

DIocese OF BALASORE

Bishop's House
Balasore – 756 001

Circular No. 07/2014

30 Sept. 2014

Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings from Bishop's House, Balasore!

This circular comes to you in the context of the celebration of the feasts of two most beloved saints of the Church – St. Therese of Lisieux (the 'Little Flower') and St. Francis of Assisi (the 'Poor One').

The Little Flower, who never left the four walls of her convent and yet is considered the Patroness of the Missions, is a great model for each one of us. She supported the missionaries in their life and work of evangelization by means of her prayers and penance. Imitating her we could also offer our support and encouragement to those of us engaged in one good activity or another for the good of the Mission, especially those activities we ourselves are not capable of or are not directly engaged in. Besides, more than ever, all of us in our mission need her intercession these days. Let us make ourselves worthy of it.

Kneeling before the tomb of St. Francis in the crypt of the Basilica at Assisi on the 14th of September, I overheard a prayer made by an elderly woman who was at my side. Among the many things she was telling to the Saint, I remember one which got my attention: 'Francisco (Francis), help my family'. Apart from the fact that the Italians and many devotees of St. Francis of Assisi would like to address him Informally as 'Francisco', as if he were one member of the family, he is also informed of day to day happenings and problems in life and simply asked to intervene if necessary. The simple and direct prayer of the woman to St. Francis inspired me to pray for our diocese at that moment. Interestingly, a woman of faith from probably a middle class Italian Catholic family was unknowingly teaching a bishop kneeling by her side to say: 'Francis, help my diocese'.

What was the problem with her family for which the woman needed Francis' intervention? Poverty? She would not ask the 'Poor One' of Assisi to help her in her financial difficulties. Lack of peace? Loss of job? A wayward son or daughter? An unfaithful husband? The list could be long. In my case, after having met with different funding agencies of our Diocese in Germany, and made a cordial relationship with them, I was not going to ask St. Francis to get us some financial aid. Rather, I was having in my mind and on my lips the prayer we all in the diocese have – to give us peace and experience of solidarity in these days. We do really need these and St. Francis is really capable of helping us. Let us ask his intercession.

1. THE NEW BISHOPS' MEETING IN ROME

I had the opportunity to participate in the seminar for the 'New Bishops from the Mission Territories', organized by the Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples' (Propaganda Fide) from the 7th till 20th of September. We were about 96 new bishops, 15 of whom were from India. The seminar was an enriching experience for all of us and very informative. Heads of various Congregations in the Vatican Curia were the resource persons.

A tour to Assisi with a Mass at the Basilica of St. Francis was part of the programme. But the high point of the whole seminar was the audience with the Holy Father in which he addressed us, and the chance each of us had to meet him and interact with him. That programme was held at the Vatican and with it the seminar was fittingly concluded.

While I was in Europe I had also the opportunity to meet with the friends and benefactors of the Diocese. On the whole, my trip was a fruitful one, thanks to the prayers of each one of you.

2. ANNUAL RETREAT FOR THE PRIESTS OF THE DIOCESE

As has been announced earlier, the Annual Retreat for the Priests of the Diocese will be held from the 13th till the 17th of this month, in the premises of the Bandel Shrine in Kolkata. Fr. Basil Thottankara, C.M., well known for his pioneering missionary activities in the North East, has kindly consented to be the preacher. All the priests of the Diocese are obliged to attend the retreat. Please take it as an opportunity that is provided to us for our own self-spiritual renewal, as well as for rekindling missionary spirit during this Jubilee year.

You may contact Fr. Jose Arasseril with regard to the trip to and from Bandel.

3. THE SEMINAR FOR THE RELIGIOUS OF THE DIOCESE (POST-PONED)

Due to some reasons I have decided to post-pone the proposed two-day seminar for the Religious of the Diocese (11th and 12th October). It was meant for a study on the Vat II Decree on Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life (*Perfectae Caritatis*) in the Golden Jubilee years of the Great Council. I shall announce a convenient date for the seminar later. Sorry for the inconvenience caused by the postponement.

4. RETREATS IN THE PARISHES

A Charismatic retreat will be conducted at Hatigarh for the Santal speaking Catholics of the diocese from the 2nd till 5th of October. The retreat will commence on the evening of 2nd October and conclude on the 5th noon.

Retreats in Odiya language will be held in the parishes of Balasore and K.C. Pur in the coming months. The dates will be announced shortly.

5. DIOCESAN FINANCE COUNCIL

A new Finance Council has been constituted in the Diocese with the Bishop as its Chairman and the following members:

Fr. Jose Aresseril
Fr. Paul Kidangan
Fr. Isaac Puthenangady
Fr. Mathew Karikulam
Fr. Jojo Chakkalamattath

Establishment of such a Council is in accordance with the requirement of the Code of Canon Law (no. 492). The members are appointed for a term of five years with the possibility of re-appointment of further terms of five years (492.2).

6. DIOCESAN SILVER JUBILEE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

As per the decision arrived at during the meeting of the Priests Council held on the 5th of August, the following are the members of the Committee to organize the Diocesan Silver Jubilee to be celebrated on the 29th of Jan. 2015.

Fr. Sangram Murmu
Fr. Saji Karathankal
Fr. Rajesh Dung dung
Fr. Anil Ferdinand
Fr. Jojo Chakkalamattath

7. MISSION SUNDAY 2014

This year the **MISSION SUNDAY** falls on the **19th of October**. The day should be an occasion for us to promote the Missions and the responsibility of every Christian to be a missionary. The contribution that we make for helping the missionary activities around the world is the sign of our missionary co-operation and involvement. Thus we have the satisfaction of taking part in the missionary endeavours all over the world.

The Diocese of Balasore, despite its lesser number of Catholics compared to many others, has been a significant contributor to the missions. Last year our contribution amounted to Rs. 3,44,934/- (Rupees three lakhs forty four thousand nine hundred fifty four), which showed a 16.2% increment from the previous year. But let us remember that we receive much more from the generosity of our donors than what we contribute. I urge all the parish priests and heads of the institutions to exhort those in their care to contribute more, making use of more creative and innovative ways to raise funds for the missions. Let there be a significant increment this year in the contribution we make to the support the missionary activities around the world.

The parish priests should ensure that the **liturgy of the Mission Sunday** be celebrated in a meaningful and fitting manner to suit the occasion.

Please select the Mass for the Evangelization of Peoples with the readings:

Isaiah 2:1-5; Ephesians 3:2-12; Mark 16:15-20

8. OCTOBER: MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY

Besides being the 'Month of the Missions', October is also the 'Month of the Holy Rosary'. Reciting the Rosary everyday with devotion and asking Mother Mary's intercession would be a fitting way to pray for the Mission of the Church in the world and its Missionaries. While we make it a point to recite it meaningfully every day, please instruct the faithful of our parishes and institutions on the importance of this great devotional exercise and recommend its prayer value.

9. DAYS OF LEISURE - DAYS OF PRAYER

The month of October marks the festival days for our Hindu brothers and sisters. Schools get some holidays and thus many of us get leisure time to rest and relax. The time is also used for retreats by dioceses and religious congregations. While we rejoice with those who celebrate festival days, and join them if possible, let us also think of the ways in which we can recuperate by means of the spiritual exercises made available to us.

10. BISHOP'S PROGRAMME

OCTOBER 2014

01	- Baripada	- Feast of St. Therese with the C.S.T. Brothers
04	- Baripada	- Vestition of SABS Sisters at Betna
	- Hatigarh	- H. Mass during the Retreat
05	- Amarda Road	- Parish Feast of St. John the Baptist
13-17	- Bandel	- Annual Retreat
18	- Keonjhar	- Parish Feast of Guardian Angels; Mission Sunday
29-31	- Balasore	- Catechists' Bible training programme at Deepthi Bhavan Pastoral Centre, Kuruda

NOVEMBER 2014

03	- Kuruda	- Seminary Day Celebrations
04-8	- Jharsuguda	- OCBC Meeting
10-18	- Bangkok	- FABC Seminar
23	- Balsore	- Feast of Christ the King
		- Canonization of Bl. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Bl. Euphrasia
27 Nov. – 4 Dec:		- Kerala

With Regards and Blessings



†Simon Kaipuram, C.M.
Bishop of Balasore

