Most Rev. Dr. James Thoppil Bishop of Kohima Bishop's House Post Box No. 519 Kohima - 797001 Nagaland

February 20, 2024

BPKOH/CIR/01/2024

Dear Rev. Fathers, Sisters, Brothers and Lay Faithful,

Greetings from Bishop's House, Kohima!!

As I write the first circular of the year, I would like to wish once again each and every one of you a grace-filled Year 2024. None of us know what awaits us during this New Year. We are confident that everything will be good for those who have faith and confidence in God who wants all peoples to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. May we be an instrument of God for bringing people to the knowledge of truth?

New Academic Year: Opportunities and Challenges

At this time of the year many of us are busy with opening and planning for the new academic year. Despite the many problems we encounter, especially low enrolment and difficulty of getting qualified teachers especially in the interior areas, we take our educational apostolate seriously because it is the best means to reach out to the poorest in the remotest areas and in carrying out our ministry of evangelization. We must aim at character and conscience formation, the formation of the heart and emotions of our students than filling the head with information. For this I suggest that we must be consistent with a planned module of value education, personality development, career guidance and one to one interaction. Let us also make our educational institutions and campuses Tobacco and Plastic free and sensitize our students about the substance abuse and HIV/AIDS epidemic that is threatening the very fabric of our society. Unless we take preventive and precautionary measures the future can be very bleak. Let us make a concerted effort to make our educational apostolate more effective.

It is also the educational policy of the diocese that catechism or moral science along with bible is taught in all our schools. First Friday Mass and opportunity of Confession for catholic students must be part of annual program.

The legal system and financial reporting are getting complicated and demanding, challenging and difficult. We have no way to ignore or do away with them. Therefore, I request all those concerned to keep all documentations up to date. Since none of us are experts we could learn from each other. I have requested Fr. Jacob Charalel, the Secretary of the Commission for Education to visit every

school and render all possible help to get the documents of our schools updated and mandatory committees set up in each school.

CBCI Plenary Assembly and call for prayer on March 22, 2024

Recently we had the 36th plenary assembly of the Catholic Bishops' Conference at St. John's Bangalore with the theme: "The Church's Response to the Current Socio-Political Situation of the Country and the Benefits and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI) against the backdrop of the ongoing "Synod on Synodality" with the theme, Communion-Mission-Participation. The assembly after highlighting the socio, economic, political and religious situation existing in India, which are not very positive, calls upon the Christian community to respond positively with Prayer. Therefore the CBCI assembly has requested all the dioceses in India to observe, **Friday, 22 March 2024 as a Day of Prayer and Fasting for peace and harmony in our country. Therefor we too shall observe Friday, 22 March 2024 as a day of Prayer and Fasting.**

The bishops felt that our response to the existing situation besides prayer is our greater commitment to serve the weaker section of the society, imbibe and promote the values of the constitution as enunciated in the preamble which declares India to be a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Republic, committed to justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. It exhorts all eligible citizens to enroll as voters and exercise their sacred duty to vote wisely. Enclosed please find the final message of the bishops..

Budget for 2024-2025

As per the diocesan calendar for 2024, the last date for submitting the Budget for the year 2024-2025 is on Thursday, 29th February 2024. Budget is the best instrument for planning and prioritizing the development in the parish/centre and school. Therefore I request all who are responsible for making the budget to make it with utmost care and seriousness, to make it as accurate and realistic as possible. No developmental works or other activities will be permitted if they are not included in the budget and approved by the Finance Committee. Kindly take into consideration the following important points while preparing the budget.

All concession/scholarship for students must be entered as expenses with the ledger head "Concessions". In the income column full payment of fees by all the students must be shown. Even if some pay the fees in kind, kindly convert the same to cash value and show as cash paid. In this way we are able to prove with the documentary evidence that we are a charitable organization and not a business establishment.

A separate salary register for Religious including priests must be kept and full salary as per qualification and job must be entered. The whole amount comes to the Parish as contribution from the Religious for which a receipt should be issued to the religious communities. From this amount the parish pays the allowance to religious and priests.

As told earlier since most of our schools do not have a total turnover of 10,00,000.00 (ten lakhs) for uniform, stationeries, note books, etc., excluding the text books; these schools do not come under the purview of GST. These schools can continue with the Stationary Account. The payment for text books must go with the school account, not as part of stationary. Those schools with over ten lakh must keep a separate account and it must be presented for internal audit.

Lenten Season and Lenten campaign

We are in the season of Lent, a very special time of grace. "Through the Desert God leads us to freedom" is the theme of Holy Father Pope Francis message for Lent this year. "Lent", the Holy Father says, "is a season of conversion, a time of freedom". "Prayer, almsgiving and fasting are not three related acts, but a single movement of openness and self-emptying, in which we cast out the idols that weigh us down, the attachments that imprison us. Let us use this opportunity of lent for real conversion and return to the Lord.

The traditional practices of observing the season of lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. By practice, lent is also the time, the Catholics make a concerted effort to mobilize and encourage Lenten campaign against "Hunger and Disease". Caritas India has been in the forefront making concerted efforts to actively promote the Lenten Campaign across the country. This year, the Lenten Campaign theme of Caritas India "Fraternity in Humanity, Together with Everyone," depicts for the collective commitment to foster unity and solidarity in the face of challenges.

I request every Priest, Sister and Lay Faithful to actively promote the Lenten campaign in our diocese. The priests must exhort the faithful on the need to make sacrifices including love offering on behalf of the poor and the needy. The children in our schools must be animated to contribute something by their voluntary sacrifices. A collection box could be kept in each class or in public places and encourage children and others to put in their sacrifice. The fruit of our sacrifices will be sent to Caritas.

Along with this circular I am also enclosing the Message of the Holy Father Pope Francis for Lent 2024. Kindly read it out for our faithful on any convenient Sunday of Lent

Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) - 2024

This year, the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) will be on Friday, 22^{nd} March 2024 at Mt. Tabor Kohima at 9.30 am - 1.30 pm. I request all the members of the DPC to be present for this important annual meeting. All the Parish Priests and Centre In-charges are ex-officio members of DPC. There will not be a separate invitation for the participation. **Kindly consider this as invitation** and **information** to all the members. I request all the Parish Priests and Centre in-charges to make sure that the lay representatives from their respective places are present for the meeting.

The theme for the Pastoral Conference is **Prayer** since the year 2024 is dedicated to prayer by Pope Francis in view of the jubilee year 2025.

Those who need accommodation, kindly inform, Sr. Superior at Mt. Tabor in advance. The contact mobile numbers are: 8879826939 (Sr. Diana, Superior) / 9436010138 (House).

There are three categories of members for the DPC as given below.

i) Ex-officio members

The Bishop, Vicar General, Chancellor, Directors of different Commissions, Regional Animators, Presidents and General Secretaries of all diocesan level association (CAN, NCWA, NCYM), Rectors of Seminaries, Members of the College of Consulters, of Priests' Council (four Representatives), Commission for Education (Secretary and two

office-bearers), Members of Finance Committee (Secretary and two representatives), All Parish Priests and Centre In-charges.

ii) Elected

Two Priests from below the age of 39, Nine Sisters four above the age of 35 and five Sisters below the age of 34, one Brother each from Regency, Philosophy and Theology; one from Brothers' Congregation, Lay representatives from each parish/centre proportionate to the Catholic families, (1 to 100 – 1; 100 to 200 – 2; 200 to 400 – 3; 400 above 4; Two representatives from touring Catechists. It is good that the lay representative be the office bearer/members of the Parish Pastoral Council, for better co-ordination, information sharing and implementation of the decisions of the DPC in the respective places.

iii) Nominated

- a. Bishop can nominate up to a maximum of ten percent of the total number.
- b. Bishop can nominate two teacher representatives (laity) two students (College level)

Request to all the Parish Priests and Center In-charges

Kindly send the names of the DPC members from your parish/center on or before 2nd March 2024 to Rev. Fr. Alex Tep, the Secretary

Other Diocesan Meetings

The schedule of other diocesan meetings are as follows:

Wednesday, March 20, 2024: 10.30 am: Senate (Priests Council) meeting (Bishop's House, Kohima)

" : 2.00 pm: Joint meeting of the Regional Animators, Chairmen of the various Diocesan Commissions and Presidents and

Secretaries

of CAN, NCWA and NCYM, (Mt Tabor)

": 4.30 pm Priests meeting

: 6.30 pm DF meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2024 : 9.00 am Recollection for Priests (Mt. Tabor)

3.30 pm Chrism Mass at the Cathedral Church

Friday, March 22, 2024 : 9.30 am Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC)

2.30 pm Meeting of the College of Consulters

Come and See Program - 2024

The annual Come and See Program for Class X and Class XII students who would like to join the Seminary for studies to priesthood will be held this year at St. Xavier's Minor Seminary Jalukie, from 9th (Arrival) 20th April (Departure) 2024. Detailed program would be given out by Fr. Alex Tep, our Vocation Promoter. I request all the Parish Priests and Centre In-charges to encourage students who are interested to become priests to attend the same. Since we cannot accommodate all those who come for the vocation camp in the seminary, it is another forum for students to join the studies to priesthood. Kindly inform Fr. Alex (Mobile: 9484210215. e-mail: sec.kohima@gmail.com) on or before 1st April 2024 so as to facilitate the necessary preparation.

Northeastern Pastoral Conference – 2024

This year the Northeastern Pastoral conference will be held from August 26-29, 2024 in NEDSF, Guwahati on the theme, Evangelization in the light of Gaudium et Spes and Ecclesia in Asia.

Annual Collections

Every year, there are some mandatory collections to be made in the Parishes / Centres (including the village churches) for the needs of the universal and particular churches. These collections must be distinguished from Tithe and membership fees. No one can neglect to collect or exempt one's parish/centre from such collections. In the list of collections for the year 2020-21; 2021-22, 2022-2023 that I had sent to all the parishes/centers show that some of the parishes and centers were not regular either in making collection or handing over to the diocesan office to be forwarded to the respective Church agencies. Failure either to make the collection or to hand over the collection are serious neglect of the responsibility and stewardship as Parish Priest/Centre In-charge. I am enclosing a list of collections for the year 2024 and request all those who are responsible to make the collections as per the list and hand over the same to the diocesan office for dispersing the same to the proper destination in time.

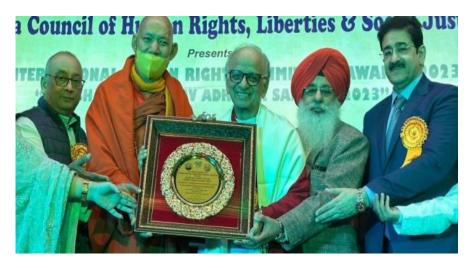
Annual Retreats

As in the past, this year too, we will have two retreats organized by the diocese for Sisters and Priests respectively according to the schedule given below at Mt. Tabor, Kohima. Most Rev. Dennis Panipitchai, the auxiliary bishop of Miao will animate both the retreats.

Jun 24-29: **Retreat for Sisters** (starts on 24th Monday evening and ends on 29th Saturday morning)
July 01-06: **Retreat for Priests** (starts on Monday evening and ends on 5th, Friday evening

August 20-24: Retreat for Catechists

Archbishop Menamparampil receives World Peace Award



It is a matter of pride that Archbishop Emeritus Thomas Menamparampil of Guwahati has received Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam World Peace Award-2023 on the occasion of the United Nations

International Human Rights Day. The award was given on December 10th 2023, by All India Council of Human Rights, Liberties and Social Justice at a function held in the Indian Islamic Cultural Centre, New Delhi.

In this age and time when there is a steady spread of divisive agenda, hatred, polarization, religious discrimination, violence and war. Archbishop has been consistently advocating peace and harmony through his writings and seminars. The award document reads: "After perusing your credentials, it remains our considered opinion that you have worked tirelessly and selflessly to promote Human Rights, Peace with kindness and compassion into action through multifarious humanitarian services, and above all, you believe in justice for all, peacefulness, meekness and innocence as the natural way of life, and your worthy example does inspire others especially the young generation towards certain remarkable achievements."

Congratulations and bless your effort to build a culture of peace !!.

Vocational Training

The students of class X and XII finish their Board exams and wait for the result. They have almost two months free. It may be good to encourage and even provide opportunities for some skill development or vocational training, by providing additional computer classes (if there are computers) or suggest to our students the possibility of joining other programs. Enclosed, please fine the program offered in DBI Guwahati. There are other vocational programs run by Salesian Fathers in carpentry, welding, motor mechanics, Animal husbandry, organic farming, etc at Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre, 3rd Mile, Dimapur, 03862-242940, 8837246060, 9436060741, dbvtc.dimapur@gmail.com or at Don Bosco, Rangajan, PB 38, Golaghat, Assam – 785621, dbsrangajan@gmail.com; 6001166862 / 9435350482.

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- → 5. SPOKEN ENGLISH
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Please bring Aadhar Card, 2 Passport photos and Online Admission Form and Payment Receipt, black pants, Toiletries/ bed sheets and Traditional dresses

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Congrats and best wishes to New Leadership team of the following congregations

Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians (MSMHC)

Superior General Sr. Christine Mynsong MSMHC

Assistant General Sr. Mary Thadavanal MSMHC

Councillor for Formation Sr. Sisily Cherian MSMHC

Councillor for Evangelization Sr. Bridget Diengdoh MSMHC

Councillor of Education Sr. Katherine Joseph MSMHC
Councillor for Social Apostolate Sr. Liza Elavunka MSMHC l

Economer General Sr. Daisy Jacob MSMHC

Sisters of St. Joseph of Saint-Marc (St. Joseph Province)

Provincial Superior Sr. Jyoti Anaie

Provincial Assistant Sr. Bindu George Palathingal

Provincial Councillor Sr. Tessy Thomas Peringanappilly

Provincial Councillor Sr. Bindu Paul Pynadath

Provincial Councillor Sr. Agnes Tete

Transfers and Appointments

Diocese

Rev. Fr. Marius Patton Assistant Priest, St. Peter's Parish, Kiphire Rev. Fr. Peter Pehiachanglu Assistant Priest, St. Xavier Parish, Meluri

Rev. Fr. Martin Mhasikholie Assistant Priest, St. Augustine Parish, Chessore

Rev. Fr. Albert Shitio Assistant Priest, St. Xavier Parish, Jalukie

MSFS

Rev. Fr. Anthony Kameih MSFS

St. Francis de Sales Church. Tening

Rev. John Maring MSFS

St. Andrew's Church. Mangkholemba

SMI

Transferred Appointed

Aghunato Sr. Stella Belavandran Sr. Reji Bastian (Sup)

Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (SABS)

SABS Provincial House	Sr. Tresa Kochumuriyi	
St.Theresa Convent,Tobu	Sr. Mariet Kumbiluvelil Sr. Salomy Kisku	Sr. Medries Timungpi Sr. Gladys
St. Xavier Tuensang	Sr. Dipti Daimari Sr. Sr. Mary Abigail	Sr. Cislim Hebron Sr. Juhi Pohlong
Shanti Bhavan, Dimapur	Sr .Bency Thannikkottu Sr. Mary Varanath	Sr.Tessy Kattapuram Sr. Lincy Korattiyil Sr. Mariet Vattakunnel Sr. Cecilia Rosii Sr. Martha Lamthew
St. Paul's Convent Kiphire		Sr. Lucy Jinger
St. Mary's Mokokchung	Sr. Cecilia Rosii	Sr. Gabreiela Huten Sr. Holy Rose Awungshi

Little Flower Pungro Sr. Lily Mary Nongsiej Sr. Ritisha Nongsiej

SABS Novitiate, Medziphema Sr. Amala Puthiyadath

St. Peter's Tesophenyu Sr. Lincy Korattiyil Sr. Rosebella

Sr. Marina A. Koutseu Sr. Maria Vulenshe

Sr. Theresa Rampaopoisile

St. Anthony's Tenyiphe Sr. Cislima Hebrom Sr. Veronica Rabha

May their Souls rest in peace!!

9th December: Mrs. Rosalia Rone Zholia (56 Years), Mother of Sr. Lisha Euphasia CMC – Razeba.

11th December: Rev. Sr. Theresa D'Souza PDDM (77 Years), worked at Mt. Tabor Retreat House for 9 years.

17th December: Mr. Alex M. Dabre (84 Years), father of Rev. Sr. Cicilia PDDM - Mt. Tabor Retreat house, Kohima.

- **24th December:** Mr. Mhonbemo Andrew Shitiri (57 Years), father of Rev. Fr. Albert Renao Assistant Priest, Jalukie.
- **29**th **December:** Mrs. Mary Cutinha (94 Years), mother of Rev. Sr. Matty Cutinha UFC UFC noviciate Dimapur.
- 31st December: Mrs. Pauline Tsemoni Yanthan (75 Years), mother of Rev. Fr. John Ntonse, Parish Priest of St. Peter Parish Longsa.
- 1st January: Mr.Tsürie-o Cyril Ziephrü (103 Years), father of Rev. Sr. Christina Khrievinuo Ziephrü –

 Chiephobozou.
- **3rd January:** Mrs. P. Hrünüru (55 Years), Rev. Sr. Veronica Loru SCCG, St. Joseph Convent, Chümoukedima.
- **7th January:** Mr. Walter D'Souza (50 Years), brother-in-law of Rev.Sr. Vanith D'Souza UFS, Assisi

Convent Dimapur.

- 9th January: Mr. Atoshe Sangtam (58 Years), father of Rev. Sr. Roseline Sangtam UFS from Seyochung, working in St. Francis of Assisi School Guwahati.
- **21**st **January:** Mr. Anthony Samy, brother-in-law of Rev. Fr. Pappu Samy, Priests' Home Chümoukedima.
- 23rd January: Mrs. Aliamma Joseph Thuniampral (77 Years), sister-in-law of Rev. Fr. Mathew John.

Priests' Home – Chümoukedima.

24th **January:** Mrs. Thenyinguü Joana (92 Years), mother of Rev. Fr. George Keduolhou from Chiechama, Principal of St. Joseph College Autonomous Jakhama.

29th January: Mr. Linson Pv the brother of Rev. Fr. Glanson Pulladan VC, Zhadima.

17th February: Mr. BS Bepha (62Years), father of Rev. Sr. BS Lydia SABS, St. Joseph Adoration Convent, Jakhama.

17th February: Mrs. Mary Devasy (76 Years), mother of Rev. Sr. Jessy Rose FCC, Superior of Phesama Convent.

18th February: Mr. Nnithung Augustine Odyuo (70 Years), father of Brother Peter Janbemo, Oriens

Theological College, Shillong

23rd February: Mrs. Xaveria (81 Years), mother of Rev. Sr. Maria Goretti, Mt. Tabor – Kohima.

Bishop's Program

February 2024

22	Thu	Kohima : Meeting of the College of Consulters
23	Fri	Kohima: Visit of Rev. Sr. Maria Rosa Vittoni SCCG from Rome
24	Sat	Dimapur: Blessing and Mass, Daughters of Charity Convent
25	Sun	Kohima – 2 nd Sunday of Lent
26	Mon	Kohima
27	Tue	Kohima
28	Wed	Kohima
29	Thu	Kohima – Last day to submit the budgets

March 2024

1	Fri	Sanis: Pastoral visit
2	Sat	Sanis: Pastoral visit
3	Sun	Sanis: Pastoral visit; Collection for NERCC
4	Mon	Sanis: Pastoral visit
5	Tue	Sanis: Pastoral visit
6	Wed	Kohima
7	Thu	Kohima
8	Fri	Jakhama : Spring fest
9	Sat	Medziphema : SFS Seminary – Mass and confirmation; Visit to Shalom
10	Sun	Chizami: Pastoral visit
11	Mon	Chizami: Pastoral visit
12	Tue	Kiphire
13	Wed	Kiphire
14	Thu	Kohima
15	Fri	Dimapur: 3 rd Convocation of St. Joseph University; Pastoral visit, GSS, Dimapur
16	Sat	Dimapur - Pastoral visit, GSS, Dimapur GB Meeting, HRHC, (3.00 pm)

17	Sun	Kohima
18	Mon	Kohima
19	Tue	Dimapur: Feast of St. Joseph; Mass; Blessing of the new building for Children Home
		St. Joseph College Jakhama – mass (5.00 pm)
20	Wed	Kohima- Diocesan meetings
21	Thu	Kohima - Recollection and Chrism Mass
22	Fri	Kohima – DPC, Consulters meeting
23	Sat	Kohima - Kohima
24	Sun	Kohima - Palm Sunday
25	Mon	Kohima - Kohima
26	Tue	FC Meetings (9.30 am) for Budget
27	Wed	Kohima
28	Thu	Holy Thursday: Collection - maintenance of the Holy See (Holidays for catholic institutions
29	Fri	Good Friday – Collection – for Holy Land (19 th death anniversary of Fr. NA George
30	Sat	Holy Saturday, Holy Cross, Dimapur (vigil mass)
31	Sun	Kohima, Easter Sunday

April 2024

1	Mon	Kohima
2	Tue	Diphu: NE Bishops' Meeting
3	Wed	Diphu: NE Bishops' Meeting
4	Thu	Diphu: NE Bishops' Meeting
5	Fri	Diphu: NE Bishops' Meeting, Departure
6	Sat	To Tobu
7	Sun	Tobu – Divine Mercy Sunday; Blessing of the renovated Church and Convent
8	Mon	Kohima -
9	Tue	Kerala - Fiat Mission
10	Wed	Kerala - Fiat Mission
11	Thu	Kerala - Fiat Mission
12	Fri	Kerala - Fiat Mission
13	Sat	Kerala - Fiat Mission
14	Sun	Kerala - Fiat Mission
15	Mon	Kerala
16	Tue	Kerala
17	Wed	Kerala
18	Thu	Return from Fiat mission
19	Fri	Kohima
20	Sat	Jakhama – Golden Jubilee of the Parish
21	Sun	Kohima – Vocation Sunday: Mass at St. Peter's Church, Kohima
22	Mon	Kohima
23	Tue	To Seyochung -
24	Wed	Seyochung – New school building: blessing and inauguration
25	Thu	Kohima
26	Fri	Kohima
27	Sat	Dimapur – CMC Profession (10.00 am) SABS Jubilee (6.00 pm)
28	Sun	Kohima -
29	Mon	Kohima

30	Tue	Dimapur – UFC Profession (10.30 am) Blessing of RJM Convent – Toulazouma (4.00 pm)
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May 2024

1	Wed	Kohima:
2	Thu	Kohima
3	Fri	Kohima
4	Sat	Kohima: PDDM Centenary celebration, Mt. Tabor (5 pm)
5	Sun	Kohima
6	Mon	Kohima:
7	Tue	Kohima
8	Wed	Kohima
9	Thu	Kohima
10	Fri	Bhandari – Pastoral visit
11	Sat	Bhandari – Pastoral visit
12	Sun	Bhandari – Pastoral visit
13	Mon	Bhandari – Pastoral visit
14	Tue	Bhandari – Pastoral visit
15	Wed	Bhandari – Pastoral visit
16	Thu	Kohima
17	Fri	Kohima
18	Sat	Kohima – Pastoral visit Cathedral
19	Sun	Kohima – Pastoral visit Cathedral
20	Mon	Kohima – Pastoral visit Cathedral
21	Tue	Kohima
22	Wed	Kohima -Diocesan Seminar
23	Thu	Kohima - Diocesan Seminar
24	Fri	Kohima - Diocesan Seminar; Meeting of the consulters (2.30 pm)
25	Sat	Kohima – Meeting with Sister Provincials and superiors – Animation and Recollection
26	Sun	Feast of the Cathedral – Sisterhood day
27	Mon	Kohima
28	Tue	Kohima
29	Wed	Kohima
30	Thu	Kohima
31	Fri	Kohima



Most Rev. Dr. James Thoppil Bishop of Kohima

Most Rev. (Dr.) James Thoppil Bishop of Kohima P.B. No. 519, Kohima Nagaland - 797 001, India

