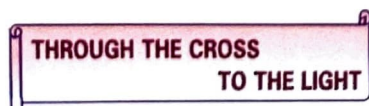


Bishop Cletus Chandrasiri Perera O.S.B
Bishop of Ratnapura



TEL : 071 6831199 (MOBILE)
E-MAIL : perera.cletus@Yahoo.com (PERSONAL)



Bishop's House,
Madola,
Avissawella 10700,
SRI LANKA.

Tel : 036 - 2232368 (OFFICE)
Tel : 036 - 2232370 (DIRECT)
Fax : 036 - 2232369
E-mail : bisratnapura@gmail.com

1st November 2022 ; CL/Pres/Rn 156

God's Blessings and Fraternal Greetings

TO THE REVEREND CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS OF THE DIOCESE OF RATNAPURA

Dear Rev Fathers and Sisters

As we enter into the Month of November, which is traditionally considered as the **Month of the Commemoration of the Dead**, let us not forget to pray continuously for our deceased dear ones: clergy, religious and lay people who have served our Diocese and have now passed to their eternal reward.

1. This year too, **The Clergy and Religious Sisters** shall have their customary Christmas gatherings (I do not want to call them parties) on a deanery level in their own respective deaneries. They have to be organized by the three Deans in their respective deaneries. I have been informed that Kegalle deanery on December 5th at 5.00 p.m. at Kudagama; and Seethawakapura deanery on October 6th at 5.00 p.m. at the Bishop's House; the dean of the Ratnapura deanery will notify its place and date later.
2. The Clergy and Religious gatherings have been a Tradition in view of Christmas. However, I would earnestly request you to be sensitive to the prevalent economic crisis which is escalating and has afflicted the poor in a serious manner. You clearly know that some cannot afford even one meal a day. They are just struggling to survive. We have to feel with them in some way and empathize with them, not just sympathize with them verbally.
- 3 Hence I would kindly but earnestly request you, Clergy and Religious, to refrain from too much of **thamashas, merry-making and enjoyment**; and let us limit ourselves **to a simple and austere celebration of Christmas** in the deaneries, parishes and institutions of the Diocese, at the same time, safeguarding and maintaining **its spiritual and festive dimensions**. Failure in this respect can be a counter-witness by our Priestly and Religious vacations. Very unfortunately, some of us, not everybody, are absolutely insensitive and indifferent to the suffering and starvation, undergone by some of our people, due to the prevalent economic crisis and high cost of living in the country, especially children who cry for food and milk. In our concern for them, we too have **to make some personal sacrifices** for their sake and identify ourselves with these unfortunate families. We need to go back to the spirituality of the **Original Christmas with the Divine Baby in the manger**.

4. We thank Rev Fr Justin Chawkan SSS and Rev Fr Roger Fernando SSS for their dedicated services in the Parish of Mahena and, particularly Fr Chawkan for his services as spiritual director to our minor seminarians. We also congratulate him in his appointment as Provincial Superior of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation and assure him of our prayers. They both are leaving us at the end of this year to take-up their new responsibilities.

5, The dates of the Annual Retreat have been announced, namely, **it begins on Monday the 7th of November at 4.00.p.m.** with a cup of tea, and will go on till Friday the 11th November evening at Bulutota. Those who want to go there early are kindly requested to inform Rev Fr Anton Morris in advance. The facilitator will be **Rev Fr David Hore CSSR**. Please avoid coming late for the Retreat and leaving early. If anybody who cannot join in the Annual Retreat, which is a priestly obligation, should personally contact me and get himself excused. One is excused from attending the Retreat only for **seriously valid reasons**.

As there are constant power cuts, we are not sure if we can have power-point presentations. Hence, please, bring your personal breviaries along with you to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, and, the emergency lamps too, if you have them with you.

6. We, as a Presbyterium extend our sincere condolences to Rev Fr Gabriel Nicholas on the demise of his father and assure him of our prayers for the repose of his soul.

7. Some changes in the Presbyterium.

A. Rev Fr Sanjeewa Peiris has gone overseas for pastoral work with immediate effect.

B. Rev Fr Dencil Priyankara is appointed temporarily to assistant at Kudagama with immediate effect.

C. Rev Fr Sri Lal Fernando is appointed as the Acting Parish Priest of Yatiyantota with immediate effect.

D. Rev Deacon Bastian Coduthor is appointed temporarily to assist Fr Sri Lal at Yatiyantota .

E. Rev Fr Umesh Malinda is appointed as the Assistant Procurator with residence at the Bishop's House with effect from the 15th November 2022.

F. Rev Fr Sameer Budhisha is appointed as Projects Coordinator

With the assurance of my prayers and with all best wishes for a fruitful Retreat

Yours fraternally

+ 
+ Cletus C. Perera osb

Bishop of Ratnapura

