



**Sanmaargi**  
— to shepherd HIS flock —



**MDB 06/2024**

**MYSORE DIOCESAN BULLETIN**

**NOV. & DEC. 2024**



*Merry Christmas*

# 3845 / M2, Nelson Mandela Road  
RAJAMAARGA, Near Highway Circle  
Bannimantap 'C' Layout, Mysuru - 570 015



## **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,  
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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OCT. & NOV. 2024

## SHEPHERD'S VOICE

As we approach the **Solemnity of All Saints**, we are invited to reflect on the lives of those who have faithfully followed Christ and now rejoice in His eternal presence. This special day reminds us that holiness is within the reach for everyone, not just for a select few. The saints were ordinary people who lived extraordinary lives of faith, hope, and love, and they inspire us to follow their example in our daily lives. Their lives, though marked by challenges, show us that holiness is possible for everyone. By their prayers and example, the saints encourage us to persevere in faith, live out the Gospel, and draw closer to God. Let this day be an opportunity to deepen our commitment to living out the Gospel, with the saints as our guides and intercessors. May the example and prayers of all the saints lead us ever closer to God.

Through **All Souls' Day**, we are invited to remember in a special way all the faithful departed - our loved ones, friends, and all those who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith. It is a day when we, as a community, unite in prayer for the souls in Purgatory, those who are being purified as they prepare to enter the fullness of God's presence. The

Church teaches that while these souls are assured of Heaven, they still require our prayers and sacrifices as they undergo this purification. Our prayers, Masses, and acts of charity can assist the souls in their journey toward eternal peace. All Souls' Day invites us to reflect on our ultimate destiny and the promise of eternal life. It reminds us that death is not the end, but a passage to new life with God. We pray for the souls of our dearly departed, trusting in God's mercy and love, and we take comfort in the hope that one day we will all be united in His Kingdom. May this day strengthen our faith in the promise of eternal life and deepen our connection with our brothers and sisters who have gone before us.

**Advent 2024** begins on December 1<sup>st</sup> and marks the start of the liturgical year in the Christian tradition. This season, lasting until Christmas Eve, is a time of preparation and anticipation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It encourages believers to reflect on themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Advent is often characterized by the use of an Advent wreath, with candles lit each week symbolizing the increasing light of Christ. Many Christians also engage in prayer, fasting, and acts of charity during this period, fostering a deeper spiritual connection and a sense of community as they await the joyous arrival of Christmas. May this Holy Eason enrich us in our spiritual journey and let us welcome Christ in our hearts.



## IMPORTANT EVENTS

### WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

Pope Francis established the *World Day of the Poor* in 2017 to call attention to poverty as a matter of human dignity, not just economics. This year, the 8<sup>th</sup> World Day of the Poor will be celebrated on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 with the theme, “*The prayer of the poor rises up to God*” (Sirach 21:5). Pope Francis emphasizes that prayer must be expressed through concrete acts of charity and justice, cautioning that without prayer, charity risks becoming empty philanthropy.

This year’s theme reminds us that the poor are especially dear to God, who hears their cries. The message urges us to not only provide for the poor but also work to restore their dignity and advocate for justice, especially for those affected by war and social injustice. This day presents an opportunity for our community to unite in solidarity with the poor, deepening our faith through action and compassion. Let us pray together and actively support those in need, responding with the love and mercy that Christ calls us to.

For the message of the Holy Father for the 8<sup>th</sup> world day of the poor, please refer to ***Annexure I***.

### FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING

We celebrate the Feast of Christ the King on **Sunday, November 24, 2024**, marking the end of the liturgical year 2023-24. As we reflect on this special day, we are reminded to make Christ the King of our

hearts and lives. His reign is not about worldly power but about bringing love, justice, and peace into our lives and communities.

Christ invites us to embrace values such as humility, mercy, forgiveness, and service. As His followers, we are called to live out these principles by serving the poor, promoting justice, and loving our neighbours as He loves us. As we conclude this liturgical year, let us renew our commitment to Christ's Kingdom and allow His love and guidance to shape our actions in the year ahead. May we faithfully live out the Gospel and bring His light to the world.

## **CHRISTMAS**

After the fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve, sin entered the world, but God, in His infinite love, did not abandon us. From that moment, He set into motion a plan to save His people, a plan fulfilled in the birth of Jesus Christ. Through the season of Christmas, we are reminded of God's great plan for the salvation of humanity. In Jesus, God became man, embodying His promise to redeem humanity. The Son of God took on human flesh to bring salvation and restore our relationship with the Father. This profound mystery is the heart of the Christmas message - God's love for us, so deep that He became one of us. Christmas is a season of joy, hope, and peace. It is a time to celebrate the coming of the Saviour who brings light into the darkness of the world. We are called to reflect this love by spending time with one another, especially those in need, bringing hope to the lonely and comfort to the suffering.

On behalf of the Diocese, I wish all of you a HOLY SEASON OF ADVENT AND A GRACE FILLED CHRISTMAS.

### **SOLEMNITY OF HOLY FAMILY**

The Solemnity of the Holy Family, celebrated after Christmas, invites us to reflect on the family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. The Holy Family is characterized by love, unity, and obedience to God, making them a role model for all Christian families. The Holy Family lived a life of simplicity, faith, and unwavering trust in God's plan. This feast calls us to follow their example by fostering the same love, patience, and devotion in our own families.

As Catholics, we are called to imitate the Holy Family by living out God's love in our homes through mutual respect, forgiveness, and prayer. By centring our family life on faith, we allow God to guide us through challenges and lead us toward unity and peace. Let us build our families on the foundation of God's love, by prioritizing prayer, attending the Holy Mass together, and extending our love to those in need. In this way, we can strengthen our families and create a home that reflects God's presence after the perfect model of the Holy Family.


**INFORMATION**
**PRIESTS' RECOLLECTION**

The Diocese has organized priest's recollection day in the season of Advent in preparation for Christmas on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at Catholic Centre. The program will be,

Arrival at 10 am followed by Coffee

First Talk : 10:30 am

Sacrament of Reconciliation : 12.00 to 1.00 pm

Lunch : 1.00 pm

Second Talk : 2.30 pm

Holy Eucharist : 3.30 pm

Tea and Departure : 4.30 pm

(Priests who cannot go back to their place are welcome to stay back over night at the Catholic Centre)

All the priests working in the Diocese including the religious are expected to attend the recollection. On that day we will celebrate Christmas and exchange with each other Christmas and New Year wishes.

**REIMBURSEMENT OF MEDICAL BILLS**

The diocesan fathers may send the medical bills to the Financial Administrator for reimbursement. However, in doing so, kindly follow the norms stated below:

- You are requested to present the medical bills along with a covering letter duly signed by the concerned priest. You are also requested to sign on all the bills that you send for reimbursement.

- Along with the medical bills, kindly attach the copy of the doctor's prescription.
- The limit for the purchase of spectacles is Rs. 10,000/-
- Cosmetics are not permissible for reimbursement.
- With regard to the dental treatment, in case of necessity to fill the cavity, normal filling is reimbursable, gold / silver filling is not reimbursable from the diocese.
- Whenever you get medicine from St. Joseph's Hospital Pharmacy, you are requested to present the copy of the prescription from your doctor.

Since the medical insurance covers the hospitalization, any priest who is getting admitted in any hospital is requested to inform the Financial Administrator regarding the admission. It is also necessary that you carry with you the insurance card and the copy of Aadhar and PAN card.

Alternative medication other than allopathy, needs prior permission from the Diocesan Bishop / Apostolic Administrator.

### **AUDITORS' OBSERVATIONS**

The auditors, having gone through the books of accounts of all our parishes and institutions, have given a few observations in general. All the priests of the diocese are requested to keep in mind the necessity to follow the norms of the government with regards to the accounts. Let us be vigilant and avoid unnecessary issues related to government audit norms. In view of this, we request all of you to strictly follow the things stated below:

- Cash payment to any single person within one audit year is limited to Rs. 10000 only. Even if you give an open (not crossed) cheque, it is equal to cash transaction. Kindly avoid such payments.
- Over writing of the bills (date / amount) is strictly forbidden.
- The name of the parish / institution / society should be written on the bills that you procure. It is advisable that the vendor writes the name on the bill instead of you writing the name on the bill.
- Cross Cheques to be issued as payment to the supplier's company not in the individual's name.
- Details of the account heads is to be written in the vouchers. Accountant who prepares the voucher has to get the authorization signature from the head of the institution / parish priest and receivers' signature also should be obtained.
- All parishes and Institutions are expected to maintain Asset register.

### **INTERIM AUDIT 2024-25**

In view of the afore mentioned topic, the auditors have suggested that the diocese strictly follows the interim audit system. Therefore, I request all the Parish Priests, Correspondents and the heads of various institutions in the diocese to submit the books of accounts for the interim audit by the end of November 2024 without fail. It is mandatory to submit the books of accounts for auditing done on Tally software, strictly following the prescribed chart of accounts that has been circulated last year.

Those of you who find it difficult to write the accounts may take the help of the Accounting Cell established in the Bishop's House. Please contact the Financial Administrator to make use of the Accounting Cell.

### **ST. JOSEPH'S CHARITABLE TRUST**

You are aware that in the recent past, a fund was created in the name of **Cancer Patient Support Fund**. This was to support only the poor cancer patients, however, people with many other sicknesses started to come seeking for medical assistance from the diocese. Similarly, many poor students have been coming to bishop's house seeking charity. Till recently, they were given charity from this Cancer Patient Support Fund.

But we have a trust in the diocese called '**St. Joseph's Charitable Trust**' started in the year 1988 for the purpose of helping the poor faithful of the diocese for their educational, medical and social needs. The present Cancer Patient Support Fund is accounted under St. Joseph's Charitable Trust, while it continues to support the cancer and other medical needs of the poor faithful of the diocese who seek help. The St. Joseph's Charitable Trust is registered as a Charitable Trust and it has a facility of 80.G. Exemption, while, the Diocese (MDS) is a religious society. The proceedings of Cancer Patient Support Fund have been transferred to St. Joseph's Charitable Trust. I request all to contribute generously towards St. Joseph's Charitable Trust, so that the Diocese can help many more poor people.

In the recent months it has been observed that many students who are not that poor and can afford their educational expenses also come seeking charity. The reason for this seems to be the non-scrutiny from the part of the Parish Priests. Hence, a new form is prepared in the diocese and will be circulated to all the Parish Priests. The concerned parish priests are requested to fill the form personally and to send it sealed, as confidential letter to the bishop's house as recommendation letter. The Parish Priests are further requested to recommend only the deserving candidates for charity from the bishop's house. However, the self-sufficient parishes can do the charity at their end itself.

### **FUNERAL RITES**

The Catholic Church traditionally viewed suicide as a grave matter, but its understanding has evolved, particularly in recent years. While the Church still emphasizes the sanctity of life, it also recognizes that mental illness and extreme distress can impact a person's ability to make decisions.

In terms of burial, the Church's current stance is more compassionate. CCC 2281 acknowledges the complexity of suicide and emphasizes the need for compassion, stating that individuals who take their own lives may not be fully culpable due to mental illness. Therefore, the Church encourages the faithful to pray for those who have died by suicide and to offer them a Christian burial. This reflects a hope for God's mercy and an acknowledgment of the complexities surrounding mental health.

In various addresses, Pope Francis has urged the Church to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for families affected by suicide, reinforcing the importance of burial rites for those who have died under such circumstances. Hence, no Catholic faithful should be denied under any circumstances the catholic cemetery and Christian burial, except may be some one who lives a very scandalous public life.

### **STATUTORY COLLECTION REMISSION**

All are reminded to send the stipulated collections to the Financial Administrator at the earliest. While thanking you all for sending the collections for specific purposes, I request those who have not sent the same, to send them without delay. Let us avoid last minute transactions. Please see **Annexure II** for the list of statutory collection for the months of September and October 2024.

### **LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT**

Every priest is required to make his “Last Will and Testament” to avoid legal problems and complications (It must be preferably done with the consultation of a Lawyer). Priests are to make their “Last Will and Testament” in duplicate, keeping a copy for their own file and sending a sealed copy to the Chancery. It is recommended that a brother priest be appointed personal representative (executor) of the Will. All accounts should have a nominee to avoid legal complications. The Will may be amended or modified at any time by writing an entirely new Will and replace the old one with a new one. If a priest expires intestate (without writing a will), it will be taken for granted

that the priest wished to leave all his belongings, movable and immovable, bank deposits etc. to the diocese. All the proceeds will be transferred to the Clergy Medical Fund after the expenses are deducted.

Priests are encouraged, if they so desire, to make their Will in favour of Clergy Medical Fund.

In making the Last Will, the following guidelines may please be kept in mind:

- i) Provision is to be made in the Last Will regarding Masses for which stipends have been received and which will have to be exonerated after one's death.
- ii) It is strongly recommended that one sets aside some amount for Masses for one's own soul; that pious and charitable institutions of the diocese as well as work of Evangelization are kept in mind.
- iii) The priest's chalice and other sacred articles, vestments, liturgical books may kindly be bequeathed to a priest of the diocese or to some church or religious institution.
- iv) While he is absolutely free to nominate any one as the executor of his Will, it is advisable to appoint a priest of the diocese.
- v) Amendments / additions can be made to the Will at any time. They should be incorporated in both the copies.
- vii) All personal bank accounts of the priest (including fixed deposits, cash certificates etc.) should be in the name of two persons – either or survivor OR former or survivor.
- viii) If a priest has any land or building standing in his personal name, it is better that a Settlement Deed is drawn up and registered separately.

A model of LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT is given below. The priests of Diocese of Mysore are requested to consult their legal advisor (if they have any) in this regard and send a copy of the Will in a sealed cover to the Chancery at the earliest before Christmas.

### **SUGGESTED FORM OF LAST WILL**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

I, N..... Son of N. ....

Parish priest (Assistant) of the church of.....

At (address of the place) .....being of sound mind will and memory, do make this my Last Will and Testament.

FIRST : I give, devise and bequeath all my immovable property to .....N.N. (Name and full address of the party).

SECOND : I give, devise and bequeath to .....N.N. (name and full address) a sum of Rs.....

THIRD : I give, devise and bequeath all my books to.....

FOURTH : I give, devise and bequeath the rest and belongings to .....

FIFTH : I nominate and appoint as executor or executors of this my Last Will and Testament Rev. Fr.....

To give effect to this Last Will, I affix my signature here unto at ..... (place) of this.....day of the month of.....In the year of our Lord.....

### **SIGNATURE OF TESTATOR**

This will is signed by the Testator in my presence / our presence and attested by us in his presence.

Signature and address of the 1st Witness

Signature and address of the 2nd Witness

## MISSION SUNDAY

Based on the past experience concerning the remittance of Mission Sunday contribution from various parishes and religious institutions, we request all of you to kindly remit the Mission Sunday Contributions to the account details furnished here below:

Name of the A/c	: Mission Sunday
A/c No.	: 0524053000000162
IFSC	: SIBL0000524
Name of the Bank	: South Indian Bank
Branch	: Bannimantap

## KINDLY NOTE :

- Please do not deposit cash in any of the accounts in Bishop's House.
- Please intimate to the Financial Administrator if you transfer funds either by way of NEFT or RTGS.
- You may kindly write the cheque in favour of MISSION SUNDAY and send it to the Financial Administrator of the Diocese.

## DIRECTORY & ORDO

The Diocesan Directory and the Ordo will be available at

- 1) Aaradhana Liturgical Centre (Religious Stall), Cathedral Campus, Mysuru.
- 2) Reception of SANMAARGI, the Diocesan Bishop's House, Bannimantap, Mysuru
- 3) Religious Stall in the Church premises of Virgin of the Poor Church, Bannimantap, Mysuru.

## **GUIDELINES TO APPLY FOR DISPENSATION FOR MIXED MARRIAGES**

The acceptance of interfaith marriage by the Roman Catholic Church is increasingly necessary in today's diverse and interconnected world. As society becomes more multicultural, the likelihood of individuals from different faith backgrounds forming meaningful relationships grows. By embracing interfaith marriages, the Church acknowledges the value of love and commitment that transcends religious boundaries, fostering a spirit of inclusivity and understanding. Accepting these unions allows the Church to remain relevant and approachable, encouraging dialogue between faiths and promoting respect for differing beliefs. This acceptance not only enriches the lives of couples but also enhances the Church's mission to build community and spread compassion, ultimately reflecting the universal love that lies at the heart of the Christian faith. Please find in ***Annexure III*** an article published by Fr. Jacob Madathumpaddy in Christ ward Magazine of Jalandhar Diocese with the guidelines for dispensation for mixed marriages

## **JUBILEE 2025**

Jubilee 2025 holds significant importance for the Catholic Church as it marks a special year of grace, reflection, and renewal. Rooted in the biblical tradition of the Jubilee, this event offers an opportunity for the faithful to engage in spiritual revitalization, reconciliation, and acts of mercy. It encourages Catholics to deepen their faith, foster community bonds, and promote social justice, echoing the

Church's commitment to service and compassion. As the Church prepares for this milestone, it aims to inspire a global movement of hope and unity, inviting all to participate in a shared journey of faith and transformation. Please find enclosed letter from the President of CCBI Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrao on the Jubilee celebrations in ***Annexure IV***.

### **CONCLUSION :**

As we enter into the Holy Season of Advent and prepare ourselves for joyful celebration of the Birth of Christ, I wish all of you blessings of the coming Holy Season. May the Lord bless our Diocese and all our activities and our apostolates.

I thank all the priests, religious and faithful for your continued prayers and support.

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

**ANNEXURE - I****MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS  
FOR THE EIGHT WORLD DAY OF THE POOR 2024**

**The prayer of the poor rises up to God (cf. Sir 21:5)**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. The prayer of the poor rises up to God (cf. Sir 21:5). In this year dedicated to prayer in anticipation of the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025, this expression of biblical wisdom is most fitting as we prepare for the Eighth World Day of the Poor, which will be observed on 17 November. Indeed, Christian hope embraces the certainty that our prayer reaches God's presence; not just any prayer but rather the prayer of the poor! Let us reflect on this word and "read" it on the faces and in the stories of the poor whom we encounter daily, so that prayer can become a path of communion with them and a sharing in their suffering.
2. The Book of Sirach, of which we are speaking, is not sufficiently known, yet it deserves to be discovered for the richness of its themes, especially regarding the relationship of humanity with God and with the world. Its author, Ben Sira, was a teacher, a scribe in Jerusalem, likely writing in the 2nd century B.C. He was a wise man, deeply rooted in Israel's tradition, who taught on various aspects of human life: work, family, social life and the education of the young. He paid special attention to themes related to faith in God and observance of the Law. He tackled the difficult

issues of freedom, evil and divine justice, which are still highly relevant to us today. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Ben Sira sought to point out to everyone the path to follow in order to live a wise and dignified life in the eyes of God and our brothers and sisters.

3. One of the themes to which this sacred author devotes significant attention is prayer. He does so with great fervour because he gives voice to his personal experience. Indeed, no writing on prayer can be effective and fruitful if it does not stem from someone who stands daily in God's presence and listens to his Word. Ben Sira declares that he sought wisdom from his youth: "While I was still young, before I went on my travels, I sought wisdom openly in my prayer" (Sir 51:13).
4. On this journey, he discovered one of the fundamental truths of revelation, namely, that the poor hold a privileged place in God's heart, to the point that, in the face of their suffering, God is "impatient" until he has rendered justice to them. "The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds, and he will not be consoled until it reaches the Lord; he will not desist until the Most High visits him, and does justice for the righteous, and executes judgment. And the Lord will not delay" (Sir 35:17-18). God knows the sufferings of his children because he is an attentive and caring father. As a father, he takes care of those who are most in need: the poor, the marginalized, the suffering and the forgotten. No one is excluded from his heart, for in his eyes, we are all poor and needy. We are all

beggars because, without God, we would be nothing. We would not even have life if God had not given it to us. Yet how often we live as if we were the masters of life or as if we had to conquer it! The mentality of the world demands that we become somebody, that we make a name for ourselves at any cost, breaking social norms in order to accumulate wealth. How sad of an illusion this is! Happiness cannot be acquired by trampling on the rights and dignity of others.

The violence caused by wars clearly shows the arrogance of those who consider themselves to be powerful before men and women, but they are poor in the eyes of God. How many more people are impoverished by misguided policies involving weapons! How many innocent victims! Yet we cannot turn our backs to this reality. The disciples of the Lord know that each of these “little ones” bears the image of the Son of God and each one must receive our support and expressions of Christian charity. “Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society. This demands that we be docile and attentive to the cry of the poor and to come to their aid” (Evangelii Gaudium, 187).

5. In this year dedicated to prayer, we need to make the prayer of the poor our own and pray together with them. This is a challenge we must embrace and a pastoral activity that needs to be nurtured. Moreover, “the worst discrimination which the

poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith. Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care” (*ibid.*, 200).

All of this requires a humble heart, one that has the courage to become a beggar. A heart that is ready to acknowledge itself as poor and needy. Indeed, there is a correlation between poverty, humility and trust. The truly poor person is the humble one, as the holy Bishop Augustine said: “The poor have nothing to be proud of, the rich must combat their pride. Therefore, listen to me: be truly poor, be virtuous, be humble” (Sermons, 14, 4). The humble have nothing to boast of and nothing to claim; they know they cannot rely on themselves but firmly believe they can appeal to God’s merciful love, standing before him like the prodigal son who returns home repentant to receive the father’s embrace (cf. Lk 15:11-24). The poor, having nothing to rely on, receive strength from God and place all their trust in him. Indeed, humility generates trust that God will never abandon us and will never leave us without a response.

6. To the poor who dwell in our cities and are part of our communities, I say: do not lose this certainty! God is attentive to each of you and is

close to you. He does not forget you nor could he ever do so. We all have had the experience of prayers that seem to remain unanswered. Sometimes we ask to be freed from a misery that makes us suffer and humiliates us, and God seems not to hear our cry. However, God's silence does not mean he is inattentive to our sufferings; rather, it contains a word that must be received with trust, surrendering ourselves to him and to his will. Sirach again attests to this: the Lord's judgment will be in favour of the poor (cf. Sir 21:5). From poverty, therefore, the song of the most genuine hope can spring up. Let us remember that "whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades" (Evangelii Gaudium, 2).

7. The World Day of the Poor has now become a fixture for every ecclesial community. It is a pastoral opportunity not to be underestimated, for it challenges every believer to listen to the prayer of the poor, becoming aware of their presence and needs. It is an opportune occasion to implement initiatives that concretely help the poor and to recognize and support the many volunteers who dedicate themselves passionately to those most in need. We must thank the Lord for the people who make themselves available to listen to and support the poorest among us. They are priests, consecrated persons, lay men and women who,

by their testimony, give voice to God's response to the prayer of those who turn to him. This silence, therefore, is broken every time a person in need is welcomed and embraced. The poor still have much to teach us because in a culture that has placed wealth at the forefront and often sacrifices the dignity of people on the altar of material goods, they swim against the tide, highlighting that what is essential for life is something else entirely.

Prayer, then, is verified by authentic charity that manifests itself as encounter and proximity. If prayer does not translate into concrete action, it is in vain; indeed, "faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (Jas 2:17). However, charity without prayer risks becoming philanthropy that soon exhausts itself. "Without daily prayer lived with fidelity, our acts are empty, they lose their profound soul, and are reduced to being mere activism" (BENEDICT XVI, Catechesis, April 25, 2012). We must avoid this temptation and always be vigilant with the strength and perseverance that comes from the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of life.

8. In this context, it is beautiful to recall the testimony left to us by Mother Teresa of Calcutta, a woman who gave her life for the poor. Saint Teresa continually repeated that it was from prayer that she drew the strength and faith for her mission of service to the least among us. When she spoke at the General Assembly of the UN on October 26, 1985, showing everyone the rosary, she always held in her hand, she said: "I am only a poor sister who prays. By praying, Jesus puts his love in my

heart, and I go to give it to all the poor I meet along the way. Pray too! Pray, and you will notice the poor who are beside you. Perhaps on the same floor in your apartment building. Perhaps even in your houses, someone is waiting for your love. Pray, and your eyes will open, and your heart will fill with love”.

How can we not recall here in the city of Rome, Saint Benedict Joseph Labre (1748-1783), whose body rests and is venerated in the parish church of Santa Maria ai Monti. A pilgrim from France to Rome, rejected by many monasteries, he spent the last years of his life poor among the poor, spending hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, with the rosary, reciting the breviary, reading the New Testament and the Imitation of Christ. Having no place to stay, he usually slept in a corner of the ruins of the Colosseum like a “vagabond of God,” making his life a ceaseless prayer that rose up to God.

9. As we journey towards the Holy Year, I urge everyone to become pilgrims of hope, setting tangible goals for a better future. Let us not forget to keep “the little details of love” (Gaudete et Exsultate, 145): stopping, drawing near, giving a little attention, a smile, a caress, a word of comfort. These gestures are not automatic; they require a daily commitment and are often hidden and silent, but strengthened by prayer. In this time, when the song of hope seems to give way to the clamour of arms, to the cry of many innocent wounded, and the silence of the countless victims of wars, we turn

to God with our plea for peace. We stretch out our hands to receive peace as a precious gift for we are “poor” in this regard, while at the same time committing ourselves to weave it back into daily life.

10. We are called in every circumstance to be friends of the poor, following in the footsteps of Jesus who always began by showing solidarity when dealing with the least among us. May the Mother of God, Mary Most Holy, who appeared at Banneux and left a message not to be forgotten: “I am the Virgin of the poor,” sustain us on this journey. To Mary, whom God has looked upon with favour for her humble poverty, accomplishing great things through her obedience, we entrust our prayers, convinced that they will rise to heaven and be heard.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 13 June 2024,

Memorial of Saint Anthony of Padua, Patron of the Poor

+ POPE FRANCIS

**ANNEXURE - II**

LIST OF THE EARMARKED COLLECTIONS RECEIVED FOR THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2024

PARISHES	Prison Ministry	St. Peter's Pence	Vocation Sunday	Second Sunday	Communio Sunday	Hunger & Disease	St. Peter the Apostle	Maint of Holy Land	Waynad Flood Relief	Girl Child Day	Holy Childhood	Holy Thursday	Poor Patients Fund
St. Peter's Church, Bogadi	19,518			15,420									
Mother of Humanity Mission Station, Maniya West		1,000	2,000	7,000									
Infant Jesus Mission Station, Yathagadanahalli													5,000
Holy Spirit Church, Siluvaipura			820	5,395	1,600	2,300	830	970	1,880			1,800	3,520
Holy Family Church, Kudige		3,100	6,000	12,960	6,080	6,110	3,790	3,000	10,000			6,000	10,100
St. Paul's Church, Chamarajanagar				12,120	3,430	5,210						3,590	
Sacred Heart Church, Nangunahalli		2,260		12,320	7,860	12,210	2,650		5,550			8,960	16,750
St. Mary's Church, Periyapatna			2,615	7,520	2,140	3,570	1,430	1,472	1,765			2,530	2,670
Infant Jesus Church, K. R. Pet				7,200	980	3,560				1,100		1,300	
St. Mathias Church, Malavalli			3,173	11,647		6,461	1,704	1,905	2,225			2,621	2,780
St. Francis of Assisi Church, Kollegal			8,880	43,070		58,623	7,070					11,964	
O. L. of Immac Conception Church, Kudlur				5,123			1,724	1,973					
St. Francis Xavier's Church, Kanagere				9,560			3,340	3,250					6,185
St. Lawrence Church, Aboorkatte									6,005				6,200
St. Joseph's Church, P. G. Palva		535		2,523			489	413	596				1,340
St. Joseph's Church, Ontertoti		2,100	3,100	11,770			2,230						19,000
St. Mary's Church, Mariapura		390	398	1,965	379	471	325	475				375	
St. Francis Xavier's Church, Hunsur				4,476									7,500
St. Alphonsa's Church, M. K. Halli													2,440
Rajendra Swamy Mission Station, Chikkasinakere				2,640									710
St. Thomas Church, Thonayarpalayam				8,610									
Immaculate Conception Church, Ganjam				7,250					2,500				3,250
Our Lady of Assumption Church, Pandavapura				10,730									5,010



**ANNEXURE - III**  
**CATHOLIC CHURCH'S CONDITIONS AND**  
**PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING THE**  
**DISPENSATION OR PERMISSION FOR THE**  
**MIXED MARRIAGES.**

**INTRODUCTION :**

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics or individuals of different faith backgrounds are growing more common. The Catholic Church, while acknowledging the beauty of interfaith love, must balance its commitment to spiritual unity with the complexities of mixed marriages. In response, the Church has established specific guidelines to ensure the spiritual well-being of all parties involved. This article explores the conditions, obligations, and procedures governing mixed marriages within the Catholic Church, providing clarity and insight for those navigating the intersection of love, faith, and marriage.

**THE PRELIMINARY CONDITION FOR GRANTING PERMISSION/DISPENSATION OF THE MIXED MARRIAGE**

In cases of mixed marriages (between Catholics and non-Catholics) or disparity of cult marriages (between baptized and non-baptized), dispensation or permission is granted only under specific circumstances, as stipulated in Canon 1125. To obtain dispensation/permission, the following conditions must be met: 1. Just and reasonable causes must exist. 2. The Catholic party must be aware of the potential difficulties arising from such a union. 3. The Catholic party must take responsibility for obtaining the necessary dispensation from the competent authority to avoid an invalid marriage. The local Ordinary has discretion to assess

each case individually and evaluate the reasons for granting permission or dispensation. Canon law emphasizes that the **The Obligatory Conditions for Granting the Permission/Dispensation**

The 1983 Code of Canon Law outlines three essential conditions for obtaining permission or dispensation from the local Ordinary for such unions (Canon 1125). These conditions apply equally to: 1. Mixed marriages (between Catholics and non-Catholics). 2. Disparity of cult marriages (between baptized and non-baptized individuals) (Canon 1086 §2). The three conditions are prerequisites for the local Ordinary to grant permission or dispensation.

### **THE OBLIGATION OF THE CATHOLIC PARTY (FIRST CONDITION)**

The 1983 Code of Canon Law requires the Catholic party in a mixed marriage to make a two-part declaration (Canon 1125, 1°): 1. To avoid potential dangers to their Catholic faith. 2. To ensure all children are baptized and raised in the Catholic Church. This obligation stems from divine positive law, specifically Christ's plan of salvation. The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith clarifies the Catholic party's obligations in mixed marriages: "Catholic spouses must strengthen and grow in their faith, lead a Christian family life, and set a shining example for the non-Catholic party and children". (Instruction *Matrimonii Sacra-mentum*, 238-239). This emphasis on faith and family life underscores the Catholic Church's commitment to nurturing spiritual growth in mixed marriages.

The Catholic party's declaration must align with their internal conscience and be externally expressed as a manifestation of their will. This condition aims to

demonstrate the Catholic party's commitment to professing their faith in the mixed marriage. The Catholic party must evaluate their strengths and the prospective partner's attitude and commit to precautions preventing faith defection and indifferentism. The obligation to preserve one's faith is absolute and non-dispensable. This condition prepares the Catholic party to anticipate and avoid obstacles to their faith obligations. And to foster a deeper understanding with their partner regarding religious responsibilities. By making this declaration, the Catholic party reaffirms their commitment to their faith and sets a foundation for a harmonious and faith-filled marriage.

The Law emphasizes that marriage is inherently oriented towards the procreation and upbringing of children (Canon 1055 § 1). Additionally, receiving baptism in the Catholic Church obliges the Catholic party to baptize their children in the Catholic faith and to raise them as Catholics (Canon 211). Although the Church acknowledges the possibility of salvation outside its confines, this obligation remains indispensable (*quod Ecclesia perpetuo senserit*). The Catholic party must make this promise sincerely. In essence, the Catholic party's promise to baptize and raise their children as Catholics is an integral part of their marriage commitment, lifelong responsibility and a fundamental aspect of their faith. By upholding this obligation, the Catholic party ensures the continuation of their faith and fosters a strong spiritual foundation for their family.

### **THE OBLIGATION TO THE NON-CATHOLIC PARTY (SECOND CONDITION)**

The second condition for the granting permission or dispensation for the mixed marriage is the notification to the non-Catholic party about the declaration made by the Catholic party (cf. c. 1125, 2°). This condition ensures that both parties enter the marriage with open eyes, acknowledging the Catholic party's obligations and the non-Catholic party's autonomy. While imposing no obligation on the non-Catholic party to adopt the Catholic faith, this notification fosters a moral responsibility to respect and support the Catholic party's faith commitments. Furthermore, as parents, both parties share responsibility for their child's upbringing encompassing physical, social, cultural, moral, and religious aspects (Canon 1136). **B3** promoting open communication, cooperation, and respect for conscience, this guideline lays the groundwork for a harmonious and respectful interfaith union.

The Code does not specify the mode of communicating essential information to the non-Catholic party in mixed marriages. However, examining the practice of the Church and teachings of the previous Code reveals that this obligation traditionally fell on the local Ordinary of the Catholic party. In contrast, the new Code assigns this responsibility to the Catholic party themselves. The new Code emphasizes the importance of timely notification, expressed through the phrase "*tempestive certior fiat*," which must occur before the marriage. This ensures that the non-Catholic party is fully informed about the Catholic party's promise to uphold their faith obligations. Effective marriage preparation is crucial in mixed marriages. The parish priest or pastor plays a vital role in facilitating open discussions between both parties.

## **THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION ON MARRIAGE (THIRD CONDITION)**

The third condition for obtaining permission or dispensation for mixed marriages catechetical instruction for both the Catholic and non-Catholic parties (Canon 1125, 3°). This specialized instruction aims to educate both parties on the nature, essential purposes, and properties of marriage in the Catholic Church, ensuring they understand and consent to Catholic doctrine. Typically, the proper parish priest of the Catholic party is responsible for imparting this instruction during marriage preparation (Canon 1063). Through comprehensive guidance (addressing concerns, and verifying understanding, this process fosters mutual respect, promotes a deeper appreciation for the sacrament of marriage, and ensures informed consent. By fulfilling this condition, the Catholic Church safeguards the Catholic party's faith obligations, promotes unity, and lays the groundwork for a harmonious and fulfilling mixed marriage.

The catechetical instruction provided to couples contemplating mixed marriage serves as a vital preparatory step, empowering them to assume the responsibilities of married life. Through this guidance, couples gain a deeper understanding of marriage's essential ends — fostering their own well-being and that of their partner, as well as the well-being and upbringing of their offspring. Additionally, this instruction illuminates the fundamental properties of marriage, including unity, indissolubility, and sacramentality. By embracing these principles, couples lay a solid foundation for a fulfilling and harmonious marriage, cultivating a loving environment conducive to their own growth and the nurturing of their children.

Canon 1125 emphasizes the fulfilment of pre-nuptial conditions through the clause “*nisi impletis conditionibus*” (unless the conditions are fulfilled). These conditions are essential for the lawfulness of marriage, distinct from validity of permission, dispensation, or marriage itself. The legislator prescribes these three conditions to ascertain and confirm the Catholic party’s willingness to uphold their faith obligations, rooted in divine law. These obligations are universally binding, transcending time, place, and circumstance. While they may seem superfluous in certain contexts, every faithful is called to adhere to them, underscoring the Church’s commitment to safeguarding the Catholic faith in mixed marriages.

### **THE MODE OF DECLARATION**

The Code delegates authority to Episcopal Conferences to determine the mode of declaration and promise for mixed marriages (Canon 1126). This includes establishing the format for the Catholic party’s declaration and notification procedures for the non-Catholic party, taking into account regional specifics. Episcopal Conferences may also require the Catholic party to make their declaration under oath. However, their norms require review and recognition by the Holy See and formal promulgation to take effect. To ensure consistency, a uniform procedure within a country or region is recommended, facilitating clarity and coherence in mixed marriage processes and safeguarding the integrity of Catholic marriage norms.

### **THE CCBI AND REGULATION ON MODE OF DECLARATION**

In granting permission or dispensation for mixed marriages, written documentation is essential to certify the fulfilment of conditions. The Episcopal Conference of India

mandates that promises made by the Catholic party be in writing, although the local Ordinary may accept oral declarations, attested by two witnesses and documented by the parish priest (CLD, Vol. VII 725). The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CCBI) has established additional norms: The Catholic party's promises and declaration must be written and signed. 2. The Catholic party's declaration must be communicated to the non-Catholic party prior to marriage, with the (priest signing a statement confirming this notification; the non-Catholic party may optionally countersign. 3. For record-keeping purposes, the Catholic party's declaration, signed state men of the parish priest, and marriage record must be preserved. These norms ensure transparency accountability, and documentation, safeguarding the integrity of Catholic marriage norms ii mixed marriages within the Indian context.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Catholic Church's guidelines for mixed marriages strike a delicate balance between embracing interfaith love and safeguarding the spiritual well-being of its faithful. This thoughtful approach ensures that couples can direct complex situations with confidence, clarity and a strong foundation for their union. At its core, the Church's guidance reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the sacrament of marriage, unity of faith, and spiritual growth for its members.

**ANNEXURE - IV****JUBILEE 2025****CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF INDIA**

To

The Archbishops, Bishops, Apostolic Administrators and Diocesan Administrators of the Latin Church in India.

**SUBJECT : JUBILEE 2025 CELEBRATIONS IN THE LOCAL CHURCHES.**

Your Eminence/Grace/Excellency/Dear Monsignor,  
Greetings from the CCBI General Secretariat!

As we approach the much-anticipated Jubilee Year 2025, proclaimed by the Holy Father with the motto 'Pilgrims of Hope' through the Bull of Induction, titled *Spes Non Confundit* ('Hope does not Disappoint'), released on May 9, 2024, I wish to convey to you some key instructions for the celebration of this Holy Year within your Dioceses.

The Jubilee is a moment of grace, offering all the faithful an opportunity for deep renewal and encounter with Christ. Below are some essential guidelines and recommendations drawn from the Holy Father's Bull of Induction and from the discussions on Jubilee 2025, held at the recent CCBI Executive Committee meeting, held on September 10-11, 2024, in Bangalore.

1. Opening of the Jubilee Year in the Universal Church: The Holy Year will officially begin with the opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter's Basilica on

December 24, 2024, followed by the opening of Holy Doors by the Holy Father in the other Major Basilicas.

2. Opening of the Jubilee Year in the Local Churches: Sunday, 29 December 2024, Feast of the Holy Family. Diocesan Bishops or Administrators are to celebrate the Inaugural Mass only in their Cathedrals as the solemn opening of the Jubilee Year. People gathered for the Mass will proceed in procession (pilgrimage), starting from a place indicated by the Local Ordinary. A specially made/ decorated Jubilee Cross is to be carried during the Solemn Entry into the Cathedral.
3. Closing the Jubilee Year in the Local Churches: Sunday, December 28, 2025. The Holy Year closes in the Local Churches with a Solemn Concluding Mass at the Cathedral, with the decorated Jubilee Cross standing in a prominent place. Specially prepared Prayers of the Faithful, Presentation of the Gifts, Thanksgiving Hymn, Prayer over the People, Solemn Blessing and Dismissal are suggested. In the Universal Church, the Jubilee Year closes on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026, the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord.
4. Kindly note that, for the Jubilee 2025, the Holy Doors are opened ONLY in the Papal Basilicas of Rome. No real or symbolic opening of the Holy Door is allowed in other Dioceses.
5. Use the Appropriate Liturgical Resources: The liturgical resources — Rite of the opening of the Jubilee Year; Rite of the closing of the Jubilee Year;

Mass for the Holy Year; Readings for the Liturgy of the Word; Formularies for the Mass; Prayers for the Pilgrimage; Decree on the Granting of Jubilee Indulgence from the Dicastery for Evangelization: Section for Questions regarding the Evangelization in the World' have been sent to you. Kindly avail yourselves of the translations from your Regions and use only the prescribed texts.

6. Pilgrimage and Indulgence: During the Jubilee Year, a pilgrimage becomes a sacred journey of faith and renewal. The Local Ordinary may announce the Jubilee Churches (cathedral, co-cathedral, shrine, minor basilica, pilgrim centre or chapel) in his Diocese and promote pilgrimages within the diocese. The Local Ordinary an Indulgence to the pilgrims who visit these sacred spaces. Psalms or passages from the Bull of Indiction could be read during the pilgrimage.
7. Jubilee Cross: The Cross - not the Door - is the symbol of the Jubilee 2025 in the Local Churches. The Jubilee Cross is a sign of hope and love, showing us the Sacrifice of Christ. Placed in the Cathedral, it invites everyone to remember His mercy. The Cross will be carried in procession at the Opening Mass and will be placed in the Cathedral until the Concluding Mass. The Jubilee Cross may be carried, with devotion and decorum, to other pilgrim centres / deaneries / parishes / villages during the Holy Year.
8. Sacrament of Reconciliation: The Holy Father emphasizes the importance of the Sacrament of Confession during the Jubilee. It is a time for the

faithful to experience God's boundless mercy. You are encouraged to prepare priests and make this Sacrament readily available to the faithful throughout the year. Special attention should be given to the penitents, offering them spiritual guidance and a path to conversion.

9. **Ecumenical and Interfaith Participation:** The Jubilee Year coincides with the significant ecumenical milestone of the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. The Holy Father invites us to intensify our efforts toward Christian unity and collaboration with other faiths, reflecting the inclusive nature of our hope in God.
10. **Focus on the Poor and the Marginalized:** As emphasized by Pope Francis, the Jubilee should be an opportunity for renewed solidarity with the poor and those on the margins of society. The dioceses are asked to increase their outreach programmes, ensuring that no one is excluded from the message of hope, particularly those suffering from poverty, illness, imprisonment or displacement. The places where hope is dim — hospitals, prisons, orphanages, homes for the aged, refugee camps and others — could be visited during the Holy Year.
11. **In the Parishes and Religious Institutions across the Diocese:** Wherever possible, display the Jubilee 2025 Logo and Motto, recite the Jubilee 2025 Prayer and sing the Jubilee 2025 Hymn. For your recollections, reunions, retreats and feast days, take the 'Four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council, "prayer,' and 'hope' as the themes or

subject matter. Above all, encourage everyone to be a 'sign of hope' in the neighbourhood. And, in accordance with the Jubilee 2025 Calendar, prescribed by Rome and adopted by the CCBI, kindly celebrate Jubilee 2025 with various groups — children, young people, women, labourers, prisoners, migrants, etc. Make the celebrations not only liturgical and spiritual, but also social, cultural and pastoral.

12. Pilgrimages to Rome: If any pilgrimage is arranged to visit Rome during the Holy Year, kindly follow the required protocol suggested by the Apostolic Nunciature and the Italian Consulate. Guidelines for his purpose have been given to your Diocesan Contact Person for the Jubilee by the National Co-ordination Team.

Let this Jubilee be a time when we, as Shepherds, lead our people in hope, inspiring them with the assurance that, despite life's challenges, the love of Christ triumphs overall. May we be faithful witnesses of God's mercy and steadfast hope during this sacred time.

With my warm personal regards

Yours fraternally in JESUS,

**+ Filipe Neri Cardinal Ferrao**  
President, C.C.B.I.  
Archbishop of Goa and Daman