

DIOCESE OF KARWAR

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KARNATAKA, INDIA

CIRCULAR



MOST REV. DEREK FERNANDES
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1 April, 2024

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

CHRIST IS TRULY RISEN, ALLELUIA!

ADIEU

This is my last circular to you. Hence, I wish to say good bye to all of you as the Bishop/Apostolic Administrator of Karwar.

While I have sent you a separate pastoral letter in this regard, still, for the sake of record I would like to repeat a paragraph from that:

“I thank you most sincerely for all the love and work with which you have supported me in my ministry and I ask pardon for all my defects. And now, let us entrust the Holy Church to the care of Our Supreme Pastor, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and implore his holy Mother Mary, so that she may assist the New Bishop with her maternal solicitude, in guiding you in faith and love. I would like to invite all to renew our firm confidence in the Lord, to entrust ourselves like children in God’s arms, certain that those arms always hold us, enabling us to press forward each day, even when the going is rough. I want everyone to feel loved by that God who gave his Son for us and who has shown us his infinite love. I want everyone to feel the joy of being a Christian. And you dear priests, and brothers and sisters, may you respect and obey the shepherd entrusted to you with love and faith, so that the Lord may bring to completion in you what he has started. We are all certain that the Lord has great plans for the whole diocese together with each of its members.”

I would like to reiterate that as Bishop and Apostolic Administrator of Karwar, all my successes are yours, my failures are mine. Let us continue further with love and brotherhood. We are not placed far away; but in the neighbourhood. You are most welcome to Belgaum any time.

EPISCOPAL ORDINATION OF MSGR. DUMING DIAS – APRIL 9, 2024

I am repeating a few things already communicated to you both in the circular and through the WhatsApp messages.

The programme will begin at 9.00 a.m. and will end with the lunch. Please try to be at the venue at least by 8.30 a.m. and see that every bit of the election code of conduct is followed strictly.

For proper conduct of the programme and the arrangements to be made, it is **important to know the number of people attending**. Hence, each parish priest and

the heads of the institutions are requested to **send in the number of people attending** from your parishes/institutions immediately, if you have not done it already.

The finance committee is grateful to all those who have responded positively with regard to the collection of Funds. Many have responded. Thank you for this. All those who are still to respond in this regard, I request you to do it at the earliest as the program of this sort requires heavy expenditure.

Those attending the episcopal ordination may contact the contact numbers printed on the invitation, especially if you need overnight accommodation. Please call and get the advance information regarding the parking of cars and other requirements from these.

Since there will be many guests coming from outside, our priority should be sacrifice on our behalf and make the guests as comfortable as possible. This may be noted, especially at the venue.

Request for prayer: A programme of this magnitude cannot be successfully conducted without the help of God. Hence, as already communicated to you, please have a **Holy Hour on Sunday April 7, 2024** to pray for the success of the programme and the Episcopal Ministry of the new Bishop.

Those involved in the conduct of programmes in any way are requested to clear all that has to be cleared and claimed, both monetary or otherwise, by April 12, 2024. This is necessary to be accountable and transparent. An evaluation meeting will be called subsequently to close the matter pertaining to the Episcopal Ordination. This will be communicated later.

PASCHAL SEASON 2024

In the last few days, we have all joyfully celebrated the most sacred mysteries of our redemption in the Paschal Triduum. I wish you all that the victory of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ over death and sin, fills our lives, our parishes and our communities with light and with love, and thus makes us His shining witnesses. Pope Francis in his Easter homily this year commented upon the women who first thought who will roll away the stone from the entrance to the tomb; then, in a second moment, looking up, they see that it has already been rolled. Therefore, *“Let us raise our gaze to Jesus... resurrected by the Father in his and in our flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit, he opened a new page for mankind. From that moment, if we let ourselves be taken by the hand of Jesus, no experience of failure and pain, however much it hurts us, can have the last word on the meaning and destiny of our life. From that moment, if we allow ourselves to be seized by the Risen One, no defeat, no suffering, no death will be able to stop our path towards the fullness of life.”* (Pope Francis, Homily for Easter 2024).



May these coming fifty days of Eastertide leading to the Pentecost, be an extended moment of grace when we can experience this fullness of life within ourselves and in the lives of everyone around us. I request all the priests working in the parishes to carry all these blessings of this season to each house through the annual house blessing in this season. Through this, all the graces that our people have received in these holy days as a community, may now receive them as a family. This will also help us to come to know our faithful better, and thereby, respond better to their needs and aspirations.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY – 7 APRIL, 2024

The second Sunday of Eastertide is now celebrated all over the world as Divine Mercy Sunday, thanks to the private revelations of our Lord to the Polish nun St. Faustina Kowalska and the intense piety towards the Divine Mercy that Pope St. John Paul II had. It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for mercy '*rahamim*' is derived from the word that signifies the womb of a mother '*rehem*'. This connection reveals to us the real nature of God's mercy for us. Divine Mercy is not only compassion or pity of God towards His lowly creatures. Rather, in its essence, it is also the fullness of the grace of God that regenerates a person and makes him new, just like the mother's womb gratuitously generates a new person. Therefore, the streams of Divine Mercy, gushing from the opened side of Jesus, invite us to be submerged in them, so that we too can be born anew, freed from all sin.

SOLEMNITY OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD – 8 APRIL, 2024

The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, which is usually celebrated on 25th March, is celebrated on 8th April this year, because it fell within the Holy Week. This Solemnity is placed nine months prior to the Nativity of Our Lord, and therefore, occurs close to the Lenten or in the Paschal season. If the Paschal festivities celebrate the glorious culmination of the mysteries of our salvation, Annunciation on the other hand points to the beginnings of these mysteries. Annunciation also reveals that an important and necessary element in our redemption is free and total 'yes' of our will to the initiative of God. Mary said '*fiat*' and the Word became flesh. Remembering also the words of St. Augustine who said 'Our Lord who created us without our consent, will not save us without our consent.' Therefore, let us learn from the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom the crucified Christ gave us as our Mother, to say a total 'yes' to God's actions in our lives.

GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY – 21 APRIL, 2024

The fourth Sunday of Easter time is traditionally observed as the Good Shepherd Sunday, in reference to the Gospel of the Good Shepherd that is proclaimed on that Sunday (Jn 10:11-18). As we all know well, this is also the Sunday on which a special emphasis is placed on vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life. Christ Himself is aware of the need of more labourers to work in his fields and instructs us to pray for this intention: 'The harvest is rich, but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers to his harvest' (Mt 9:37). This should be our first response to the declining number of vocations all over – insistent prayer to the Lord to send shepherds like Himself to tend his flock. I request all the parish priests and others, to support the vocation camps organized by the diocesan Director of Vocations inviting the altar servers and the youth, and to also request all our faithful to pray earnestly for vocations.

ELECTIONS IN KARNATAKA – 26 APRIL AND 7 MAY

I am sure everyone is aware that the dates of the 2024 General Elections have been declared. Our state of Karnataka will go to polls on 26th April and 7th May, 2024. It is to be borne in mind that the Church is non-partisan, and does not favour any political party or any ideology. It is very important that this attitude should always be reflected in our thoughts, words and the messages that we circulate. At the same time, it is our fundamental duty as responsible citizens of our nation, to exercise our right to vote, in order to elect the right leaders for our state and our nation. I am sure the efforts made by you to get people enrolled in the voters' list etc. have been successful. You may approach the Laity Commission Secretary in case of need of any help in this regard, who would be very happy to guide you.

MISSION SUNDAY COLLECTIONS IN THE DIOCESE

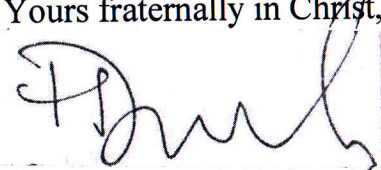
I must congratulate all the Parish Priests, Asst. Parish Priests and others who were involved in the animation and conducting of the mission-oriented activities for the celebration of the Mission Sunday in the diocese. The collection this year has been Rs. 90,00,331.00 (Ninety lakhs three hundred and thirty-one only) which has already been transmitted to its destination.

1	O.L. of Assumption Church, Kajubag	7,07,070.00
2	St. John the Baptist Church, Kumta	6,24,300.00
3	Infant Jesus Church, Prabhatnagar	6,11,000.00
4	San Salvador Church, Honavar	4,06,746.00
5	O.L. of Happy Death Church, Samsi	3,37,465.00
6	St. Anthony's Church, Dandeli	3,03,860.00
7	Holy Cross Church, Manki	2,83,354.00
8	O. L. of Miracles Church, Haliyal	2,46,350.00
9	St. Francis of Assisi Church, Hadinbal	2,17,611.00
10	St. Anne's Church, Binaga	2,16,370.00

I have mentioned above 10 higher amount-wise collections. This does not mean that the others have lagged behind. The per capita collection of some of the smaller parishes has been very high. May God bless all of you, especially the parishioners, symbol of whose sacrifice is the collection mentioned above.

Wishing you all every Joy of the Risen Lord,

Yours fraternally in Christ,



✠Derek Fernandes
Ap. Adm of Karwar

Reminders:

There will be no clergy recollection for the months of April and May.