



DIOCESE OF KOHIMA

BISHOP'S HOUSE
Post Box. No. 519
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Nagaland, India

December 08, 2015

BPKOH/CIR/05/2015

Dear Rev. Fathers, Sisters, Brothers and Lay Faithful,

We are already in the season of Advent, marking the beginning of the new liturgical year and entering into the threshold of new calendar year 2016. I take this opportunity **to wish each and every one of you a very happy and joy filled Christmas and a grace-filled New Year, 2016. I also would like to thank each one of you for your support – spiritual, moral, physical and material - to the diocese, to our priests and sisters in each of the parishes and centres, to me personally and to each other. I thank you and pray that God may continue to bless us all.**

The year 2015 has been remarkable for two important events that will leave an indelible mark in the coming year 2016 in the Church and in the world. The first is the publication of the Pope Francis' encyclical, '**Laudato Si**' focused on the idea of "**integral ecology**," connecting care of the natural world with justice for the poorest and most vulnerable people. "Only by radically **reshaping our relationships with God, with our neighbours and with the natural world**", the Pope says, "can we hope to tackle the threats facing our planet today". "**Science**", he insists, "is the best tool by which we can listen to the cry of the earth, while **dialogue and education** are the two keys that can "help us to escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us."

At the heart of the Pope's reflections is the question: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" The answers he suggests call for profound changes to political, economic, cultural and social systems, as well as our individual lifestyles. Let us hope that all of us give heed to the clarion call of the Pope for a change in our attitude, action and life style that will bring about equity and equality, caring for the nature and the poorest and the weaker sections. I suggest that each one of us read the encyclical, '**Laudato Si**' and make individual and collective resolution to share our little mite to preserve the nature. I have enclosed a road map of what we can do during the coming 12 months joining hands with Caritas India.

The second remarkable event is the publication of *Misericordiae Vultus*, Bull of Indiction of the **Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy** which began today that is December 8th, 2015, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Blessed Virgin Mary and will conclude on November 20th, 2016, Solemnity of Christ the King. It is to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council in 1965.

The Catholic Church started the custom of proclaiming Jubilee years from the 15th century. The Jubilee year was proclaimed every 33 years in the beginning. Later it began to be proclaimed every 25 years. More recently we have seen that the Popes have proclaimed such Jubilee years more frequently. A Jubilee year is proclaimed by the Pope to invite people to repentance and conversion. As a sign of their conversion and coming to Christ they are invited to visit a Cathedral, church or a shrine designated for that purpose in the diocese. Every such church sets apart one of its doors as a 'Holy Door' and it is opened solemnly at the beginning of the Jubilee year and closed at the end of the Jubilee year. The faithful walk through this door into the church as a sign of their repentance. Many pilgrims travel to Rome to walk through the 'Holy Door' of the four Basilicas. Walking through the 'Holy Door' is not a superstitious practice which automatically guarantees forgiveness or divine grace by the mere act of passing through a particular door. This walking through has to be accompanied by an inner disposition to conversion and change of life. Walking through the door is symbolic. Pilgrims walk through the door as a gesture of leaving the past behind and crossing the threshold from sin to grace, from slavery to freedom, and from darkness to light.

The symbol of 'door' finds meaning only when the believer associates the door with Christ. Jesus is the door. John's Gospel clearly depicts this relationship between Jesus and us. "In truth Jesus declared, I am the door of the sheepfold. All who have come before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the door. Anyone who enters through me will be safe: such a one will go in and out and will find pasture" Jn 10:7-9.

In our diocese we shall **inaugurate this Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy on 13th December** at St. Paul's Church, Wokha, since I will be there on that day celebrating the golden jubilee of the parish and ordaining Deacon John Nchumbemo Kikon, by opening ceremonially the Holy Door of St. Paul's Church, Wokha. Along with St. Paul's Church Wokha, four more churches in our diocese have been officially declared as centres of pilgrimage during this Year of Mercy – Mary Help of Christians Cathedral Kohima; St. Xavier's Church, Jalukie; St. Peter's Church, Kiphire and Holy Cross Church, Dimapur. You are invited to visit any of these Churches and walk through the Holy Door to experience the mercy of God. Let us remember that this walking through the Holy Door is not a magical act. It symbolizes our faith in Christ Jesus who said "I am the door". It represents our commitment to leave sin behind in order to embrace a life that is fully in keeping with the teachings of Christ. Participation in Holy Mass and reception of Holy Communion is also part of this spiritual exercise of the Jubilee year along with prayer for the intention of the Holy Father, by which one can gain plenary indulgences. During this year we are encouraged to bring about a "mercy revolution" by undertaking daily almsgiving, caring for the needy and forgiving as a way to meaningfully observe the Year of Mercy called by Pope Francis.

Thus the year 2016 is a crucial year for all of us to live a more pro-active life to defend and foster nature and to live in total submission to God's mercy – receiving mercy from God and living our lives as persons of mercy. I believe that in Nagaland this call of the Holy Father to experience and give mercy, and thus to forgive and be reconciled to one another take particular importance since we are all searching for peace and collective solution to our problems. May we take heed to this invitation of our Pope to live our lives in the coming year and make it a source of blessing to us today and to the coming generations in the days to come.

Gratitude and Congrats

I am happy that I have been able to complete the first round of my pastoral visit to all the parishes, centers,

institutions and all the villages with catholic communities in the diocese. As I visited these communities, parishes and centres, my admiration and gratitude to all our people, catechists, leaders, sisters and priests have increased immensely. Many of our people, priests and sisters live in very challenging and difficult situation with minimum facilities and necessities of life. Their sacrifice and commitment have brought positive effects and results in our mission and ministry. Only God and He alone can reward us adequately. Though we have been able to make inroads to many villages and communities, there is still scope and opportunity to expand and enlarge our mission. I wish and pray as Catholics, we bring about positive and salutary changes in the society. I wish that our schools and educational institutions really become centres of moral formation. We need to develop the “heart” of our students and form well informed conscience in our students so that the choices they make are in accordance to the values of the gospel we uphold. Those passing out from our institutions should become very perceptive and sensitive to the many moral and social problems we face today. We have to empower our people to make enlightened choices in accordance with our faith and teachings of the Church. Once again I am grateful to every one for the positive contribution make for the spread of God’s kingdom and we have miles to go.

Bicentenary celebration of the Birth of Don Bosco (1815-1915)

Dimapur Province of Salesians had the grand finale of the yearlong bicentenary celebration of the Birth of Don Bosco at Don Bosco Higher Secondary School (DBHSS), Diampur from 23rd to 25th October 2015. The celebration brought together the members of the Salesian family, Salesian co-operators and other well wishers and friends. The diocese takes this opportunity to thank the Salesian congregation for the pioneering evangelization work in the diocese and laying a solid foundation for the Catholic faith in Nagaland. The charism and the spirit of Don Bosco, the great visionary and missionary saint is kept alive and continued by the ministry and activities of the Salesian family. Thank you and Congrats.

Diocesan Pastoral Council – 2016

The annual diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) 2016 will be held on Friday, 26th February 2016 (the last Friday in February) at Pastoral Centre Hall, Dimapur. During the first session there will be an animation program on Pope Francis’ much acclaimed encyclical on ecology “Laudato si”. As I mentioned in my pastoral reflection, the Pope is making a passionate pleas to take care of the Nature for the preservation and for the well being of the future generations. We must find ways and means to live the timely advice and admonition of our Holy Father. The whole world today is debating the topic and trying to find common and collective effort to enhance human living without plundering the nature. We shall also explore ways and means to live this encyclical in our own little and small ways. I request all the Parish Priests and Centre in-charges and other members of the DPC to attend the session. I request all the Parish Priests and Centre in-charges to see that the lay representatives from their parish attend the same.

Jubilee Year of Our Mother of Perpetual Help

The 27th of June 2016 is the conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. The jubilee commemorates the providential event of the handing over of the Icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help to the Redemptorists by Blessed Pope Pius IX, on 11th December 1865. Since then the Miraculous Icon has been preserved and venerated in the Redemptorist Church of St. Alphonsus in Rome. The devotion to our Mother of Perpetual Help, especially through observations of Novenas has been a great source of blessing to the Church as a whole and for individuals. To commemorate 150 years of Jubilee, the Apostolic Penitentiary under the mandate of Pope Francis has granted Plenary Indulgences, under the usual conditions (Sacramental confession,

Eucharistic communion and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father) in any church where the Icon of the Mother of Perpetual Help is being venerated. On this occasion, I invite all our parishes and centres to begin the Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in all our parishes, preferably on Saturday after the Holy Mass. I am sure that it will be a great source of special blessing to our communities. The Novena booklets in English are available at the Pastoral Centre Book Stall, Dimapur.

Diocesan Collections

Enclosed with this circular, please find the list for diocesan collections for the year 2016, giving all the details – the date of collections, the intent and beneficiaries and dates on or before which these collections are to be reached to the diocesan Finance Office. These collections are mandatory and I request all to reach the collections in time to the office so that we can forward the same in time to the respective offices in Bangalore (PMS) and New Delhi (Nunciature).

Priestly Ordinations

This year and coming year we have three ordinations in the diocese. Deacon John Nechumbemo Kikon, SDB will be ordained on 13th December 2016 at St. Paul's Church, Wokha. Deacon Victor Renthungo will be ordained on 30th December at Sacred Heart Church, Bhandari and Deacon Luke Nagahuto, OFM CAP will be ordained on 12th May 2016 at Pughoboto. Congratulations and prayers dear Deacons and wish you a fruitful priestly ministry.

Congratulations to the New General and Provincial Councillors Society of Pilar (Kolkata Province)

Rev. Fr. Attley Gomes	: Provincial Superior
Rev. Fr. Jude Antao	: Ist Councillor
Rev. Fr. Seby D'Souza	: 2nd Councillor
Rev. Fr. Habil Minj	: 3rd Councillor
Rev. Fr. Roque Rebello	: Provincial Treasurer

SABS : General Council

Mother Grace Perumbanani	: Superior General
Sr. Rosily Jose Ozhukayil	: Vicar General
Sr. Annett Chalangady	: 2nd Councillor
Sr. Jessy Maria	: 3rd Councillor
Sr. Annie Kurichiel	: 4th Councillor
Sr. Mercitta Kannampuzha	: 5th Councillor
Sr. Anit Karottupulluveliparayil	: Finance Officer
Sr. Blessy Therese Mangalathukary	: Secretary

FCC: General Council

Mother Ann Joseph	: Mother General
Sr. Flby	: Asst. General
Sr. Tresa Jose	: Councillor
Sr. Lisa Martin	: Councillor

Sr. Shefy Devia : Councillor
Sr. Starly : Councillor
Sr. Betsy Adappur : Councillor

St. Clare Province, Imphal, Manipur (FCC)

Sr. Lilly Maria : Provincial
Sr. Annie Kalapurackalparambil : Asst. Provincial
Sr. Annie Lisieux : Councillor
Sr. Lisa : Councillor
Sr. Elsa Renu : Councillor
Sr. Lilly Theresa : Finance Officer
Sr. Ancy Maria : Secretary

Amala Province: Tezpur (Sacred Heart)

Sr. Annie Areekuzy : Provincial Superior
Sr. Rose Marina Mekkannuel : Vice Provincial (Charitable Activities)
Sr. Ancy Jose Muttakulam : Councillor (Evangelization)
Sr. Vineeth Tresa Poovathumkal : Councillor (Education)
Sr. Ancy George Aryankalayil : Councillor (Social Welfare Activities)
Sr. Bincy Jose : Provincial Auditor
Sr. Annie Catherine : Provincial Procurator

Transfers

Holy Cross Convent: Dimapur
Sr. Susan Maria BS : Holy Cross School
Sr. Therese Rothangpui BS : Pastoral Ministry
Sr. Aquinas BS : Transferred

May their Souls rest in Peace

Mrs. Acchama Mathew Mundathanam (84), eldest Sister of Fr. Sebastian Ousepparampil (Principal, St. Joseph's College) passed away on 14th October, 2015.

Mr. Abraham (70) the uncle of Fr. Sajimon (Pungro) passed away on 20th October, 2015

Sr. Anitha (61) FCC (61) (worked in Nagaland) passed away on 8th November, 2015.

Mr. Mark Fernandes (61) elder brother of Rev. Sr. Milly Fernandes, UFC, Provincial Superior, passed away on 11th November, 2015.

Peter Kithan (former priest of our diocese) passed away on 15th November, 2015.

Mr. Anthony, Father of Sr. Pauline (Baghty) passed away on December, 6th, 2015.

Rev. Fr. Cherian Moollamattam (diocese of Tezpur) passed away on December 8th, 2015.

Bishop Anthony Francis Sharma S.J., emeritus Bishop of the Apostolic Vicariate of Nepal, passed away on December 9, 2015.

Bishop's Program (December 2015 – March 2016)

- Dec 2015** **08** **Immaculate Conception – Jubilee Year of Mercy begins**
09-11 Kohima
12 To Wokha
13 Wokha – Golden Jubilee of the Parish & Ordination
14 Dimapur –Senate (2.00 pm, BH Dimapur) Recollection (HC 5.30 pm)
15 Dimapur – Priests' meeting (9.30 am) Consulters (5.30 pm, BH Dimapur)
16 Dimapur: GB, HRHC (9.00 am)
17 Kohima
18 To Meluri
19 Phor village – Silver Jubilee
20-21 Lozaphuhu: Youth Jubilee
22 Church Blessing (Tronger)
23 Kohima
24 Dimapur (Christmas Vigil)
25 Kohima
26 Rosuma Village Jubilee, to Tobu
27 Tobu – Reception of New Members into the Church
28 Return from Tobu
29 Medziphema: Mass for Junior Sisters (Sdp), to Bhandari
30 Bhandari – Priestly Ordination of Deacon Victor Renthungo
31 Kohima
- Jan 2016** 01-07 Kohima
08 Dimapur: Mass for UFC
09 Khonoma – Youth Jubilee, to Zhavame
10 Zhavame (Zhamai) Golden Jubilee and Blessing of the New Church
11-14 Kerala
15-17 Chizami: Chakhesang Women Association Convention
Jubilee for Migrants & Refugees
18 Kohima
19-20 Guwahati – MSFS Provincialate
21 Jalukie: Blessing of the Songlhuh Church
22 Dimapur
23 Diphu: CRI Celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life
24 Wokha – NCWA Convention, 51st International Eucharist Congress (Philippines)
25-26 Wokha-Kohima
27-30 Kohima – Catechists' Convention
30-31 Dimapur: National Peace Convention
- Feb 2016** 01 Dimapur: National Peace Convention
02-04 Kohima,
05-06 Shamator-Kiphire
07 Kiphire: Jubilee of Women Association of Kiphire
08-09 Pungro

- 10 Kohima, **Ash Wednesday** (Holiday for Catholic Schools)
- 11-13 Kohima
- 14 Kohima: Blessing of the New Church at Police Reserve, Kohima
- 15 Kohima – Mass at SDB Novitiate
- 16-21 Kohima
- 22-23 Zunheboto: Blessing of new school building
- 25 Dimapur: Senate (2.30 pm, BH, Dimapur).
Recollection for Priests and Members of the DPC (5.30 pm, Holy Cross)
- 26 Kohima: **Diocesan Pastoral Council** (9.30 am Pastoral Centre-Dimapur) Consulters’ Meeting (4.00 pm, BH, Dimapur).
Last date for submission of Budget for 2016-2017
- 27 Dimapur
- 28-29 Bangalore
- Mar 2016**
- 01-16 Bangalore: CBCI, CCBI Plenary Assemblies
- 12 Finance Committee meeting for assessment and approval of Budget (9.00, BH, K)
- 17-18 Kohima
- 19 Kohima – Feast of St. Joseph, Jakhama GB & OD team meeting
- 20 Dimapur, Palm Sunday (HC)
- 21 Kohima: Updating Accounting: Martin Pinto (CBCI Auditor) 9.00 am
Priests’ Meeting (2.00 pm, Mt. Tabor, Kohima), DF (6.00 pm)
- 22 Kohima: Recollection for Priests (9.30-12.30) Chrism Mass (3.00 pm)
Consulters’ Meeting (6.00 pm, BH, Kohima)
- 23 Kohima
- 24 Kohima: Holy Thursday
- 25 Chumukedima: Good Friday
- 26 Kohima: Easter Vigil (Cathedral)
- 27 Kohima: Easter Sunday (CKC, Kohima)
- 28 Kohima
- 29 Kohima, Death Anniversary of Fr. N. A. George
- 31 Kohima

Bishop James Thoppil
Bishop of Kohima

12 Ways to live the encyclical ‘Laudato Si’

Theme: One Human Family Caring for Creation

JANUARY 2016	Make a resolution with your family for the year 2016 for more responsible use of electricity and water in your house.
FEBRUARY 2016	Bring a group of likeminded people of your locality/parish together and discuss and plan for concrete actions on reducing the ill effect of climate change
MARCH 2016	Experience what it means to be hungry by giving up some food in the season of Lent; donate to the Church’s charity ministry from what you have saved.
APRIL 2016	Give your free and voluntary services during this month in a school/orphanage/institution
MAY 2016	Visit a lonely person – a widow/widower/single person family – of your neighborhood and spend some quality time with such persons and listen to someone who needs you.
JUNE 2016	Plant at least 3 trees in your farm/courtyard during this monsoon
JULY 2016	Switch off your cell phones for one hour each day during this month; instead spend time in talking to your family members
AUGUST 2016	See how it feels to travel by public transport or use a bicycle or walk during this month; Donate your savings for a social cause
SEPTEMBER 2016	Express your solidarity with the Church’s Social Ministry by volunteering to be a member of Parish Social Action Cell
OCTOBER 2016	Donate your old books, clothes and unwanted household items to someone who may need them more than you
NOVEMBER 2016	Take lead in organizing a “go green campaign” in your parish/neighborhood
DECEMBER 2016	Visit any poor family in your neighborhood and share a Christmas meal with its members

Suggestions by Caritas INDIA