February 2001
Elected Pope : 13th March 2013

Pope Francis at the beginning of his pontificate, manifested that he is and will be a servant-leader after the example of his Divine Master Our Lord Jesus Christ whose Vicar he is, who was poor, humble and had come to serve. In his Homily to the Cardinals in the Sistine Chapel, Pope Francis spoke: "We can not be the disciples of Christ without the Cross. When we journey without the Cross, when we build without the Cross, when we profess Christ without the Cross, we are not disciples of the Lord, we are worldly".

My prayer for all of us is that the Holy Spirit, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, will grant us this grace: to walk, to build, to profess Jesus Christ crucified.

2. Faith Formation Team:

I have appointed a Faith Formation Core Team in the diocese who will organise faith renewal programmes in the diocese and in the parishes in collaboration with the Parish Priests. The members of this Core Team are:

Fr. Jadu Marandi (Director)
Fr. Isaac Puthenangady
Fr. Francis Puthenthayil, C.M.
Fr. Jose Aresseril
Fr. Saji Karathankal

The Core Team will meet together quarterly to plan and evaluate various faith formation programmes in the diocese. It will formulate a time bound faith formation plan and submit it to the Bishop for the approval.

Scope (Function) of the Core Team:

- To conduct Retreats and one day conventions
- To organize seminars and animation programmes on Church documents, basic tenets of the Church (the Creed, the Sacraments, Ten Commandments)
- Promotion of popular devotions in the parishes

Resource Persons: According to the nature of the group (language), resource persons will be made available for the various Faith formation programmes.

3. Training Programmes for the Laity in the Pastoral Centre:

During this Year of Faith, Seminars for the Laity will be held in our Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Deepthi Bhavan, Kuruda, Balasore. Fr. Jadu Marandi, the Director of the Pastoral Centre will be informing the Parish Priests about the dates of these Seminars. The Parish Priests will have to select competent lay people (both man and woman) from their respective parishes who will draw benefit from these Seminars. The topics for the Seminars will be on faith formation, Documents of Vatican II, Catechism of the Church, laity leadership and their involvement in the parish pastoral works.

4. Small Christian Communities (SCCs):

I am pleased to learn that SCCs are established in nine parishes in the Diocese. SCCs will strengthen the parish community and will enable them for the evangelization. During this Year of Faith, I am instructing the Parish Priests to establish the SCCs before the end of this year, in their parishes where it is not yet established. If you require more informations about the SCCs, you can contact Fr. Jose Aresseril, the Diocesan Secretary for the SCCs.

5. Regional Convention for the Catechists:

During this Year of Faith, a Regional Convention of the Catechists of the five dioceses in Odisha will be held at the Cambridge School, Cuttack, on 12th, 13th and 14th October 2013. We are expecting 350 Catechists to take part in it. During this Convention, there will be various input sessions, group discussions and meaningful liturgical celebrations. Three Catechists each from the five dioceses of Odisha will be selected on merit basis and will be awarded during this Convention. You will be getting further informations on the matter from the Regional Director of the Catechists and his team.

6. New School at Udala:

On 19th March 2013, we started the new St. Joseph's Convent School (C.B.S.E.) in a rented building at Udala. At present two Sisters from the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha are working in this school. The Diocese has a plot of land at Udala and during this year we will be starting the construction works of this new school building at Udala.

7. Transfers/ Appointments:

Fr. Daniel Kishore	- Parish Priest of Amarda Road
Fr. Cyprian Lakra	- Parish Priest of Jhatiada
Fr. Manoranjan Beshra	- Parish Priest of Guttiduba
Fr. Josef Xaxa, C.M.	- Parish Priest of Joshipur
Fr. Samir Dung Dung	- Priest-in-charge of Karanjia
Fr. Santhosh Kudackanal	- Priest-in-charge of Udala
Fr. Baiju Mulackal	- Teaching Staff of Deepthi Bhavan Minor Seminary, Kuruda, Balasore
Fr. Francis Xavier Singh	- Assistant Parish Priest of Barbil
Deacon Eric Soreng	- Krishnachandrapur - Diaconate Ministry

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Thomas Thiruthalil, C.M.
Bishop of Balasore

Bishop's Programme:

April 2013

13	- Balasore, 11.00 a.m.	- Thanksgiving Eucharistic Celebration in the Cathedral
15	- Balasore 04.00 p.m.	- St. Thomas School of Nursing – Graduation programme of the 1 st batch students of Nursing
16 - 10 May	- Kerala	

May 2013

7	- Palliserry, Trissur, Kerala	- Golden Jubilee of the Priestly Ordination of Archbishop Emeritus Raphael Cheenath, SVD
11	- Aligonda, Berhampur	- Feast of Our Lady
26	- Balasore	- Confirmations

June 2013

17 June to 15 July	- Germany	
-----------------------	-----------	--
