



Vol. 6 No. 4

Mallige Mane, Sagar Road, Shimoga - 577205

July 2019

FROM THE BISHOP'S DESK

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

Greetings from Mallige Mane

These five eventful years of my ministry of leadership here in Shimoga, have been, for me a time of rich human and spiritual experiences as well as a time to acquire deeper insights into myself and other human beings, especially the members of the Presbyterium. Touring the diocese, visiting the parishes and meeting almost all of you personally, has been a satisfying as well as sobering experience. While problems and pains have not been lacking as they certainly will not be in any life, in any vocation, at any place, and for anyone, there have also been examples of heroic fidelity, unfailing generosity, unshakable loyalty unassuming courtesy, unexpected cooperation, undiminished cordiality and unsurpassed commitment.

Of course, there have been some thorny issues to resolve, certain serious policy decisions to enforce, a few difficult and delicate canonical procedures to comply with and the usual administrative arrangements to put in place, which may not have been always acceptable, agreeable or palatable for everyone. But then, as Pope Francis rightly and repeatedly has stressed to the world's Bishops, the pastoral leadership in the Church is not a popularity contest, nor an image building exercise, but rather a mission of leading the entire flock of Christ along the straight and narrow path to the fullness of life, with fairness, firmness and faithfulness born of sincere dialogue, suitable deliberation and spiritual discernment. This indeed has been the guiding philosophy of my ministry till now, and it will continue to be the light to my path and lamp to my feet as long as I remain in this ministry in this diocese.

One of the dreams of this diocese has been to have a minor seminary of our own. It is a matter of joy and satisfaction for all of us to see that a first step has been taken in this direction with the establishment of the Apostolic School in what was till recently the Villa Vianney. Another long cherished dream is also well on the way to realization even in the face of legal hurdles and financial difficulties, namely, a Pastoral Centre. The entire apostolic enterprise of the diocese is on the shoulders of Diocesan Commissions who are doing a competent, committed and conscientious job. Each of the Diocesan Commissions, with its own well evolved and efficiently implemented pastoral programme, is giving a concerted, concrete and collective momentum to the pastoral service of the entire diocese.

In the area of the material aspect of the diocesan administration, it has been our good fortune to have had men of integrity, intelligence and initiative at the helm. Thanks to their foresight and judicious husbanding of our meagre resources, we have been able to manage well till now. Some fixed assets have been liquidated and other beneficial properties have been acquired depending upon the pastoral needs and contingencies of each place and always with participative decision making in the relevant diocesan bodies and discerned decision taking at the end of a process of, at times prolonged, debate, discussion and dialogue. Participation and cooperation have always been the watch words.

With this aim of ensuring the widest possible participation, genuine efforts have been made to share as much information as possible with as many stake holders as possible, of course with the inevitable need for the strictest possible confidentiality in certain delicate and sensitive matters of a personal nature, dictated by the

obligatory religious respect for the reputation, good name and the right to privacy of those concerned. In this context all of us need to take to heart the sage advice given by Pope Francis to be wary of unhealthy curiosity, unbridled tendency to gossip, and unwholesome inclination towards contentiousness, conflict generation and contrariness, which neither help towards building up the Body of Christ nor ensure peace of mind and serenity of spirit to those who indulge in them. Steps will be taken to share with the People of God in this diocese, whatever can be safely shared from the points that emerge from the meetings of the Clergy and the Religious of the diocese as also the meetings of the diocesan college of consultors.

All such meetings have to ideally take place in an atmosphere of communal discernment which Pope Francis has highlighted in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Let us remember what St Ignatius of Loyola lays down as the absolute pre-requisite for any genuine discernment: Interior Freedom, which involves, divesting ourselves of all inordinate attachments; all emotional enslavement to people, places and positions; all private, personal prejudices and predilections; all hidden agenda, all possessive preferences for personal projects, and instead, solely focusing our attention on the glory of God, the good of the people, the growth of the Church and the service of the Gospel. Nothing else. This demands, in the words of St Paul, dying to our own ego and living for Christ alone! Not easy, but possible.

Dying to self is absolutely necessary for reconciliation and peace to reign within us and around us. This is particularly relevant now that we in this diocese are observing the Year of Reconciliation. The Lord calls every one of us to be ministers of reconciliation in our homes, in our families, in our religious communities, in our parishes, in our villages, in our institutions, everywhere. But one important thing we need to keep in mind is that we cannot be ministers of reconciliation if reconciliation and peace do not dwell in our hearts. We need to be first reconciled to God, to our fellow human beings and to creation before we can hope to bring about reconciliation in others and among others.

Therefore, while extending my sincere appreciation and gratitude to all my colleagues, collaborators and co-workers in the service of faith that leads to the fullness of life, I confidently hope and pray for even greater faith, fidelity, fervour, fellowship and fruitfulness in the time that is still left for me in this diocese.

Now, let me remind you of the several great feasts that we will be celebrating in the coming days, and share with you my reflections.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS: As this Newsletter goes to the press, the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is being celebrated. Our diocese and our Cathedral are dedicated to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Sacred Heart of Jesus takes us right to the heart of the Gospel. The heart of the Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God as our loving and merciful Father. The Father calls to drink deep from the springs of salvation that pour out of the wounded heart of crucified Christ. This leads to our transformation into Christ. This in turn makes us mediators of God's love and mercy, forgiveness and healing, reconciliation and harmony. Those of us who are in close touch with our people surely know that these are the greatest needs of our people today, and we are sent by God to fulfill these needs. That is our ministry. We in this diocese have taken reconciliation as the special theme for this year. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be enthroned in every heart and every home in our diocese so that reconciliation, justice and peace reign everywhere.

SS PETER and PAUL: Two sturdy pillars of the Church! Two great evangelizers! Two great icons of fearless faith, courageous commitment, sacrificial service and fierce fidelity to Christ to the very end! Peter the man of rock who was also the man of sand, just like all of us. Paul, the passionate preacher who was also weak and sinful. Again like us. What we clearly see in both these stalwarts of our faith is the triumph of grace over human nature. That is why both these saints are popular figures of devotion in the Christian spirituality. If Peter represents the Church as a stable institution with spiritual authority, Paul

represents the Church as a firestorm of evangelization, intent on setting the whole world on fire with the love of God. Both these dimensions of the church go hand in hand.

ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE: This man, one among the Twelve, represents all of us who find ourselves weak in faith, fragile in hope and cold in charity. It was the patience and forgiveness of the Risen Lord, born of immense love and compassion that brought Thomas back into the apostolic fold, reviving and enlivening his faith, increasing and intensifying his hope and rekindling and inflaming his heart with love. Those celebrated words recorded in the Gospels, “My God and My Lord” can well be the cry from the heart of each one of us. On the occasion of the feast of this great apostle, the Apostle of India, let us specially renew our bonds of communion with our fellow Catholics who trace their origin to the evangelizing mission of St Thomas.

ST JOHN MARY VIANNEY: Reconciliation, Justice and Peace are the fruits of Christ’s love and mercy flowing into our deepest selves and the deepest selves of our people. This is best done through the sacrament of reconciliation. More than anyone else in the Church it is the pastoral clergy who are primarily the ministers of the sacrament of reconciliation. In this they have a model and example in their model and patron St John Mary Vianney, who spent long hours of the day in the confessional and much of his nights in prayer. As we prepare to celebrate the feast of this great and heroic saint, let us ask him to intercede for us so that at least a tiny spark of the flame that blazed bright in his soul may be granted to us so as to enable us to live and cherish our priesthood in all its authenticity. For John Mary Vianney priesthood was not a ladder to climb the steep steps of social standing and economic prosperity. Preaching was not an occasion for rhetorical flourishes and oratorical eloquence to mesmerize people and draw their attention, appreciation and admiration to himself. Liturgy was not a mere stage performance. On the contrary he lived his priesthood every moment of his life, speaking the words of comfort and consolation, forgiveness and

healing. He celebrated the mass and administered the sacraments with utmost faith and fervour. And most importantly, he lived a life of simplicity, frugality and penance.

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL: Our people have a filial devotion to Mother Mary and venerate her under various titles, and one of the most popular in this diocese is Our Lady of Mount Carmel. This feast which is very dear to our people, has a special significance for our diocese, because our one section of educational apostolate is under the patronage of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. May Our Lady help us to make good education, especially higher education, accessible and affordable to our people, particularly the poor, talented young people in our diocese. Therefore, I encourage all of you to prepare for the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, with a novena and celebrate it with due solemnity, popularizing the practice of wearing her scapular as a pledge of her maternal protection.

THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY AND INDEPENDENCE DAY: The feast of the Assumption of Our Lady coincides with our Independence Day, and hence it is indeed a feast of freedom for us, because Mary’s Assumption into heaven is her attainment of total freedom, as she is not only liberated from her mortal coils but also has arrived at the summit of spiritual freedom, which was already manifested by her at the Annunciation by her total and trusting surrender to God in her celebrated words: “Behold the servant of the Lord! Whatever the Lord wants let it happen to me.” This makes Mary the icon of true freedom. It is not by throwing off the foreign yoke that our nation becomes truly free but by being able to live up to its great ideals and growing to the fullness of its potential. Mary, by surrendering herself totally to the Lord became completely free from selfishness and this is what made her a true icon of genuine freedom. This Independence Day is being celebrated in the immediate aftermath of General Elections, which have yielded fruit in the form of a stable, secure and strong Union Government of a party with a comfortable majority of its own. With the new Government firmly in place in Delhi, we can only hope that our rulers will be guided by those great ideals on which our nation has been founded and

which are enshrined in our Constitution. The initial rhetoric of the winners has been positive and hopeful, stressing the need for inclusivity and non-discrimination. Let us hope that rhetoric is confirmed by reality. The viciousness, the divisiveness and poison that spewed forth during the long and troubling election campaign leading to these astounding results may well make us think that this hope is tenuous indeed. However, whatever might have been our personal predilections, political perspectives and preferred poll prospects, we must now gracefully accept the democratic verdict of the electorate and offer unstinted cooperation to the Government in working for the welfare of all our people, while at the same time keeping vigilant against the forces of hatred, division and discrimination amidst us. And certainly we shall keep praying to Mary our Mother to protect us from all dangers and to bless all our people.

These are my reflections and views which I wished to share with you because no ministry of leadership can succeed without the active support and generous cooperation of all. Communication, consultation and co-responsibility are pre-requisites for cooperation and communion. Let me conclude here with an earnest request for your prayers so that the divine assistance may never be lacking to me.

With warm regards and in union of prayers,

Sincerely yours in Christ

✠ Francis Serrao SJ
Bishop of Shimoga

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CROSS OF RECONCILIATION: As an important part of the celebration of the Year of Reconciliation, four crosses will be blessed and handed over to each of the four Deans at the end of the mass in honour of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Cathedral on Tuesday 16 July. Each Deanery will receive one cross which is to be kept in each parish and Mission Centre of the Deanery for a week before it is handed over ceremonially to the next parish or Mission Centre. Each parish or mission centre will receive the Cross on Saturday

evening and will keep it there till the following Saturday evening when it will be handed over to the next parish or mission centre. The Deans will draw up the detailed order of transferring the cross from one centre to the other in the deanery. Suitable devotions and para liturgical programmes may kindly be organized in each parish or mission centre during the week that the cross is with them. Penitential Services followed by Confessions for children, the youth, married couples and elders may be arranged separately during that week. Prayer for Reconciliation may please be recited in common on every day of the week.

FEAST OF ST JOHN MARY VIANNEY: A Clergy Recollection has been organized in connection with the feast of St John Mary Vianney. It will begin at 6.30 pm on Sunday 04 August in Mallige Mane, the Bishop's House and end with lunch in Chaitanya the following noon. All priests, diocesan clergy as well as the Religious, are invited for this recollection.

CLERGY RETREAT 2019: The annual retreat for the clergy of our diocese will be held in Maitreya, Bannerghatta Road, Near Mount St Joseph, Bangalore from 7 pm on Sunday 15 September and will end with lunch on Friday 20 September. Fr Juventius Andrade CSSR will be the preacher. Let us approach this retreat with a deep desire in our hearts for repentance, reconciliation, and renewal. Therefore, interior silence would be most important. Not just listening to talks but enterprising the message with prolonged personal prayer is essential.

SEMINAR FOR THOSE ENGAGED IN EDUCATION MINISTRY: A seminar for all the Correspondents, Principals, HMs of all the diocesan and Religious institutions is organized on 12 August 2019 at Chaitanya, Shimoga. The one-day seminar will begin at 9.30 am and end at 4.00 pm. Frs Dionysius Vaz SJ, Melwyn Pinto SJ and Bishop Francis Serrao SJ will be the resource persons. The topics to be dealt are: Characteristics of Christian Education, Challenges to Education Ministry, the "New National Education Policy" and Revisit to our Diocesan Education Policy. Please attend without fail.

APPOINTMENTS 2019

Sl. No	Names	To	Designation	W.E.F
1.	Fr Franklin D'Souza	Hiriyur	Parish Priest	19.05.2019
2.	Fr Simon Horta OFM Cap	Hosanagar	Parish Priest	16.06.2019
3.	Fr Johnson D'Mello OFM Cap	Hosanagar	Asst. Parish Priest	16.06.2019
4.	Fr Arogya Raj SDB		Director Labour Commission	27.06.2019
5.	Sr Elize Lurdh SCB		Director, Women Commission	27.06.2019
6.	Sr Irene Lewis SCB		Director, Health Commission	27.06.2019
7.	Rev. Fr Devikanth S (Vivek) SDB		Director, Apostleship of Prayer	29.06.2019

MERCY QUOTES OF POPE FRANCIS

I think we too are the people who, on the one hand, want to listen to Jesus, but on the other hand, at times, like to find a stick to beat others with, to condemn others. And Jesus has this message for us: mercy. I think - and I say it with humility - that this is the Lord's most powerful message: mercy.

— Homily on March 17, 2013

It is not easy to entrust oneself to God's mercy, because it is an abyss beyond our comprehension. But we must! ... "Oh, I am a great sinner!" "All the better! Go to Jesus: He likes you to tell him these things!" He forgets, He has a very special capacity for forgetting. He forgets, He kisses you, He embraces you and He simply says to you: "Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more" (Jn 8:11).

— Homily on March 17, 2013

"And here the first word that I wish to say to you: joy! Do not be men and women of sadness: a Christian can never be sad! Never give way to discouragement! Ours is not a joy born of having many possessions, but of having encountered a Person: Jesus, in our midst."

"Being with" Christ does not mean isolating ourselves from others. Rather, it is a "being with" in order to go forth and encounter others."

BISHOP'S PROGRAMME**JULY**

03 : Deanery meeting, Chitradurga

04 : Regional Major Superiors' Seminar, KROSS

05 : Theologians Colloquium, NBCLC

07 : Confirmations, Silvepura

09 : GB Meeting, SMSSS, MM

14 : Confirmations, Molakalmuru

16 : Feast of Mt Carmel, Mass Cathedral

21 : am: Confirmations, Jog

pm: Parish Youth Presidents' Meeting, MM

23-29 : Retreat, SCB Superiors, Mysuru

31-

AUGUST

-01 : AGB & GB Meeting, NVSC Pune

04 : Mass, Deanery Youth Convention, Hiriyur

06 : AGBM St Peter's Seminary, B'luru

07-08 : KRCBC Commissions Meeting, KROSS

09 : AKUCFHR Meeting, Bengaluru

10 : CCBI Executive Committee Meeting, B'luru

11 : Seminar for Prison Ministry Volunteers, MM

12 : am: Seminar on Education, Chaitanya

pm: MAGIS, Mass, Harihar

15 : am: Mass, Mavinkere Parish

pm: Mass, Hiriyur Parish

18-23 : Clergy Retreat, Varanasi

25 : Talk on Mission, Laity of Bhadravathi

26 : AGBM SMSSS, Chaitanya

29 : Ecumenism Office Bearers' Meeting, Mysuru

BIRTHDAYS**July**

02 Fr Mark P. D'Silva
 04 Sr Jenifer Nirmala CIC
 04 Sr Flora BS
 05 Br Stanley David
 06 Sr Soji Jacob UMI
 09 Sr ArpithaCrasta SCCG
 11 Sr Sara Arakkal IMA
 11 Sr Anupama CSST
 13 Fr Alwyn Serrao
 13 Sr Henry SJC
 14 Fr Arun VenilD'Silva
 16 Fr Pius D'Souza
 14 Sr Sirija Pushpam SJC
 16 Sr Clara D'Souza SCB
 20 Sr Smitha D'Souza FMM
 20 Sr Adline Alvares SCB
 20 Sr Metty SAB
 21 Sr Blanche BS
 21 Sr Merylle CSST
 25 Sr Linus Lobo SJT
 26 Dn Paul Crasta
 26 Sr Annie Nedumkallel SCB
 26 Sr Mary Asha BS
 28 Sr Amala CIC
 29 Sr Martha D'Souza SCB
 29 Sr Paul Monteiro SCB
 29 Sr Teena Rose AC
 30 Sr Arogyam FSI
 30 Sr Diana FSI
 30 Sr PremshilaKerketta SSPS
 30 Sr Diana D'Souza SCB

August

02 Bro. Roshan Honest Raj SDB
 04 Sr Susai Rani SJT
 07 Fr Santhosh Pereira
 07 Sr Juliana Pereira SCB
 08 Sr Flavia Pais SCB
 09 Sr Roseline. A SCB
 09 Br NithinJoyson
 09 Sr Roseline SCB
10 Archbishop Bernard Moras
 10 Fr Robert D MSFS
 11 Br Ashlin Prithesh Pinto
 12 Fr Stephen Albuquerque
 14 Sr Prema Rodrigues UFS
 14 Sr Reema MC
15 Bishop Francis Serrao SJ
 15 Fr Kokkandathil Joe SDB
 15 Fr Santhosh V. Almeida
 17 Fr David Dellario
 20 Sr Cyrillina MC
 20 Br Joy Jolson Andrade
 21 Sr Chinni FSI
 22 Sr Regina Suares SCB
 23 Fr Valerian Mascarenhas
 23 Fr Abhishek Joseph MSFS
 23 Sr Mary Lobo SCCG
 23 Sr Daisy A SCB
 23 Sr Rosy Varkey SCB
 24 Fr Lancy B. D'Souza
 25 Fr Anthony Almeida M.Ss.Cc
 25 Br Infant Daniel
 29 Sr Lucy FSI
 30 Sr Philomena Jacob SCB
 30 Sr Arpitha Shalini SCB
 30 Sr Jude SAB
31 Mar Lawrence Mukkuzhy
 31 Fr Palakaran Vinesh Paul SDB