

# DIOCESE OF KARWAR

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## CIRCULAR

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

### ***GREETINGS FROM BISHOP DEREK***

#### **CONSECRATION OF THE NEW BISHOP OF KARWAR**

The Consecration of the new Bishop of Karwar, Msgr. Duming Dias, will take place on St. Joseph's School Grounds, Kajubag on April 9, 2024 at 9.00 a.m.

The concerned Parish Priests and the Heads of the Institutions are requested to make arrangements, if necessary, to bring the people to the venue. The lunch would be catered to at the venue.

Further details in this regard will be sent to you in a separate communique shortly.

#### **PLENARY INDULGENCE FOR THE 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF BIRTH OF ST. MAGDALENE OF CANOSSA**

The year 2024 is the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of St. Magdalene of Canossa, who was the founder of the Canossian Daughters of Charity congregation. As we know well, Canossian Sisters have opened a new house in our diocese in Mangalwad and are busy with pastoral and social work. In the past they have also worked in Binaga, Mallapur and in St. Joseph's PU College. To mark this special year for the Canossians, *"the Apostolic Penitentiary has granted a Plenary Indulgence (under the usual conditions) for the faithful who will visit the parish churches or places of prayer where the Canossian Fathers or Canossian Sisters are present anywhere in the world, from 1<sup>st</sup> March to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024. Even the sick and all those who are unable to physically participate will still be able to benefit from the gift of the Indulgence, offering their sufferings to the Lord or carrying out acts of piety."*

I request the parish priests, where the Canossian Sisters are present, to explain this to the faithful so that they can benefit from this important spiritual gift.

#### **SOLEMNITY OF ST. JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY – 19 MARCH**

St. Joseph is the patron of the Universal Church. He watches over the Church like he watched over Mother Mary and her child Jesus Christ. He teaches the world the dignity of work and the role of a father in the family. There is no time like the present when the institutions of marriage, family and work need protection from the dangerous ideologies of materialism and gender. Fr. Donald Calloway, who authored a book on the Consecration to St. Joseph during the Year of St. Joseph (2021) writes that "there is no father or husband who knows more about the sacredness of marriage and the family or the self-sacrificing love required of fathers and husbands than St. Joseph. His paternal mission continues from heaven... St. Joseph is the key to overcoming the anthropological confusion so prevalent in our times. Under the watchful, steadfast love and care of St. Joseph, all ideologies and idols will crumble and fall before Jesus Christ!" (*Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of*

*Our Spiritual Father*, Day 4). Let us also hasten to St. Joseph for his intercession and patronage, that we may also be good Christian points of reference, especially to our children and our youth.

### **CHRISM MASS – 21 MARCH**

Chrism Mass this year will be held on Wednesday, March 21, 2024 at 10.30 a.m. in the Cathedral. I know that all the priests would be attending the Chrism Mass, in order to live the bond of the *Unum Presbyterium*. Pope Francis, in his homily during the Chrism Mass of 2023, spoke about the importance of the ‘anointing’ that priests receive at their ordination, and the necessity of not letting the ‘fragrance of our anointing’ dissipate in our lives. He said, “*Dear brothers, priestly maturity comes from the Holy Spirit and is achieved when he becomes the protagonist in our lives... by giving ourselves completely to the Lord who anointed us and who wants that anointing to penetrate to the depths of our being. Brothers, let us rediscover that the spiritual life becomes liberating and joyful.*” Let the Chrism Mass we celebrate together this year, be a moment of revitalizing our anointing.

At the same time, I also request all concerned, as is the custom in our diocese, to encourage people to attend in large numbers from all over the diocese. As usual the lunch would be served to all. Therefore, in order to facilitate proper catering and other arrangements, I request you to send in the number of lay faithful and the religious attending the Chrism Mass from your parishes and institutions to **Rev. Fr. Richard Rodrigues (+91 9481373744) by March 15, 2024.**

### **DAY OF REPARATION AT NANGAD– 22 MARCH**

The Friday immediately preceding Good Friday is observed as the Diocesan Day of Reparation, at the foot of the Holy Cross in Nandgad in the diocese of Belgaum. Many people from other dioceses, far and wide, have been visiting this place on this day wherein an emphasis is laid on Eucharist, Stations of the Cross and Confessions. Our Jewish brethren prepare themselves for ten days – through fasting, reconciliation with their neighbours and enemies, almsgiving – for the Feast of Atonement known as *Yom Kippur*. For us Christians, the Paschal Triduum is the great day where God reconciles mankind to Himself through the Paschal Mystery of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, it is very fitting that we prepare ourselves to partake of these sacred days through the Day of Reparation. I invite all from the diocese of Karwar to join us on the Nandgad Hill for the Day of Reparation. A pilgrimage on this day would certainly be in order.

### **HOLY WEEK AND PASCHAL TRIDUUM**

The month of March this year culminates with the Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum. The three holy days celebrating the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ form the heart of the fountain from which the entire sacramental life of the Church flows superabundantly. Hence, it is fundamental that we celebrate these days with all our faithful in the best possible manner, so that the spiritual gifts that these days bring may illuminate our entire lives and actions.

A passage from the *Treatise on the Kingdom of Jesus* by St. John Eudes can help us in this regard. He says: “*In fact, the mysteries of Jesus have not yet reached their total perfection and completion. They are certainly complete and perfect as much as they concern the person of Jesus, but not yet in us who are his members or in His Church which is His mystical body... God intends to make perfect in us the mysteries of His passion, death and resurrection. He makes present these mysteries by our suffering, dying and rising with him and in him. He desires to communicate with us His glorious and immortal condition that He has in heaven.*”

Therefore, these days, the liturgical celebrations are not merely a remembrance, but the means through which God communicates to us His glory, His eternal life. Hence, on

Palm Sunday, we commemorate ‘the Lord’s entry into the city for our salvation, following in His footsteps, so that, being made by His grace partakers of the Cross, we may have a share also in His Resurrection and in His life” (Invitation to the Blessing of the Palms). On Maundy Thursday, we receive the Spirit of our Lord who becomes a Servant, the High Priest who becomes the Sacrifice, and the King who becomes the Beloved. On Good Friday, the glorious Cross of Christ shines light on our sufferings and death, so that venerating His Cross we enter with Him into our ‘death’ like ‘the grain of wheat [that] falls into the earth and dies’ (cf. Jn 12:24). On the Paschal Vigil, we rejoice with Mother Church, ‘arrayed with the lightning of His glory’, singing ‘O love, O charity beyond all telling, to ransom a slave you gave away Your Son’ (from the *Exsultet*).

Therefore, let us all celebrate these days in such a way, that these mysteries are fulfilled in us and in the Church more and more. I am happy that in many parishes retreats have been conducted during the lenten days. Let us also encourage our faithful to take recourse to the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**.

#### **A DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER FOR THE NATION – MARCH 22**

Seeing that our Nation needs incessant prayer, in the final statement at the end of the recently held Assembly, the CBCI has prescribed March 22, 2024 as a day of fasting and prayer for the Nation which is the need of the hour. We as Christians bear a serious responsibility of praying for our nation and its leaders. St. Paul exhorts us saying thus: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior” (1 Tm 2:1-3). Therefore, March 22, 2024, will be observed as a nationwide day of fasting and prayer for our country. I request the parish priests and the religious to sensitize our faithful on the importance of this day of prayer.

#### **UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND AWARENESS OF VOTING**

While the church prefers to be non-partisan, yet is also necessary that all the faithful, who are eligible to vote, must exercise their fundamental duty of voting in the upcoming elections in order to choose the right leaders for our times. Awareness about voter ID cards, enrolling youth in the voters’ list etc. can also be taken up at the parish level. You may approach the Laity Commission Secretary in this regard, in case of need of any help, who would be very happy to help you in this regard.

#### **GESTIS VERBISQUE – ON THE VALIDITY OF THE SACRAMENTS**

The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith has published a note named “*Gestis verbisque*” on the validity of the Sacraments. The aim of this note is to state clearly some important points regarding the doctrine of the sacraments, and to reiterate the importance and the necessity of adhering faithfully to the matter and the form of the sacraments as determined by the Church. This note states that “*While in other areas of the Church’s pastoral action there is ample room for creativity, such inventiveness in the area of the celebration of the Sacraments turns rather in a “manipulative will” and cannot therefore be invoked. Changing, therefore, the form of a Sacrament or its subject matter is always a gravely illicit act and deserves exemplary punishment, precisely because such arbitrary gestures are capable of producing grave harm to God’s faithful People.*” The note concisely presents how the Church is received and expressed in the sacraments, and how the Church guards and is guarded by the sacraments. “*Both matter and form, summarized by the Code of Canon Law, are established in the liturgical books promulgated by the competent authority, which must therefore be faithfully observed, without adding, taking away or changing anything.*”(Gestis Verbisque, n. 17). The note also presents reflections of liturgical presidency and the art of celebration.

In the light of this document, I request all the ministers of the sacraments to faithfully adhere to the texts of the liturgical rites given in the officially promulgated Liturgical Books. It is good to purchase the present editions of the liturgical books like 'Order of Celebrating Matrimony', 'Order of Confirmation' etc. This will ensure the validity of the liturgy and the sacraments celebrated and thus safeguard the faithful from serious problems.

#### **FIRST "WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY" – 25-26 MAY, 2024 IN ROME**

Though this event is going to take place in the month of May, I am bringing this to your notice now itself, so that necessary preparations can be made at the parish level.

On December 8, 2023, after the Angelus on the occasion of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Pope Francis announced a World Children's Day similar to the World Youth Day. The First "World Children's Day" will be celebrated in Rome, on 25-26, May, 2024. This event aims to "offer children the possibility to become protagonists through moments of prayer, friendship, and formation" said Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect of the Dicastery for Culture and Education, which will co-ordinate this event. This first event will be held on two levels, in Rome and universally at the diocesan level. The fact that this event is happening in the Year of Prayer for the Jubilee stresses that prayer and love for Jesus will be at the heart of this event. *"The dominant elements will be prayer, adoration, and celebration of the faith, showing how children are not objects in the transmission of the faith, but are protagonists. Children believe in Jesus"* Cardinal Mendonça added. In this light, it is important that we plan some programmes or activities for our children at the diocesan or parish level.

#### **EASTER HOUSE BLESSING**

Easter House Blessing is one of the important aspects of the Easter ministry. The tradition of Catholic priests blessing homes after Easter is rooted in the belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the renewal of life. It symbolizes the joy and hope of Easter and serves as a reminder of the spiritual significance of the season. The blessing is seen as a way to invoke God's presence, protection, and grace upon the household, ensuring a spiritually enriched environment for the family. It also provides an opportunity for members of the community to come together in prayer and fellowship, strengthening their faith and bonds with one another. **I request all priests to take this ministry seriously.**

#### **NECROLOGY:**

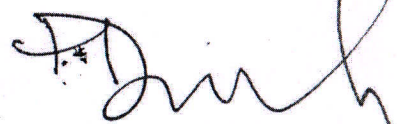
Mrs. Carmine D Souza (102), the mother of Fr. Stanislaus D Souza, returned to the Lord on 20-2-2024.

Mrs. Ambubai (75) the elder sister of Fr. Gnana Prakash Rao returned to the Lord on 19-2-2024.

Fr. Anthony Balgundkar, priest of our diocese returned to the Lord on 27-2-2024.

**Wishing you all a grace filled Passion Week and every Joy of the Risen Lord.**

**Yours fraternally in Christ,**



**(✠ Derek Fernandes)**  
Ap. Adm of Karwar

#### **Reminders:**

**In view of the Chrism Mass on 21<sup>st</sup> March, there will be no clergy meeting/recollection for the month of March.**

**The financial year ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March; please keep your books of accounts up to date.**