



**MDB 02/2024**

**MYSORE DIOCESAN BULLETIN**

**MAR & APR 2024**



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## **THE JUBILEE PRAYER**

**Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have given us  
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,  
and the flame of charity enkindled  
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
reawaken in us the blessed hope  
for the coming of your Kingdom.**

**May your grace transform us into  
tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.  
May those seeds transform from within  
both humanity and the whole cosmos  
in the sure expectation of  
a new heaven and a new earth,  
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,  
your glory will shine eternally.**

**May the grace of the Jubilee  
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,  
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.**

**May that same grace spread  
the joy and peace of our Redeemer  
throughout the earth.**

**To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.**

**Amen**



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## SHEPHERD'S VOICE

***Dear & Rev. Fathers/Brothers/Sisters/Lay Faithful***

Greetings from Archbishop Emeritus Bernard Moras,  
Apostolic Administrator, Diocese of Mysore.

We are in the graceful season of the liturgical year – Lent. As we commemorate the forty days of fasting and prayer of Christ our Redeemer in the desert, let us also enter into such desert experience with Him, so that we can joyfully celebrate the Resurrection with Him. The people of Israel were in the desert for forty years and they could experience the presence of the Lord in their lives in those forty years all the more than in the years of their habitation in the promised land; not that the Lord had gone away from them, but because of their sinful ways, they went away from the Lord during their stay in Canaan.

The Holy Father Pope Francis has given us his Lenten message on the theme ***“Through the Desert God Leads us to Freedom”***. Holy Father in his message states people of Israel through Moses received **“Ten words”** as a thoroughfare to freedom which are called “commandments”. Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more – in the words of the prophet Hosea – the place of our first love (cf. Hos 2:16-17).

Lent is the time to act which also means to pause in prayer in order to receive the word of God. **Annexure - 1**

Desert experience is a must for every Christian to understand the real love and concern of the Lord. It is in the desert situation of one's life that the person feels the need of the presence of the Lord more. Even in the book of Hosea, we see that the Lord says that he will take the people of Israel into the desert to help them understand His nearness to them. It is in the desert that he wanted to make the people realise their former closeness and wanted to re-establish their relation. When we pass through such desert experience in our personal lives, we realise the love of the Lord and we are able to grow closer to Him.

Most of us, unfortunately wish to celebrate the Easter and do not wish to undergo the Lent - the desert experience in our lives. But the fact is this, we cannot celebrate Easter without the Good Friday. Let this season of Lent be a real desert experience for each of us, so that we can celebrate the Easter more meaningfully.

As our Holy Father puts it, this lent, let us try to re-establish our broken relationships, only when we heal the wounds incurred by ourselves in moving far away from each other, not listening to the cry of the other, we cannot really heal the brokenness. Without such reconciliation with our fellow brothers and sisters, our relationship with the Lord, is impossible and our Lenten observance will end up only in mere external celebration of the Easter.



## IMPORTANT EVENTS

### HOLY WEEK

This year, we begin the Holy Week on the 24th of March, with Palm Sunday. As the name goes, it is the most holy of all the weeks of the year for us Christians. Let us make the best use of the Holy Week to ponder over the sacrificial love of God and try to return to him with all our heart.

- **Palm Sunday:** As we carry the blessed palm leaves in our hands and walk towards the altar, let us remember the procession of the final entrance of Christ into Jerusalem. As we begin seriously to meditate upon the passion of Christ, may we make use of the days of the Holy Week to prepare ourselves well to celebrate the joy of the Easter, especially with good confession. *Please note, that the collections during the Holy Mass on Palm Sunday are to be sent to the diocese for the purpose of Communio India Sunday to CCBI.*
- **Maundy Thursday:** It is a call to practice sacrificial sharing and self-giving love. Let us imitate the self-giving model of Jesus who shares with us his own Body and Blood and enriches us with his Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist. It is a special day to remember and pray for our priests, that they may imbibe the qualities of the eternal Good Shepherd. *Kindly note that the collections during the Holy Mass on Maundy Thursday are to be sent to the diocese towards the fund to care for the elderly and sick priests of our diocese.*

- **Good Friday:** On Good Friday we commemorate the death of Jesus on the cross. When we prayerfully meditate before the crucifix, we can see and begin to understand the ultimate result of sin. On this Good Friday, let us embrace our cross with great affection and love and carry our crosses, to deny our very selves as we surrender to God's will. Great is the power in each of our crosses to create a new breed of humans, true sons and daughters of God. *Please note that the collections during the Good Friday services have to be sent to the diocese towards the "Hunger and disease" funds.*

## EASTER

Easter is the feast of victory of Christ over the evil one. Indeed, Christ won over evil two millennia ago. However, we still experience evil around us and even within us. If only each one of us try sincerely to overcome our own shortcomings and try to live according to the will of God, we can surely celebrate Easter with real joy of having defeated the evil in our lives. Let us rejoice and be glad on our Lord's Resurrection which brings us so many graces and blessings, we have been cleansed from our sins with a renewed hope, and a deepened faith which will serve as our armour against evil forces. Let us faithfully renew our baptismal promises and make sincere efforts to live the same.

I wish a very Happy Feast of Easter to all of you. The Risen Lord's first words to the Apostles were **"PEACE BE WITH YOU"**. May the peace of Christ dwell in our hearts and among all us.

## **ST. JOSEPH THE CHASTE SPOUSE OF MOTHER MARY**

On 19<sup>th</sup> March, we celebrate the solemnity of St. Joseph, the most chaste spouse of Blessed Virgin Mary. It is indeed apt that we celebrate this solemnity even within the season of lent, for St. Joseph becomes an example for all of us in leading a real dedicated life, to live according to the holy will of God. St. Joseph realized the will of God only in dreams and still took it to the heart and made it a reality in his life. May St. Joseph be an inspiration for all of us in accomplishing the will of God in our lives, very specially in living out our responsibilities with sincerity.

## **ANNUNCIATION OF INCARNATION OF OUR LORD**

This year **on 08-04-2024**, Monday, we celebrate the solemnity of the faithfulness of Mother Mary to the call of God – the annunciation of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ by the angel Gabriel. The acceptance of the will of God by Blessed Virgin Mary inaugurated the new episode in our salvation history. The *fiat* of our divine Mother is an example for all of us to accept the will of God even amidst challenging situations and uncertainties of our life. May the faithful Mother intercede for us, so that we too may remain faithful to our Christian vocation.

## **DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY ON 07-04-2024**

The heart of Jesus that was pierced on the cross overflows with the divine mercy. We all partake in the fountain of mercy every fraction of second that we breathe and live here on earth. But unfortunately, we fail to share that mercy with our fellow brothers and sisters. If God were to be a just and merciless judge, none of us could see this day in our life. It

is only because of his abounding mercy that we are seeing this very day of our life. As we experience the mercy of the Lord, we too are expected to share that same mercy with our fellow brethren. May the feast of the Divine Mercy be an opportunity to each one of us to forgive those whom we have not forgiven and re-establish the broken relationships.

## **BIRTHDAY / EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION DAY**

Bishop Emeritus K. A. William Celebrated his Birthday and Episcopal Consecration Day on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February.

Most Rev. Dr. Thomas A. Vazhapilly, the Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Mysore celebrates the anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination on 25<sup>th</sup> March and his birthday on 11<sup>th</sup> April.

At this juncture, as we wish them congratulations and Happy Birthday, we also pray that the Almighty blesses them with good health of mind and body. *Ad multos annos* your excellencies!.



## INFORMATION

### THE CBCI MESSAGE / STATEMENT BY CBCI

CBCI General Body Meeting was held from 30th January to 7th February 2024 at St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bangalore on the theme ***"The Church's Response to the Current Socio-Political Situation of the Country and the Benefits and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI)."***

Please find attached message /statement of CBCI – **Annexure – 2.**

### CLERGY RECOLLECTION & CHRISM MASS

All priests working in the Diocese will have a Clergy Recollection starting from 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 20th March 2024 at Catholic Centre.

**The program will be: -**

4.00 p.m.- Arrival and Tea

4.30 to 5.30 p.m.- Talk

6.00 to 7.30 p.m.- Adoration & Confessions

7.30 p.m.- Supper & Rosary

**On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024** the Chrism Mass will be celebrated at St. Joseph's Cathedral, at 7.00 a.m. Chrism Mass a "un presbyterium" signify oneness among the priests.

I request all the priests including religious in the Diocese to participate in the Chrism Mass celebration.

## NATIONAL DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER ON FRIDAY 22ND MARCH 2024.

As suggested by the CBCI general body and announced in the Final Statement CBCI called upon to observe ***“National Day of Fasting and Prayer”*** in all the Dioceses. It has suggested few spiritual activities which could be taken up in our Parishes / Religious Institutions, etc.

1. Chain rosary
2. Jericho Prayer
3. Holy hour in every parish
4. 40 hours of adoration with fasting
5. Night Vigil
6. Way of the Cross, Divine Mercy at a specified time in every parish
7. Bible passage readings with reflection

I appeal all the Parish Priest, Heads of institutions, CRI, to announce the same and organize the ***“National Day of Fasting and Prayer”*** on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024.

This “National Day of Fasting and Prayer” is very important at a time our world is going through unrest in various parts of the world as Holy Father calls it Third World War in beats in pieces. We are also in our country preparing ourselves with the coming National Election; at the same time India is facing many attacks in many minority institutions and various section of the people. In the season of lent may the good Lord show mercy to all of us and guide us and the authorities in the right direction.

Let us observe this “National Day of Fasting and Prayer” with great enthusiasm and dedication.

## **AN APPEAL FROM CBCI OFFICE FOR JUSTICE, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT:**

The CBCI Office for Justice, Peace and Development has prepared An Appeal to Recite the Preamble of our Constitution after the Sunday Mass in every parish.

I am attaching the Appeal here.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings of peace and joy to you all!

We have begun the holy season of Lent and are invited to repent, fast, and pray. We are also called to share our gifts with the poor and practice mercy and fraternal care. It is also a time to renew our commitment to serve our country, which is a gift from God and an obligation of us.

As we are all aware, we live in a time of challenges and uncertainty in our country. We are facing the threats of violence, corruption, poverty, unemployment, and environmental degradation. These issues affect us all, regardless of our political preferences.

The **PREAMBLE** of the Constitution of India declares that ***we, the people of India, have resolved to constitute India into a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, and to secure to all its citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.*** We share these ideals as Christians and Indians, and we must strive to uphold them.

**As a sign of our commitment, to be the salt of the earth and light of the world, to our country and our Constitution, we propose that during these days of Lent, after the Mass on**

**Sundays, we recite together the Preamble of the Constitution of India. This will help us to remember and appreciate the values and principles that unite us as a nation and as the people of God.**

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May he make his face shine upon you and give you peace.

### **ADMISSION TO ST. MARY'S MINOR SEMINARY**

Dear Fathers, Canon 233 states that "it is the duty of the whole Christian community to foster vocations to priesthood. In particular this duty binds Christian families, educators and in a special way, priests, especially parish priests ..." Kindly encourage and promote boys who have completed 10<sup>th</sup> Std., II PUC and any Degree course to join St. Mary's Seminary, Mysore. Even those who have recently written their final exams may seek admissions to the Diocesan Seminary at Mysore. Kindly make the announcements during the Sunday Mass and contact Fr. Patrick Xavier, Rector, St. Mary's Seminary to obtain the application forms for the candidates.

### **INTERNATION WOMEN'S DAY**

On 8<sup>th</sup> of March is celebrated the International Women's Day. The Women's Commission of the Diocese of Mysore is planning some activities to bring home to all the importance of women in the family and in the society.

### **FIRST WORLD CHILDREN DAY**

Holy Father Pope Francis has announced first World Children's Day on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The Day will be celebrated both at the international level in Rome and in all

the Diocesan level in each of the Dioceses. Theme chosen by the Holy Father for the first World Children's Day is "**Behold, I make all things new**". **Annexure -3**

## VOCATION AND CAREER GUIDANCE CAMP

As every year, this year too the diocesan commission for catechesis in collaboration with other diocesan commissions, is organizing the vocation and career guidance camp for all the Catholic students who complete 10th standard (who write the SSLC exams this year). It is indeed a crucial moment in the lives of the budding young boys and girls to make the right choice in their career. This is also the time to choose the call given by God to them in their lives, be it for religious life or for a secular way of life. This camp is aimed at helping the Catholic students to make the right choice in selecting their career / vocation.

However, this year the camp will not be conducted in three different places, as it used to be in the near past. This year the camp will be conducted for all the students only in Mysore. The camp will be held on 7, 8 & 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2024.

I request all the Parish Priests and the heads of the educational institutions to make necessary arrangements to make sure that all the catholic students attend the same without fail. For further information, kindly contact Fr. Sebastian Alexander, the Diocesan Secretary for the Commission for Catechesis - Mob. No. 8310574532.

## THE WOMEN COMMISSION

The Commission for Women the Diocese of Mysore celebrated Consecrated Religious Day on 24 February 2024

at St Joseph's Cathedral, Mysore. The theme was "Living for God and others". The program began with the Eucharistic celebration by His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras the Apostolic Administrator of Mysore. A short cultural program was organized in the auditorium to honor all the religious sisters for their dedicated service to the church and society at large. Around 100 religious' sisters of Mysore deanery participated in the celebration. Mrs. Joyce Lobo, CEO of Mysore Diocesans Educational Society (MDES) delivered the meaningful inaugural address. She stressed that for religious beauty cosmetic is the love for others specially for the poor and neglected ones. The Apostolic Administrator of Mysore presided over the function. We thank Mrs. A M Emily, the Secretary of Women Commission and her team for organizing the Consecrated Religious Day celebration.

## **PRISON MINISTRY**

The prison Ministry Members organized adoration, and annual report presentation at catholic center on 25 February. The Apostolic Administrator of Mysore presided over the function. Mysore Diocese has a unit of prison ministry India and we carry out programs of renewal, release and rehabilitation of individual prisoners- men, women or youth in Mysuru, Mandya, Kollegal, Nanjangud, K. R. Nagar and Mercara etc. We thank Mr. Michal Noronha and his team and volunteers who are tirelessly rendering their service to the prisoners through various ways. PMI members in their report said that there are many youngsters in various prisons for alleged, POCSO cases, many at times without knowing the consequences. PMI appeals all educational institutions to educate the children and youth with regard to POCSO legislation

## TRANSFERS

There will be transfers of the Priests who have completed six or seven years at their respective places. They are requested to keep all the records ready as specified in the Mysore Pastoral Guidelines issued in 2017. Reproduced below.

### Page. 154. 5.6.8. Parish records

The Parish Priest has to maintain all the registers and files pertaining to his ministry and administration.

#### a). Sacramental Registers

1. Baptism
2. First Holy Communion
3. Confirmation
4. Marriage
5. Funeral

#### b). Family Record Register or Status Animarum Census

#### c). 1. Parish Mass Diary

2. Cumulative Mass Diary
3. Special Mass Diary

#### d). Accounts Registers

1. Cash Book
2. Ledger
3. Register of Donors (Cash and Kind)
4. Sunday and Offertory Collections
5. Dumb box Collections
6. Parish Subscription

#### e). Inventory

#### f). Cemetery (Permanent Graves) Register

#### g). Register of Taking Charge of the Parish

**h). Minutes Books**

1. Parish pastoral Council
2. Parish Finance Committee
3. Meetings of Parish Clergy and Religious

**i). Other books and Records**

1. Sunday Announcements
2. Certificates Issued
3. Sick calls with Sacrament of Anointing

**j). Files**

1. Diocesan Circulars
2. Correspondence with Bishop
3. Pastoral Visits
4. Baptisms (Pre-Baptismal Forms)
5. Matrimonial Correspondence or Pre-Matrimonial Enquiry
6. Banns
7. Property (copies of Title deeds, Record of Rights...)
8. Bank Statements File
9. Bank Correspondence File
10. Payment and Vouchers file year - wise containing bills and vouchers
11. Correspondence with the Diocesan Curia
12. Accounts (Audited Statements)
13. Building (Permissions, Plan and Estimates, Building License, etc)
14. Parish Feast
15. Lit of priests and Religious institution in the parish
16. Parish Association
17. Catholic Women's League
18. Youth
19. Family



20. Laity
21. Vocations
22. Bible
23. Liturgy
24. Catechetics
25. Social Communication
26. Legion of Mary
27. St. Vincent de Paul Society
28. Pontifical Mission Societies
29. Correspondence with the Government Officials
30. Taxes- Bills, Notices, Receipts, etc.
31. Electricity- Bills, Receipts and correspondence
32. Telephone - Bills, Receipts and correspondence
33. Gas - Bills, Receipts and correspondence
34. General correspondence
35. Parish Hall
36. Pastoral Handbook
37. Liturgical Books
38. Miscellaneous

### **THE BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 01-04-2024 TO 31-03-2025**

Preparation of the budget accurately will help in planning properly the finances of the Parishes / Institutions / Diocese, hence all the priests are requested to prepare the budget of the Parishes / Institutions / Diocese with the help of the Parish Finance Committee based on the figures of the previous years.

The Financial Administrator has already sent by now the format for the preparation of the budget.

I request all the priests to co-operate and prepare the budget well as informed that the budget could be scrutinized and finalized before the end of March, 2024

### **EARMARKED COLLECTIONS:**

As we are coming to an end of the financial year by next month, all are reminded to send the stipulated collections to the Financial Administrator at the earliest. Let us avoid last minute transactions. While thanking you all, for sending the collections in time for specific purposes, I request those who have not sent the same, to send them without delay. Please find enclosed the details of the earmarked collections received for the period from January - February 2024 in **Annexure - 4.**

+Archbishop Emeritus  
**Most Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras**  
The Apostolic Administrator,  
Diocese of Mysore.

## ANNEXURE - 1

*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2024*

### THROUGH THE DESERT GOD LEADS US TO FREEDOM

Dear brothers and sisters!

When our God reveals himself, his message is always one of freedom: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex 20:2). These are the first words of the Decalogue given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Those who heard them were quite familiar with the exodus of which God spoke: the experience of their bondage still weighed heavily upon them. In the desert, they received the “Ten Words” as a thoroughfare to freedom. We call them “commandments”, in order to emphasize the strength of the love by which God shapes his people. The call to freedom is a demanding one. It is not answered straightaway; it has to mature as part of a journey. Just as Israel in the desert still clung to Egypt – often longing for the past and grumbling against the Lord and Moses – today too, God’s people can cling to an oppressive bondage that it is called to leave behind. We realize how true this is at those moments when we feel hopeless, wandering through life like a desert and lacking a promised land as our destination. Lent is the season of grace in which the desert can become once more – in the words of the prophet Hosea – the place of our first love (cf. Hos 2:16-17). *God shapes his people, he enables us to leave our slavery behind* and experience a Passover from death to life. Like a bridegroom, the Lord draws us once more to himself, whispering words of love to our hearts.

The exodus from slavery to freedom is no abstract journey. If our celebration of Lent is to be concrete, the first step is to desire to *open our eyes to reality*. When the Lord calls out to

Moses from the burning bush, he immediately shows that he is a God who sees and, above all, hears: "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey" (Ex 3:7-8). Today too, the cry of so many of our oppressed brothers and sisters rises to heaven. Let us ask ourselves: Do we hear that cry? Does it trouble us? Does it move us? All too many things keep us apart from each other, denying the fraternity that, from the beginning, binds us to one another.

During my visit to Lampedusa, as a way of countering the globalization of indifference, I asked two questions, which have become more and more pressing: "Where are you?" (Gen 3:9) and "Where is your brother?" (Gen 4:9). Our Lenten journey will be concrete if, by listening once more to those two questions, we realize that even today we remain under the rule of Pharaoh. A rule that makes us weary and indifferent. A model of growth that divides and robs us of a future. Earth, air and water are polluted, but so are our souls. True, Baptism has begun our process of liberation, yet there remains in us an inexplicable longing for slavery. A kind of attraction to the security of familiar things, to the detriment of our freedom.

In the Exodus account, there is a significant detail: it is God who sees, is moved and brings freedom; Israel does not ask for this. Pharaoh stifles dreams, blocks the view of heaven, makes it appear that this world, in which human dignity is trampled upon and authentic bonds are denied, can never change. He put everything in bondage to himself. Let us ask: Do I want a new world? Am I ready to leave behind my compromises with the old? The witness of many of my brother bishops

and a great number of those who work for peace and justice has increasingly convinced me that we need to combat a deficit of hope that stifles dreams and the silent cry that reaches to heaven and moves the heart of God. This “deficit of hope” is not unlike the nostalgia for slavery that paralyzed Israel in the desert and prevented it from moving forward. An exodus can be interrupted: how else can we explain the fact that humanity has arrived at the threshold of universal fraternity and at levels of scientific, technical, cultural, and juridical development capable of guaranteeing dignity to all, yet gropes about in the darkness of inequality and conflict.

God has not grown weary of us. Let us welcome Lent as the great season in which he reminds us: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Ex 20:2). Lent is *a season of conversion, a time of freedom*. Jesus himself, as we recall each year on the first Sunday of Lent, was driven into the desert by the Spirit in order to be tempted in freedom. For forty days, he will stand before us and with us: the incarnate Son. Unlike Pharaoh, God does not want subjects, but sons and daughters. The desert is the place where our freedom can mature in a personal decision not to fall back into slavery. In Lent, we find new criteria of justice and a community with which we can press forward on a road not yet taken.

This, however, *entails a struggle*, as the book of Exodus and the temptations of Jesus in the desert make clear to us. The voice of God, who says, “You are my Son, the Beloved” (Mk 1:11), and “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex 20:3) is opposed by the enemy and his lies. Even more to be feared than Pharaoh are the idols that we set up for ourselves; we can consider them as his voice speaking within us. To be all-powerful, to be looked up to by all, to domineer over others:

every human being is aware of how deeply seductive that lie can be. It is a road well-travelled. We can become attached to money, to certain projects, ideas or goals, to our position, to a tradition, even to certain individuals. Instead of making us move forward, they paralyze us. Instead of encounter, they create conflict. Yet there is also a new humanity, a people of the little ones and of the humble who have not yielded to the allure of the lie. Whereas those who serve idols become like them, mute, blind, deaf and immobile (cf. Ps 114:4), the poor of spirit are open and ready: a silent force of good that heals and sustains the world.

It is time to act, and in Lent, to act also means to pause. To pause *in prayer*, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan *in the presence of a wounded brother or sister*. Love of God and love of neighbour are one love. Not to have other gods is to pause in the presence of God beside the flesh of our neighbour. For this reason, prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three unrelated acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Then the atrophied and isolated heart will revive. Slow down, then, and pause! The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energies. In the presence of God, we become brothers and sisters, more sensitive to one another: in place of threats and enemies, we discover companions and fellow travellers. This is God's dream, the promised land to which we journey once we have left our slavery behind.

The Church's synodal form, which in these years we are rediscovering and cultivating, suggests that Lent is also *a time of communitarian decisions*, of decisions, small and large, that are countercurrent. Decisions capable of altering the

daily lives of individuals and entire neighbourhoods, such as the ways we acquire goods, care for creation, and strive to include those who go unseen or are looked down upon. I invite every Christian community to do just this: to offer its members moments set aside to rethink their lifestyles, times to examine their presence in society and the contribution they make to its betterment. Woe to us if our Christian penance were to resemble the kind of penance that so dismayed Jesus. To us too, he says: “Whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting” (Mt 6:16). Instead, let others see joyful faces, catch the scent of freedom and experience the love that makes all things new, beginning with the smallest and those nearest to us. This can happen in every one of our Christian communities.

To the extent that this Lent becomes a time of conversion, an anxious humanity will notice a burst of creativity, a flash of new hope. Allow me to repeat what I told the young people whom I met in Lisbon last summer: “Keep seeking and be ready to take risks. At this moment in time, we face enormous risks; we hear the painful plea of so many people. Indeed, we are experiencing a third world war fought piecemeal. Yet let us find the courage to see our world, not as being in its death throes but in a process of giving birth, not at the end but at the beginning of a great new chapter of history. We need courage to think like this” (*Address to University Students*, 3 August 2023). Such is the courage of conversion, born of coming up from slavery. For faith and charity take hope, this small child, by the hand. They teach her to walk, and at the same time, she leads them forward.

I bless all of you and your Lenten journey.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 3 December 2023, First Sunday of Advent

**ANNEXURE - 2**  
**CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF INDIA (CBCI)**  
**XXXVI BIENNIAL GENERAL BODY MEETING**  
**FINAL STATEMENT**

**Jan. 31-Feb. 07, 2024, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru, India**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. With joyful confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, we, the 170 Bishops of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI), gathered at St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences, Bengaluru, from January 31 to February 07, 2024, for our XXXVI General Assembly to reflect on the theme: The Church's Response to the Current Socio-Political Situation of the Country and the Benefits and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Our reflection was done against the backdrop of the ongoing 'Synod on Synodality' (October 2021-October 2024) with the theme Communion-Mission-Participation which encapsulates the essential nature of the Church. Synodality calls us to listen to the Spirit and to each other, "For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Cor 12:13). We were inspired by the call of Pope Francis: "Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all" (Fratelli Tutti 8).



## **I. THE CURRENT SOCIO-POLITICAL SITUATION AND OUR RESPONSE**

2. Ours is an ancient civilization with a rich cultural heritage of unity in diversity. Indians cherish the values of religious harmony, non-violence and peace which are enshrined in the Constitution. During the CBCI Meeting, responding to the signs of the time, we first reviewed the situation currently prevailing in our country. India has made tremendous advances in the scientific, technological, economic and other fields – the country has been acknowledged as an emerging economic power in the world. The Christian Community feels proud of our country's progress. However, we do find grave reasons for concern:

2.1. Economic development in our country seems to have benefitted only a small percentage. The rate of unemployment has vastly increased. Large-scale migration has caused untold misery to many. So also, scientific and technological development has not yet reached the majority of our people especially in the rural areas, resulting in a digital divide.

2.2. We feel that development is often done to the detriment of ecology, disrupting the life especially of our tribal brothers and sisters, many of whom are being dispossessed of their lands. We have also witnessed in anguish the sufferings of the fisher folk in the coastal areas and the long-drawn out struggle of the farmers.

2.3. There is an apprehension that divisive attitudes, hate speeches and fundamentalist movements are eroding the pluralistic, secular ethos which has always characterized our country and its Constitution. The Fundamental Rights and Minority Rights guaranteed in the Constitution should never be undermined.

2.4. Attacks on Christians continue to increase in different parts of India. Destruction of homes and churches, harassment of personnel serving in orphanages, hostels, educational and healthcare institutions on false allegations of conversion have become common. We are appalled by prolonged violence in Manipur resulting in the huge loss of life and livelihood.

2.5. There is a widespread perception that the important democratic institutions of our country are weakening, the federal structure is under stress and the media are not fulfilling their role as the fourth pillar of democracy.

2.6. There is an unprecedented religious polarization which is harming the cherished social harmony in our country and endangering democracy itself.

3/ Our Response to the present situation is along the path of non-violence, healing, justice and reconciliation. With this in view, we propose the following:

3.1. As Christians, our first response is PRAYER, "*for with God all things are possible*" (Matthew: 19:26). The CBCI asks that each Diocese observes **Friday, 22 March 2024 as a Day of Prayer and Fasting** for peace and harmony in our country.

3.2. We renew the Church's commitment to serve the weaker sections of society irrespective of caste, creed and gender so as to ensure that the benefits of development reach the least and the last.

3.3. We want to ensure that our families, communities and institutions imbibe and promote the values of the Constitution.

3.4. We appeal to our political leaders to make all attempts to preserve the basic structure of the Constitution, particularly the Preamble which declares India to be a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC committed to Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

3.5. We urge all citizens to enroll as voters and exercise their sacred duty to vote wisely so that we elect leaders who are committed to constitutional values and to the uplift of the poor.

3.6. We reiterate our demand that the Government grant *Scheduled Caste* status to Dalit Christians and other discriminated minorities. Similarly, the Government should desist from any attempt to deprive Christian Tribals of their *Scheduled Tribe* status and also from *delisting* of the tribal population of our country.

3.7. While we demand for the protection of our Fundamental and Minority Rights guaranteed by the Constitution, we will continue to be law abiding and responsible citizens of our beloved Motherland.

3.8. We request our Parish and Diocesan Commissions for Ecology to sensitize people about the ecological dangers in our present lifestyle such as overusing non-renewable resources of the earth, pollution of water and air, and wastage of food. We want to inculcate in all an attitude of caring for our 'common home'.

3.9. We will journey together with all people of goodwill, sharing in each other's joys and sorrows. We will conscientize the members of the Church to build bridges with their brothers and sisters of different faiths through Inter-Religious Dialogue and neighbourhood communities.

## **II. CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

4/ In the context of our mission, at the General Assembly, we deliberated on the benefits and challenges of Artificial

Intelligence (AI) recognizing digital technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, as gifts of God. Pope Francis urges us: “Let us boldly become citizens of the digital world” (World Communications Day Message, 2024).

5/ AI holds out the promise of tremendous benefits in the fields of health care, agriculture, education and research, engineering, recreation, business and finance. However, AI systems can be misused: In the wrong hands, the very same technologies can become tools that spread hatred, violence, manipulation and social bigotry. There is the danger that the human data collected by Digital platforms and AI can be misused to undermine the privacy of individuals and families. Hence, the CBCI urges the Government to engage with all stakeholders to regulate the development and use of AI so as to encourage the best practices and prevent abuses.

6/ Human beings, in all their social and cultural diversity, cannot be reduced to ‘mere data’ or be defined by algorithms. Hence, we recommend that:

6.1. The Communication Office in each Diocese organize well-planned media programmes whereby the entire community - children, youth, families, religious and clergy - can be educated in the responsible use of digital and AI tools, safeguarding against manipulation and abuse. We want to promote ethical use of AI to be responsible citizens of the digital world.

6.2. Our Diocesan and Regional Commissions for Social Communications and Youth Associations harness the available AI tools for effective faith formation and creative sharing of the Good News. We appeal to our young people who are skilled in AI to help in this endeavour.

6.3. Dioceses, Religious Congregations and Lay Associations equip our youth to benefit from the opportunities offered by the AI revolution.

7/ The Catholic Church in India firmly reiterates that the path to integral human development lies in promoting justice, equality, truth and freedom as a communitarian effort for the common good. For this, AI can serve as a useful instrument, provided that the human person in all his or her complexity, dignity and sanctity is respected and protected.

### CONCLUSION:

8/ As Pilgrims of Hope, in the spirit of Synodality, the Church in India moves ahead towards the Jubilee Year 2025. Over the years, Christians have served the country with dedication, whether it be in the Armed Forces, in education and literacy, in health and social services. Our service to the country has been acknowledged by many of our fellow citizens. As loyal citizens of India, we will continue serving our country whatever be the cost, walking in the footsteps of Jesus our Master who proclaimed: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour”* (Luke 4:18- 19).

We pray for the welfare and prosperity of our country as we entrust our country to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, the Star of Hope.

Archbishop Andrews Thazhath,  
The President, CBCI

## ANNEXURE - 3

### TRANSLATED LETTER FROM ITALIAN TO ENGLISH FOR THE WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY 2024

Dear Brothers in the Episcopate,

The Holy Father surprised us last December 8, on Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, when he announced the celebration of the first “World of Children’s Day, scheduled for 25 and 26 May 2024 in Rome. In fact, the surprises they infuse unexpected energies, opening up new imaginations. We are continually amazed by the touching enchantment of children, but also wounded by the suffering of the little ones who, in many parts of the world, experience the useless massacre of war, hunger and thirst, the persistent fatigue caused by the recent pandemic, the pain of misunderstandings and the amputation of the future.

The memory of the happiness felt last November is still very vivid, when in the Paul VI hall, Pope Francis met thousands of children aged between six and twelve, coming mainly from Italy. Together with groups representing much of the world. It was like looking at a spring whose lively flow refreshed the earth and the Church with hope. For this reason, the Holy Father wants the children’s meeting with the Pope to become a moment that effectively embraces the entire Church, on a regular basis.

His Holiness has commissioned the Dicastery for Culture and Education to organize the first World Children’s Day, at the same time entrusting Father Enzo Fortunato with the task of coordinating the event, making use of all the collaborations

and contributions deemed necessary. Of course, being a new event, prepared in a short time, the first day will resemble the dress rehearsal of a concert more than the concert itself, more like the seed than the tree. The Day will be celebrated on a dual level: universal, based in Rome, where the national delegations will hopefully also converge, and diocesan, leaving the organization to the creativity of the individual local Churches.

Why does the Pope want to meet children? To announce to them the Joy of the Gospel. The Children have the right to meet Christ! The whole Christ. Christ who resurrects a little girl, asking her parents to feed her (Mk 5,21-43); he awakens a little boy from the dead, returning him to his mother (Luke 7:11-17). The Christ who puts a child at the centre, showing him to adults as a criterion for entering the Kingdom (Mk 9,33-37). But also, Christ who also says to children:

«Rise and walk» (Mk 2,9-12). «Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened» (Mt 11,28), «Your sins are forgiven» (Mt 9.2). «I am the way, the truth and the life» (Jn 14.6). The Christ who speaks, even to children, about the need to pass through the narrow door and carry the cross behind him every day (Mt 7.13-14; Lk 9.23).

The Pope wishes to meet children to listen to the Gospel that throbs within them, in the initial season of life. One of the extraordinary characteristics of children is their disruptive novelty. Their very birth is an event: a new life arrives, a new person, a new presence so intense as to renew the identity of the people around it upon his arrival,

a man and a woman become “dad” and “mom”, “grandfather” and “grandmother”, “brother” and “sister”.

The Children are the most beautiful and lively commentary - written in flesh, blood and spirit – on the passage from the Apocalypse where Christ states of himself: “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev 21.5) Of course, it is the Word of God, full of majesty, who pronounces those words; yet that breath taking mystery <<became flesh in the concrete novelty brought and discovered by the Child born in Bethlehem and raised In Nazareth. For this reason, the Holy Father chose the words of Jesus as the theme of the first World Children’s Day: “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev 21.5). It is an invitation to become like children, agile in grasping the innovations aroused by the Spirit of Christ in every man and every woman, in history and in the Church.

Therefore, we recommend the participation of as many children as possible, both at a universal and diocesan level; those who are more well-off and those who enjoy good health should not deprive themselves of the wealth that only the poorest and weakest children can bring!

Card. De Mendonca

Perfect.



Annexure - 4 EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FROM 01.01.2024 TO 26.02.2024										
PARISHES	St. Peter the Apostle	St. Peter's Pence	Second Sunday	Christmas Collection	Hunger & Disease	Communio Sunday	Holy Childhood	Cancer Patients Support Fund	Maint of Holy Land	Holy Thursday
H Our Lady of Victories Church, Somwarpet	500.00	500.00	4,590.00	1,260.00	2,250.00	14,500.00	1,060.00	1,600.00		1,080.00
Infant Jesus Church, Balanagar	780.00	1,020.00	9,283.00	1,320.00	3,270.00	1,100.00		830.00	810.00	1,150.00
Infant Jesus Church, K. R. Pet	600.00	600.00	6,000.00	1,000.00	1,500.00	700.00				1,400.00
St. Anthony's Church, Gopalapura	1,780.00	2,177.00	16,116.00		7,570.00	7,220.00				4,078.00
St. Mary's Church, H. D. Kote	1,120.00	1,250.00	4,500.00	2,000.00	2,800.00	1,230.00	1,150.00			1,650.00
St. Anthony's Church, Aji		1,000.00	18,625.00	1,730.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00			3,700.00
Our Lady of Good Health Church, Hanur	350.00	350.00	4,820.00	2,180.00	2,660.00	1,110.00	350.00		1,000.00	2,680.00
Our Lady of Immaculate Conception Church, Kudlur	2,801.00	2,628.00	19,800.00	4,709.00	4,264.00	4,261.00	2,778.00			4,362.00
St. Anthony's Church, Annmathi	30,464.00	38,860.00		29,459.00	86,822.00	47,509.00				52,082.00
St. Joseph's Cathedral, Mysore	5,378.00	13,587.00	97,670.00	54,675.00	14,220.00	7,615.00	36,160.00	12,360.00		16,736.00
St. Anthony's Shrine, Domahalli	1,560.00	1,750.00	15,550.00	1,750.00		2,000.00	1,650.00	7,100.00	1,700.00	
Holy Cross Church, Maradiyur	1,000.00	1,000.00			1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00			
Catholic Centre, Mysore			1,350.00			1,200.00	630.00			
Divine Mercy Church, K. R. Nagar		1,650.00	11,814.00	3,790.00	1,700.00	1,050.00	810.00	1,330.00		1,200.00
Holy Spirit Church, Siluvaipura	3,000.00	3,000.00	21,325.00	3,753.00	6,836.00	3,234.00	3,500.00			5,678.00
St. Francis Xavier's Church, Kamagere	350.00	250.00	2,200.00		600.00	650.00	360.00			540.00
St. John the Evangelist Church, Maddur	1,000.00	1,000.00	6,500.00		1,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00			
Immaculate Conception Church, Ganjam	5,000.00	5,000.00					3,000.00			
St. Mary's Minor Seminary, Mysore	1,000.00	1,000.00	20,000.00				1,000.00			
Infant Jesus Church, Nanjangud	1,000.00	1,000.00	12,800.00	5,796.00			5,813.00			
St. Sebastian's Church, Kushalnagar		5,317.00	11,850.00	7,250.00			4,340.00			
Sacred Heart Church, Yadavagiri				9,420.00			4,030.00	4,710.00		
Infant Jesus Mission Station, Yathagadahanalli					800.00		7,653.00	9,803.00		
St. Joseph's Church, Siddapura	3,020.00	4,350.00					700.00	1,010.00		
Sacred Heart Church, Kodiugane	745.00	680.00	2,100.00	8,790.00			3,410.00			
Our Lady of Assumption Church, Pandavapura	2,000.00	2,000.00	22,145.00	5,600.00			4,525.00		5,000.00	
St. Joseph's Church, Mandya		4,215.00	24,500.00					7,214.00		
Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Martalli	3,100.00	3,000.00								

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church, Srirampura	2,600.00	34,375.00	7,110.00					
St. Anne's Church, Sandanapalayam		7,500.00	7,000.00					
Sacred Heart Church, Nagavalli		11,455.00	15,370.00				8,000.00	
Holy Family Church, Hinkal		18,000.00	7,200.00					
St. Anthony's Church, Aboorkatte		4,075.00	3,680.00					
Virgin of the Poor Church, Mysore		49,110.00	31,900.00				3,500.00	
Nirmala Mathe Church, Kutta		1,230.00						
St. Anthony's Church, Gayathripuram		15,500.00						
St. Francis of Assisi Church, Kollegal		15,826.00						
Good Shepherd Church, Anagaliadoddi								
St. Pauls Church, Chamarajanagar			5,499.00					
Our Lady of Presentation Church, Mariamangalam			5,000.00					
St. John Paul II Church, Old Kesare			2,700.00					
St. Mathias Church, Malavalli			3,332.00					
St. Lawrence Church, Aboorkatte		4,075.00	6,083.00					
St. Peter's Church, Bogadi			3,680.00					
St. Joseph's Church, P. G. Palya			9,213.00					
Holy Family Church, Kudige			665.00					
Our Lady of Fatima Church, Kudemullore			3,262.00				1,562.00	
			2,100.00					1,025.00

	Holy Childhood	Hunger and Disease	Cancer Patients Support Fund
Christ the King Convent, Mysore	5,000.00	5,000.00	
St. Joseph's Convent, Bannimantap			5,000.00
MDES Institutions			11,79,004.00
St. Joseph's Nursing College, Mysore			40,000.00

**N.B.: details of transfer and obtain necessary receipts for the remittances made.**



## ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನೆ: ಜ್ಯೋತಿ ವರ್ಷ - 2025

ಸ್ವರ್ಗೀಯ ತಂದೆಯೇ,

ನೀವು ನಿಮ್ಮ ಪುತ್ರರೂ, ನಮ್ಮ ಸಹೋದರರೂ  
ಆದ ಯೇಸುಕ್ರಿಸ್ತರಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಶ್ವಾಸದ ಕೊಡುಗೆಯನ್ನು  
ನಮಗಿತ್ತಿರಿ. ನಮ್ಮ ಹೃದಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪವಿತ್ರಾತ್ಮರ ಮುಖಾಂತರ  
ಪರಸ್ನೇಹದ ಜ್ವಾಲೆಯನ್ನು ಬೆಳಗಿಸಿದಿರಿ. ಬರಲಿರುವ ನಿಮ್ಮ  
ಸಾಮ್ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಭವ್ಯ ಭರವಸೆಯನ್ನು ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ  
ಪುನಶ್ಚೇತನಗೊಳಿಸಿರಿ. ನಿಮ್ಮ ಕೃಪಾವರ ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು  
ಪರಿವರ್ತಿಸಲಿ. ನಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಶುಭಸಂದೇಶದ ಬಿತ್ತನೆ ಕಾಳುಗಳ  
ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾವಂತ ಬೆಳಗಾರರನ್ನಾಗಿಸಿರಿ. ಹೀಗೆ ಇಡೀ ಮಾನವ  
ಜನಾಂಗ ಮತ್ತು ಜಗತ್ತು, ಹೊಸ ಆಕಾಶಮಂಡಲ ಮತ್ತು  
ಹೊಸ ಭೂಮಂಡಲದ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉತ್ಥಾನವಾಗಲಿ.  
ಆಗ ದುಷ್ಟಶಕ್ತಿಗಳು ದಮನವಾಗಿ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮಹಿಮೆಯು  
ನಿರಂತರವಾಗಿ ಪ್ರಜ್ವಲಿಸಲಿ.

ಜ್ಯೋತಿ ವರ್ಷದ ಕೃಪಾವರಗಳು ನಮ್ಮಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾತ್ರಿಕ  
ಭರವಸೆಯನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಸ್ವರ್ಗೀಯ ಐಸಿರಿಯ  
ಹಂಬಲಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಮರುಕಳಿಸಲಿ. ಅದೇ ಅನುಗ್ರಹವು ಇಡೀ  
ಭೂಮಿಯ ಮೇಲೆ ನಮ್ಮ ರಕ್ಷಕರ ಆನಂದ ಮತ್ತು ಶಾಂತಿಯ  
ಮಳೆಯನ್ನು ಸುರಿಸಲಿ. ಅನಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಶೀರ್ವದಿತರಾಗಿರುವ  
ದೇವರಿಗೆ ಸ್ತುತಿಸ್ತೋತ್ರ ಮಹಿಮೆ ಯುಗಯುಗಾಂತರಕ್ಕೂ ಸಲ್ಲಲಿ.  
ಆಮೆನ್!



*Happy Easter !*

*May God bless you in every way.*