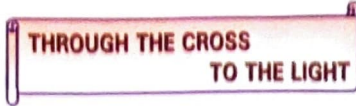


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30th November 2022: CL/RN/PRES 157

To the Rev. Fathers of the Presbyterium of the Diocese of Ratnapura

Dear Rev. Fathers,

God's Blessings and Fraternal Greetings

Now that we have entered into the Season of Advent, let us do our best to spend this holy season as fruitfully as we can. Let us prepare ourselves to celebrate the Solemnity of the Human Birth of Jesus Christ Our loving Saviour. In connection with this upcoming Solemnity I take this opportunity to wish you all a Holy Season of Advent and Christ-filled and Joy-filled Christmas 2022, full of blessings and graces of the Infant Jesus.

1. As I have requested in my previous Clergy letter, dated 20th November 2022 and as His Eminence Malcolm Cardinal Ranjith has emphatically insisted in his Christmas Message let us have a simple and austere celebration among ourselves as priests and in our Parishes/Deaneries in a low-key level with no tamashas and nonessential enjoyments. Let us keep in mind the Suffering brethren of ours who have hardly one meal a day or live on Starvation level.
2. It is praised worthy and encouraging that some of our Priests and Religious are concerned about the sad situation of our motherland and do whatever is possible to help the suffering people. However it is demanded of us that we too as Priests and Religious engage ourselves in acts of Charity and make some sacrifices on our own. That is why I insist that we have a modest celebration of Christmas emphasising the Spirituality of the Baby in the Manger, contrary to the Baby in a golden cradle in a Royal Palace.

3. Some information

- i. Rev. Fr. Hari Haran Rajapriya is appointed as the Director of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre with effect from 08th January 2023.
 - ii. Rev. Fr. Jude Amila Fernando is appointed as the Diocesan Director of PMS and Diocesan Coordinator for Interreligious and Ecumenical Activities, with effect from 08th January 2023.
 - iii. Rev. Fr. Samantha Senanayake SSS is appointed as Parish Priest of Mahena Parish and Rev. Fr. Joe Pakkiam SSS as his assistant, with effect from 08th January 2023.
4. We have not been able to have a general Presbyteral meeting for a long time due to Covid 19, fuel crisis and other economic factors in the country. Now it is has become necessary to begin our Presbyteral meetings too. Usually we have been having them on the Second Monday and Tuesday of the month. So we shall revive it by having the next meeting for one day viz. on Monday, 09th January 2023 beginning at 8.00 am with a Cup of Tea at the Bishop's House and ending with Lunch. All priests are kindly requested to attend it without fail.

The proposed programme - 09th January 2023

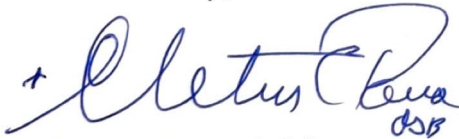
- 08.00 am - Arrival
- 09.00 am - Presbyteral meeting begins
- 10.30 am - Tea break
- 11.00 am - Meeting Continues; The Diocesan Directors are kindly requested to present their respective yearly programmes for the year 2023.
- 11.45 am - Preparation for the Holy Mass at St. Joseph Vaz Chapel
- 12.00 noon - Holy Mass followed by Lunch

Bishop's Diary – December 2022

- December 05th - Kegalle Deanery Christmas gathering at Kudagama
- December 06th - Seethawakapura Deanery Christmas gathering at the Bishop's
- December 08th - “Sangeeka Danaya” for the non Catholic Clergy at the Bishop's House
- December 09th - Clinic day at Kandy Hospital
- December 10th - Catechists Christmas gathering at the pastoral Centre and Vespers at Dummalakotuwa
- December 11th - Church feast at Seeduwa
- December 12th - Ratnapura Deanery Christmas gathering at the Cathedral
- December 13th - Diaconate at Montefano Ampitiya
- December 17th - Neighbourhood Childrens' Christmas gathering (Morning)
- December 18th - Dahampasal Prize giving and Christmas gathering at Dehiowita Parish
- December 20th - Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Rev. Fr. Bernard Fernando in Galle
- December 21st - Christmas Carols at Child Jesus Convent, Ratnapura (morning)
- Christmas Gathering of the Seminarians (Evening) *AT BISHOP'S HOUSE*
- December 24th - Christmas Midnight Mass at Balangoda
- December 25th - Christmas Morning Mass at Elders' Home, Balangoda
- December 31st - Midnight Mass at Cathedral, Ratnapura

With the assurance of prayers and all best wishes for Christmas,

Yours fraternally,



+ Cletus C. Perera O.S.B.

Bishop of Ratnapura

