

VOX NOSTRA

Vol VII

January 2019

No. 1

Dear Rev. Fathers, Deacons, Brothers and Sisters,

1. SOLEMNITY OF THE MOTHER OF GOD/NEW YEAR 2019

We begin the new year 2019 with the celebration of the feast of the Mother of God. This is the most important title of Our Lady. It contains a magnificent truth about God and about ourselves. From the moment of our Lord's incarnation in Mary, and for all time, he took on our humanity. There is no longer God without man; the flesh Jesus took from his Mother is our own, now and for all eternity. To call Mary the Mother *of God* reminds us of this: God is close to humanity, even as a child is close to the mother who bears him in her womb.

While I wish you a grace-filled New Year, I pray that the New Year brings you joy and peace, health and vigour in your personal life as well as in your ministry in the parishes and institutions. May, Mother Mary, the patroness of our Diocese, intercede for all of us with her son Jesus to accompany us on our journey through the New Year.

2. WORLD DAY OF PEACE

January 1, every year, is observed as the **World Day of Peace** in the universal Church which is observed on January 30 in India. The message of Pope Francis for the 52nd World Day of Peace is titled as 'Good politics is at the service of peace.' "One thing is certain: good politics is at the service of peace," Pope Francis wrote. "It respects and promotes fundamental human rights, which are at the same time mutual obligations, enabling a bond of trust and gratitude to be forged between present and future generations." The entire message is given as annexure on page 7.

3. YEAR OF YOUTH 2019

You are already informed that the year 2019 is dedicated to the Youth in our Diocese. The theme is envisioned as ‘**Accompaniment of the Church in the life journey of young people**’. The year of youth aims at authentic and personal engagement by pastors in the challenges and success in young people’s lives and also acknowledging the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of young people, and young people acting upon the Holy Spirit in the life of our local Church. The Youth Commission of our Diocese has been entrusted with the responsibility of organizing the Year of Youth and it will communicate to you the plans and activities to be carried out at the parish and deanery levels during the year. Let us cooperate with the Youth Commission and extend our full support to it. I request all Parish Priests to inaugurate the ‘Year of Youth’ on 31st December 2018 after the evening/midnight mass.

4. UNITY OCTAVE

Jesus prayed for unity: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (Jn 17:20-23). This year the prayer for Christian Unity will be held from 18 to 25 January with theme: **Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue** (*Deuteronomy 16:18-20*). The reflections for the eight days and the worship service are focused on this theme. Besides praying for Christian Unity, wherever possible, I request that common prayer services may be held along with the groups of the other Christian denominations so that it gives Christians an annual opportunity to continue their quest for their unity in Christ. You may contact the diocesan Director of the Commission for Ecumenism for the source material for organizing this Octave. The material is available in English at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/weeks-prayer-doc/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_20180621_week-prayer-2019_en.html

5. ECUMENISM SUNDAY

20 January 2019, Sunday during the Christian Unity Octave, is the Ecumenism Sunday for the Church in India. While the CCBI

Commission for Ecumenism has provided material for the liturgy to facilitate the active participation of the faithful in the parishes and religious communities, this is an appeal to all of you not only to keep up with Ecumenism Sunday but also celebrate it in a befitting manner so that the mission of Jesus Christ may be realized in and through our incessant prayers for unity.

6. ANNUAL FEAST OF ST LAWRENCE SHRINE BASILICA

Preparations are in full swing to celebrate the annual Feast of St Lawrence Basilica at Attur from 27 to 31 January 2019 with the traditional solemnity and devotion with the theme: **Be holy, because I am holy (1 Pet 1:16)**. While the Parish Church will celebrate Confraternity Sunday on 27 January, the festive celebrations will commence on the same day. Since the Shrine has been raised to the status of the Basilica, we see a steady rise in the number of pilgrims flocking to the Shrine for reconciliation, peace, prayers, favours and blessings. What is heartening to note is the desire of the Catholic faithful to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation with great faith and a sense of repentance, which is unique at Attur. Even though nearly 300 priests opt to hear confessions during the days of the Shrine festivities, their availability during the nights of Tuesday and Wednesday, the peak hours of the pilgrims, falls drastically short. Now that we begin the festive celebrations from 27 January itself, even for 27 January, Sunday night onwards, we need to provide sufficient number of priests for confessional facility. Hence, I appeal to all our priests to make themselves available for confessions, especially during the peak hours, when the presence of people is large and the need of confessors is more. We ought to provide the best spiritual care and facility to them as Priest-Confessors.

While I extend to all of you, dear Fathers, your dear parishioners, Religious Men and Women, and members of your Communities a cordial invitation to the Attur Feast, I request you Rev. Fathers, Diocesan and Religious, to make it a point to make yourself available to hear confessions. Please cooperate wholeheartedly and generously. Happy Feast of St Lawrence to all of you!

7. CCBI MEETING

The 31st Plenary Assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CCBI) will be held from 7 -15 January 2019 at Chingleput, Tamilnadu. The Conference will deliberate on the theme of Evangelization. Let us keep all the participants in our prayers and pray for fruitful deliberation so that the Church in India may benefit significantly in her apostolate.

8. BLESSING OF COMMUNITY HALL AT MOODUBELLE

The newly built Community Hall at Moodubelle was blessed by me on 2 December 2018. The construction of this unique hall with AC facilities was completed within a short span of time owing to the tireless and dedicated leadership of parish priest, Rev. Fr Clement Mascarenhas with the whole-hearted cooperation of the Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils, and supportive and generous parishioners. I offer my congratulations to Rev. Fr Clement Mascarenhas for his able leadership in constructing this state-of-the-art hall for the use of our community.

9. BLESSING OF COMMUNITY HALL AT BYNDOOR

The newly built Community Hall at Byndoor was blessed by me on 9 December 2018. The construction of this much-needed hall in the locality was completed within a short span of time due to the dedicated leadership of parish priest, Rev. Fr Ronald Miranda with the whole-hearted cooperation of the Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils, and supportive parishioners. I appreciate the efforts of Rev. Fr Ronald Miranda and offer my congratulations to him for his efficient leadership during the construction of this hall.

10. DEDICATION OF RENOVATED CHURCH AT NAKRE

The renovated Immaculate Conception Church at Nakre was blessed and dedicated by me on 15 December 2018 in the presence of a large number of priests and faithful. The renovation and construction of this beautiful Church was completed in a short time, thanks to the untiring efforts of the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr Vincent Crasta and the whole-hearted cooperation and collaboration by the Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils, supportive parishioners, generous benefactors and the people of good will who contributed their mite towards the building of the church. I hereby express my sincere thanks and offer my congratulations to Rev. Fr Vincent Crasta and the parishioners for working hard, with commitment, in order to realize their dream.

11. BLESSING OF THE NEW PRESBYTERY AT PADUKONE

The newly built presbytery at St Antony Church, Padukone was inaugurated and blessed by me on 18 December 2018. The construction of the Presbytery was completed in a short time due to the untiring efforts of the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr Fred Masacarenhas with the cooperation of the Parish Pastoral and Financial Councils, generous financial contribution by the parishioners and people of good will. I congratulate Rev. Fr Fred Mascarenhas for his able pastoral service in the parish and for completing the construction of the much-needed presbytery in Padukone.

Yours Sincerely in Christ

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✠Gerald I. Lobo

COMMUNICATION FROM PASTORAL COMMISSIONS

1. DIVYAJYOTHI

- 05/1/2019 Diocesan Exam in Catechism and Value
9 - Education
 for VII & X Std. The schools should collect
 question papers on 4 Jan 2019 before 1.00
 pm
13/1/2019 Liturgy Practice, Karkal -Attur
9
27- Karkal-Attur Basilica Feast Liturgy
31/1/2019 Animation
9

Rev. Fr Stephen D'Souza
Director

2. YOUTH COMMISSION

14-01-2019 YSM Convention –Udupi

Rev. Fr Edwin D'Souza
Director

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