



DIOCESE OF ALLAHABAD

Bishop's House, #32 Thornhill Road
Allahabad-211 002, INDIA

DIOCESAN CIRCULAR NO. 06/16

December 01, 2016



Most Rev. Raphy Manjaly

MY PROGRAMME

DECEMBER 2016

1	Presides over P.T Display at Christ the King School, Jagdishpur
2	Presides over Annual Day Function at S.F.X. Ashoknagar, Kanpur
3	Presides over Parish Feast at S.F.X. Ashoknagar, Kanpur
4	Presides over Parish Feast at St. Francis Xavier, Robertsganj
5	Presides over Annual Day Function at St. Joseph's School, Pratapgarh
6-9	Inauguration of Bible Convention in Dibrugarh
10	Presides over P.T Display at St. Francis School, Anpara
11	Presides over Nazareth Hospital Day Celebration at 5:30. p.m. Allahabad
12	Presides over Annual Day Function at St. Joseph's School, Sadwa Kalan, Naini
15	Christmas Recollection for Clergy

My Dear Fathers, Sisters and Brothers,

Grace and peace from God Our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

I. Advent and Christmas

I consider holy seasons like Advent and Christmas to be God's special gift to us human beings. Nobody can put the same level of effort continuously for 365 days. God knows that we are weak. Therefore, He gives us privileged times such as Advent and Christmas. The better our Advent preparation, the better will be our Christmas. Because of Jesus human beings are remade in the image and likeness of God. Jesus is God's love and mercy incarnate. The anniversary of his birth invites us to remove from our lives all that stands as an obstacle to the spiritual birth of Christ in the soul.

The spiritual birth of Christ in the soul is brought about by facing our inner emptiness and acknowledging that it can only be filled by God. We prepare ourselves by regularly setting aside time for silence and stillness we associate with the night of his human birth, letting solitude keep us open and receptive in the presence of God. We reflect the light of Christ into the world by giving ourselves throughout the year, serving the poor and homeless, being patient with our community members and support staff, taking time for a little kindness to others.

During the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas as you engage yourselves in different apostolates and activities connected with these holy seasons, I hope you will set apart time to reflect on the mystery expressed in this *mahavakya* of the Bible: **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).**

Jesus is God's gift to us. And Jesus gave himself totally to his Father and to his brothers and sisters. I am sure, just as Jesus gifted himself to God and others, we too would like to give ourselves totally to God and others. To God we will give our love in prayer and to his people our love in service.

16	Presides over Annual Day Function at Akbarpur
17	Presides over Annual Day Function at Bethany Convent, Naini
18	Mass & Blessing of the Priest's House at Oba
21	P.T Display at St. Mary's Inter College, Mirzapur

JANUARY 2017

4-9	Journey to Kerala
14	Presides over Golden Jubilee Celebration of Canossian Sisters, Allahabad
22	Presides over Capping Ceremony at Nazareth Hospital, Allahabad
28	Presides over Vestition and First Profession at Nazareth Nivas, Muirabad, Allahabad
29	Presides over Golden Jubilee Celebration at Sultanpur
31-8	CCBI Plenary Assembly at Bhopal

I think it was St. Francis of Assisi who said that during Christmas even the walls should be fed with good food. Let the joy of Christmas flood your heart and soul and may it overflow from there to the people you interact with. I know that at Christmas time Priests and Religious have much to do. Try to practice what St. Paul asked the Colossians to do: **“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:17).**

Let us ask Our Heavenly Father to give us an outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that we may grasp the mystery of God's love revealed in Christmas, that Jesus Christ is the embodiment of God's love and mercy! May the Holy Spirit that has been poured into our hearts make our love fruitful in service! I wish each one of you a Holy Advent and a very Happy Christmas!

II. Annual Day of Schools

This year I had the joy of witnessing the Annual Day of a number of schools. All of them were well planned and well executed. While I am grateful to you fathers and sisters for honouring me with invitations to preside over your school functions, I would suggest that you call me once in three years. It may be expedient for you to call someone from the District or City Administration or someone who can be of help to the school. It shall be my endeavour to spend more time with you during my pastoral visits. On such visits I shall look forward to meeting your teachers and students either to interact with them or to give them a short message.

The items you stage for the Annual Day should be screened well to ensure that they are culturally rich, their language is edifying, their content promotes values and their messages are inspiring. The school has a duty to elevate the aesthetic sense of both the students and the invited guests. You will do well to avoid impersonating any particular politician or reproducing his speech. Considering various factors it is good to keep your function short. Two and half hours is a good length of time.

Please keep in mind solemnities and sacred seasons of the liturgical year while planning your school functions. As Priests and Religious we are expected to build up the faith of the community to which we belong. Any action that smacks of disregard for the sacred days of the Church or that would scandalize the people is to be avoided.

III. Fr. Vijayanand Memorial

I am happy that Fr. Jacob Bona D'Souza came to me with the idea of organizing Christmas Carol singing competition to celebrate and perpetrate the memory of Late Fr. Vijayanand. He has rendered yeoman service to the cause of Hindustani Music and Liturgical Music in particular. The fact that he served Sangeeth Sadhana Mandir, Pachmarhi, as its Director for 50 years continuously speaks volumes about his commitment to and love for the Church and Music. He was a genial person with a great sense of humour. May he who taught many a novice of music to sing "*Nayagaan*" to the Lord be considered fit by the Lord to sing in heaven in the company of Angels and Saints! I am sure that his intercessions will make our humble endeavour to remember him in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and his people bear rich and lasting fruit!

IV. Directives for the Liturgy

A book titled **Directives for the Celebration of the Liturgy** is being dispatched to each Priest and Religious Superior. It has been published by the CCBI at the request of the member Bishops. Kindly study it well and use it as a reference book so that our Liturgical Celebrations may be orderly, correct edifying and fruitful. I suggest that persons who have the charge of organizing or conducting important Liturgical Celebrations go through the book before planning the order of the liturgy.

V. Closing of the Jubilee Year of Mercy

As the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy was ending someone asked: "Will the works of mercy come to an end with the closing of the Year of Mercy?" Pope Francis seems to have anticipated this question. So he has written an Apostolic Letter titled "*Misericordia et Misera*", which literally translated would read "*mercy with misery*". In it the Holy Father says that the time rich in mercy must continue to be celebrated and lived out in our communities. Mercy cannot become a mere parenthesis in the life of the Church as it constitutes her very existence.

In the apostolic letter Pope Francis is at pains to show how in the Church's prayer and liturgy mercy is repeatedly implored, received and experienced. He takes up for treatment the Holy Eucharist, the Word of God and the Sacrament of Penance.

The Pope does not want our focus on mercy to end with the closing of the Holy Door. He wants the grace of the jubilee to remain alive and effective in the world. As concrete expressions of this intent he has extended the faculty given to the priests

during the Year of Mercy to absolve those who have committed the sin of procured abortion. It is in the same spirit that he has exhorted the Church to celebrate the Thirty-Third Sunday of Ordinary Time as the World Day of the Poor.

The Holy Father is convinced that we are called to promote a culture of mercy, which is based on the rediscovery of encounter with others. In the culture of mercy one will not look at another with indifference or turn away from a suffering brother or sister.

VI. Reminder to Priests

Those priests who could not attend either of the two retreats organized by the diocese are expected to take out time to make their annual retreat at any of the retreat centres. Shanti Sadan on Chattam Lines is the most convenient place for making a personal retreat. In case you prefer to join some group I give here below two addresses:

- Retreat for Priests and Religious, Matridham Ashram 22-28 March, 2017
- Inner Healing Retreat at Atmadarshan, Patna, March 25 to April 2, 2017

Before making any permanent construction, please remember to send to the Bishop the plan and estimate of the same for approval.

+ R. Manjaly

MOST REV. RAPHY MANJALY
Bishop of Allahabad