



DIOCESE OF CHIKMAGALUR

CIRCULAR



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No.05/2024

25-11-2024

Dear Fathers/Brothers/Sisters/People of God,

1. SEASON OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS:

As we enter the sacred season of Advent, we are reminded of the words, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light” (Isaiah 9:2). This light is Christ, whose coming brings hope, peace, and redemption to the world. Advent is a time of “waiting in joyful hope” a period to reflect on God's immense love for humanity. The four candles of the Advent wreath symbolize hope, peace, joy, and love, illuminating our hearts as we prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth during this season, let us hold on to the truth that “God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son” (John 3:16). Christmas is not just a day but a reminder of the divine gift of grace. As we gather with loved ones, remember the words of St. Francis of Assisi: **“For it is in giving that we receive.”** Let our hearts overflow with generosity, kindness, and compassion toward those in need, echoing the selfless love of Christ. Christmas calls us to rejoice with the angels who sang, **“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men”** (Luke 2:14). Let their song inspire us to be messengers of peace in our families and communities. As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, let us live out the message of St. Teresa of Calcutta: “It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.” May every act of love reflect the joy of Christ's presence in our lives. Let the words of the beloved carol resonate in our hearts: “O come, let us adore Him,

Christ the Lord.” A blessed Advent Season and Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones.

Let us carry the message of Christmas into the New Year, spreading hope and goodwill wherever we go. May the New Year 2025 bring joy, success and endless opportunities your way. Cherish every moment, learn from every challenge and shine brighter than ever. May Mary Our Mother, in whom we place our trust, protect and guide us all through this New Year 2025.

2. ORDO: 2024-2025: As we embark on a new Liturgical Year, a new Ordo for the year 2024-2025 has been prepared and published jointly by the commissions for Liturgy and communication, for the use of parishes in our Diocese. I congratulate and thank Rev. Frs. Supreeth Meneges, Vincent Marcel Pinto and Anil Lobo for their good and generous work in bringing out the same.

3. UNITY OCTAVE: The Unity Octave is a sacred opportunity for all Christians to reflect on Jesus' prayer, "**that they may all be one**" (John 17:21). It is a call to transcend divisions and focus on the common faith that unites us as followers of Christ. Celebrated from **January 18th to 25th**, this octave reminds us of our shared mission to love, serve, and witness to the Gospel together.

The theme for the year 2025 week of prayer is **“Do you believe this?”** The theme is based on the story of Jesus’ dialogue with Martha (John 11:17-27) The theme was Chosen to mark the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea in 325, when the words “I believe” were adopted as the anchor of the Creed. let us renew our commitment to building bridges of understanding, respect, and dialogue. Together, let us celebrate the diversity that enriches the Body of Christ while striving for the unity that reveals His love to the world. I request all the Parish Priests to gather the other denominations and conduct Prayer Service in your Parish.

4. REVISED FEE STRUCTURE:

During the senate meeting held on 04.11.2024 the fee structure of the various needs was carefully reviewed and approved. This revised new fee structure will come in to effect from 01.01.2025.

4.1 Diocesan level

- a) Change of name from Rs.200/- to 300/-
- b) Dispensation from Banns or any other dispensation e.g. Mixed marriage from Rs.500/- to 1000/-
- c) Disparity of Cult from Rs.500/- to 1000/-.

4.2 Parish level:

- a) Issuing the Certificate from Rs.20/- to 50/-.
- b) Baptism fee from Rs. 500/- to 1000/-
- c) Marriage fee (includes Mass Stipend, Reading the Banns and Preparing the Dossier) from Rs.1500/- to 2000/-.

4.3 Mass Stipend:

- a) Week day Masses (remains same Rs.100/-)
- b) Sundays and Feast days Rs.200/-.
- c) All soul's day November 2, Rs.100/- only.

4.4 Special Masses: (Remains same Rs.500/-) 3rd day, 7th day, Months Mind, First Death Anniversary, Jubilees and First Holy Communion, if it is held outside the scheduled Masses.

5. INAGURATION OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL TRIBUNAL OF THE DIOCESE OF CHIKMAGALUR:

The Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Diocese of Chikmagalur will come into existence from 7th January 2025. Henceforth, it is independent and becomes operative from January onwards as we commemorate the universal Jubilee year 2025. I am indeed happy to inform you that our Diocesan Tribunal, a long-felt dream has come true. The tribunal will address and assist the pastoral care of the faithful with due care and diligence in due time.

I am also glad to tell you that we are able to have the assistance of competent and academically qualified and pastorally enriched priests so as to serve the tribunal of first instance of our Diocese. The following are appointed as the tribunal personnel and staff,

1. Rev.Fr David Prakash M.F - The Judicial Vicar.
2. Rev.Fr Melwyn Tellis - Associate Judicial Vicar/Judge.
3. Rev.Fr William Bernard - The Defender of the Bond and Promoter of Justice.
4. Rev.Fr Rayappa - The Ecclesiastical Notary.

I wish and pray every success in their tribunal and judicial ministry. I entrust them to the powerful intercession of Blessed Virgin Mary, the mirror of Justice and to our beloved Patron St. Joseph, a man of justice, so that they may never lack the divine help in carrying out their role and responsibility with fidelity and loyalty, in a spirit of fruitful ministry.

On this occasion of the inauguration of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of our Diocese, a seminar on Canon Law will be held on **07th January 2025, Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. followed by the inauguration of the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the Diocese** at Spoorthi Sadana, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Chikkamagaluru.

6. JUBILEE YEAR – 2025:

The Jubilee Year - 2025, also called the Ordinary Jubilee, will begin on December 24, 2024, with Pope opening the Door at St. Peter's Basilica. On December 29, 2024, the Holy Door at St. John Lateran, the Pope's Cathedral, will be opened. This event will be mirrored worldwide, with Bishops leading similar celebrations in Cathedrals across the globe to mark the official opening of the Jubilee Year. Hence, the same event will take place in our Diocese on **29.12.2024**, at St Joseph's Cathedral at **8.30 a.m.** Bishop, holding the Jubilee Cross and leading the gathering with a solemn procession to the doors of the Cathedral and entering the doors which symbolize Christ as the "Door of Salvation." I request all the Clergy from

across the diocese to offer mass in their respective parishes and take part in this significant liturgical and symbolic event.

- Kindly find the attachment of the Pastoral letter on the Jubilee Year – 2025

7. CHRISTMAS KALAA SOURABHA 2024:

The Diocesan Cultural meet and competition organized by the Youth Commission, celebrating the spirit of Christmas through music, dance, drama and more will be held on the following dates,

- a) 27.12.2024 - Hassan Deanary
- b) 28.12.2024 – Chikmagalur Deanary
- c) 30.12.2024 – Balehonnur Deanary

This vibrant cultural event will feature a variety of competitions. It's a wonderful opportunity for our Youth and Children to come together in celebration, showcase talents and deepen the joy of Christmas. I request all the Parish Priests to encourage the Youth and Children to Participate in big number and make these events successful.

8. INSRUCTIONS:

- a. Receiving Holy Communion:** During the Covid time, receiving the Holy Communion on tongue was prohibited due to health reason. Now it is advisable to receive Holy Communion on the tongue, however it is optional.
- b. Distribution of Communion:** Lay people are not supposed to distribute communion without the permission of the Bishop.
- c. Masses in the Estates:** It is strictly forbidden to have Masses in the Estates. The senate members requested the Bishop to discuss the matter in the KRCBC and to have a common rule in the region.
- d. Felicitation in the Churches:** It is decided in the senate not to have any felicitation in the sanctuary.

9. INFORMATION:

- a. Enrolment of Cooks:** Some of the Priest have not registered their cooks' names and other details to the Chancery. Hence, they are requested to do the needful by the end of December 2024. If not, from January 2025 onwards they are not eligible to take cook salary either from the Parish or Chancery.
- b. Seminars and Trainings:** Since we need personel of own in the diocese for various Commissions, it is decided to send some priests whenever seminars and special trainings are conducted of that particular commission.
- c. Commission Expenses:** Whenever commissions arrange programs in various parishes, the expenses incurred will be met by the diocese provided bills are produced to the Chancery. However, it is advisable to collect it from the donors.
- d. Priests after retirement:** Those priests who opt to stay outside Shanthi Nilaya, retired priests Home, are responsible to make their own arrangements when they fall sick.
- e. Kattinamane and Kunchevu:** Both will be erected as independent parishes from June 2025.

10. REMINDERS:

- 1) The Diocesan Commissions meeting, scheduled for 3rd December 2024, at 10 a.m., at St Joseph's Minor Seminary. I request all the Secretaries and Joint Secretaries to make necessary arrangements to attend this meeting. Further information will follow by the Diocesan Commissions Coordinator.
- 2) The upcoming Clergy Recollection, scheduled for 4th December 2024, at 10 a.m., at St. Joseph's Minor Seminary. I look forward to your participation without fail.

Yours Sincerely,



Most Rev. Dr T. Anthony Swamy
Bishop of Chikmagalur

I wish you a

MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

