

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

Greetings from Bishop's House, Kohima!

We just celebrated the great feast of Easter and we continue to celebrate it for fifty days until the feast of Pentecost (May 27, 2012). It is a season of grace. Easter gives the purpose and orientation to our life and ministry. May we continue to live this Mystery with greater fervour and commitment.

On the Easter day itself I had left for Guwahati and next day (9th April) took the flight to Trivandrum where I had a medical appointment at KIMS hospital. I had undergone some tests and after which I returned home for a night. On 11th April I proceeded by train to Mangalore to take part in the Post Centenary Silver Jubilee celebration of the Ursuline Franciscan Congregation at the Rosario Cathedral, Mangalore. The celebrations were well arranged and well organized. Many of the Sisters working in our diocese and some of those who were working earlier in our diocese were also present for the celebration. We would like to congratulate the Superior General and her team and all the Sisters for the great apostolate they carry out in the Church, particularly in our diocese and assure them of our prayers and collaboration. Congrats and prayers dear Sisters.

Before returning to the diocese on the 18th April I also attended the Diamond Jubilee of Prefecture Apostolic of Haflong and the decennial Jubilee of the Episcopal ordination of Most Rev. Stephen Rotuluanga in Aizawl on the 15th April, which was followed by the Northeast Regional Bishop's Council.

Trip to Italy and Germany

As you already know from my programme, I will be leaving for Italy and Germany on the 4th May 2012 and will be back on 9th June 2012. First and foremost I ask your prayers for a safe and successful trip. It is neither a pleasure trip nor is it an easy trip. The main purpose of my visit is to meet with some of our benefactors and agencies that help us and appraise them about our missionary activities and progress we are able to make. In Germany, I will be joined by Fr. Isaac P. J., who will be returning to India towards the end of June to take up his assignment in Oriens Theological College, Shillong. On 8th May I have an appointment with the Prefect of the Congregation for Evangelization of People and on the 9th May I have an audience with the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI. It will be my first meeting with the Pope after my Episcopal ordination, although I had met him as a Cardinal and had a photo with him during the Asian Synod in October 1998. I will convey him greetings and prayers of all in our diocese.

In my absence, Fr. Carolus Neisalhou, the Vicar General, will see to the ordinary matters in the diocese.

Assignment for Vicar General (cf. Canons 475 – 481)

I am assigning the following responsibilities to Fr. Carolus Neisalhou, the Vicar General. Kindly approach him on matters related to his assignments:

1. To be in-charge of the Seminarians in the diocese. This includes their formation, holidays, report of the Regency and other matters that require attention from the side of the diocese with regard to the seminarians in formation. He will coordinate this in collaboration with the Rector of Good Shepherd Seminary, Dimapur.
2. To be in-charge of Retreats and Spiritual formation of the Clergy, Religious and faithful of the diocese and organizing and arranging programmes in connection with the spiritual renewal in the parishes and centres /institutions. He will also be the overall in-charge of Mt. Tabor Retreat House, Kohima.
3. To Chair the Diocesan Consulters meeting and solicit agenda from members and prepare the agenda in consultation with the bishop and inform members about the meetings.
4. To be overall in-charge of the different Lay Associations (e.g., CAN, NCWA, NCYM, etc. and other tribal associations), in the diocese and their functioning. This would mean to monitor the activities of the Associations and to see that they don't go against the church policies, Catholic Traditions and approved customs.
5. To be in-charge of calling the Priests' Senate and Diocesan Pastoral Council twice every year and to have the meeting at the prescribed times.
6. To be in charge of Regional Animation and call for meetings and follow up of the decisions.
7. To deal with Land purchases and other legal matters in consultation and collaboration with the Financial Administrator and Chancellor.
8. To be the Official representative to the government and other voluntary bodies with regards to Naga socio-political issues.
9. To be the Chairman of Boundary Committee and settling of boundary issues between different parishes.
10. In the absence of the bishop, to deal with the ordinary matters of the diocese and to preside over the meetings that is called by the bishop.
11. To deal with any other matters assigned by the bishop.

Month of May, the Month of Mary

We are in the month of May, a month dedicated to our Blessed Mother Mary. Let us encourage our people in the parishes to pray the rosary regularly during this month to honour our Blessed Mother and thus come closer to her Son Jesus by meditating on the different events in the Mystery of Christ. She is our mother and she will never abandon us who have recourse to her motherly care and assistance. During the month of May we also celebrate the feast of Mary Help of Christians (24th May), the Patroness of our diocese. Although we do not have any official celebration yet let us continue to pray for the diocese through her motherly intercession that we may all be drawn close to her Son, Jesus Christ, day by day.

Month of June and the World Day of Prayer for Priests

During the month of June we specially remember and thank God, our Father for his infinite love as represented to us in the most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Every year, the feast of Sacred Heart (this year 15th June) is observed as a day of prayer for the Sanctification of the Priests all over the world. The Congregation for Clergy has written a letter to priests on this occasion which I am enclosing. The Holy Father has supported and encouraged this initiative of the Congregation for the spiritual welfare of the priests. Please communicate this to our people in the parishes and centres and observe the day in a fitting manner.

Pastoral Visits to Parishes

I have been making the pastoral visits to a number of parishes during the past months to have a comprehensive idea of the Parish covering all the all aspects of the Pastoral activities of the Parish. In all the parishes I also celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation and gave First Holy communion to many. The sacramental encounter with Christ is an important moment in the lives of these young boys and girls as they are sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This celebration brings together the parents, sponsors, friends and the parishioners to the church and invites their full participation. **I would like to thank all the Priests, Sisters, Catechists, Leaders and Teachers for all that they are doing for the Church in their respective parishes and villages.** Most of the places the children were well prepared and instructed. Let us continue our mission with greater fervour and commitment. Ultimately, it is our commitment to ministry and pastoral work that would give us the joy and fulfilment in our life.

Allowance in the Diocese

During the last meeting with the Parish Priests and Religious Superiors on 23rd March 2012 we had discussed the allowance of the Sisters and Priests in the diocese, without coming to a definite decision. Then I had told that we would take a definite decision after the Meeting of the Northeastern Regional Bishop's Council. The bishops discussed the matter in their meeting. The final decision for Kohima diocese will be made known after the next meeting of the Diocesan Consulters, with retroactive effect from April 2012.

Meeting of Different Commissions in the Diocese

On 30th March 2012 we had the meeting with those in-charge of different Commissions and Apostolate in the diocese in the bishop's house Kohima. We hope to plan, co-ordinate and execute effectively different apostolate in the diocese. The following persons have been put in-charge of the different apostolate and commissions in the diocese

Bible, Catechetics & Evangelization	: Frs. Jaison Thomas & Graviour Augustine
Communication & Media	: Fr. Sojan Xavier
Constructions	: Fr. Jose Sebastian
Development Association of Nagaland	: Fr. Sebastian Ouseparambil
Ecumenism & Dialogue	: Fr. Anto
Education	: Fr. Mathew Thuniampral
Family	: Fr. Sabu Chenackal
Health	: Fr. Sebastian Ouseparambil
Laity	: Fr. Alex Vizo
Liturgy	: Fr. Sojan Xavier
Peace Channel (Peace & Justice)	: Fr. Anto C. P.
Pontifical Mission Societies	: Fr. George Punnolil
Public Relations	: Fr. Carolus Neisalhou
Publication & Censor	: Fr. Carolus Neisalhou
Sharing (Diocesan News letter)	: Fr. Thomas Toretkiu
Vocation Promotion	: Fr. Thomas Toretkiu
Women Desk	: Sr. Santra & Mrs. Zumchilo Patton
Youth & SCC	: Fr. Sojan Xavier
Women Associations	: Fr. Mathew Mhabemo
Censors	: Fr. Carolus Neisalhou & Fr. Mathew Keemattam

NBCC Jubilee

We have all heard and read about the Platinum Jubilee (1937 – 2012) celebration of the Nagaland Baptist Church Council (NBCC) in Kohima from the 19th - 22rd April 2012 based on the theme “**One New Humanity**”. I was invited for it and I with Fr. Carolus and Fr. Thomas Toretkiu had gone for the inaugural function. Our presence was recognized and we were all given VIP seats. They also presented mementos including the Jubilee souvenir to me along with other VIP's and invited guests. NBCC consists of 20 full-fledged Associations and 4 Associate members with 1553 Churches and 5, 19,000 baptized members. They put up a beautiful convention centre with all facilities within a short time. Of course the government of Nagaland had given its full backing and many politicians, bureaucrats, government officials and contractors lent their full support. Many individuals were committed and passionate about the Church and worked very hard for its establishment. The Catholic Church, on our part, congratulates NBCC for its great achievements and wish them very best for the future.

Mr. Mathew Keepachan Retires

Mr. Mathew Keepachan, who served the diocese in various capacities for the last 38 years, retired from service with effect from March 31, 2012. Although we had already thanked him on Monday, 2nd April 2012 during the Priests meeting, I would like to acknowledge once again his faithful and dedicated service to the Diocese of Kohima and once again express our gratitude to him. We wish him the very best in the future and assure him of our continued prayers.

Annual Retreat in the Diocese

In my previous circular I had mentioned that Rev. Dr. Jacob Koippallil, professor at Pope John Paul II Institute, Changanassery, will animate this year's annual spiritual Retreat in our diocese for Priests and Sisters. The Retreat for Priests would be held from 11th to 16th June, 2012 and for Sisters from 16th to 22nd June, 2012 at Mt. Tabor. Both retreats begin after supper on the first day and ends with breakfast on the last day. Kindly inform Fr. Carolus, the VG, about your participation in the Retreat.

We will also have a second Retreat in this year with a special focus on mission, which is particularly suited for touring Sisters and Assistant Priests, from 22nd to 26th October 2012 (both days inclusive) at Mt. Tabor, Kohima, animated by Fr. Vijay Shantiraj and his team from Suvarta Kendra, National Centre for Proclamation, MP. Others can also participate. Kindly inform Fr. Carolus, the VG about your participation in this retreat.

As per the Canon Law and Service Conditions of our diocese all the diocesan priests are expected to make their annual spiritual retreat in the diocese normally. In case one is unable to attend the common retreat for pastoral reasons, he can choose a place for the retreat in consultation with the local Ordinary (cf. 4.1). If a priest opts for his own retreat at a place of his choice for personal reasons he may do so in consultation with the local Ordinary and shall meet all the expenses for the same (4.3).

Course in Book Keeping and Accounting

As announced earlier, the diocese will conduct a course on computerized Accounting from Friday (arrival) 29th June to Thursday, 5th July (departure) for priests and others who are designated to write the parish and school accounts. The course will be conducted at Carmel School, 4th Mile. Those who are intending to take part or send someone, kindly inform Fr. Arokiadoss for Registration (free) and Fr. Sebastian Ouseparambil for accommodation (Rs. 350 per day). The cost will be borne by each parish/centre.

Mark your Calendar: Steve Ray: The World Famous Apologist to Visit Nagaland

I am hoping that Steve Ray, the world famous Apologist from USA, will visit our diocese and meet with various groups and people are large during the month of November 2012. The most probable date for his visit will be 19-22 November 2012. He is a convert from Protestant to Catholic and has written and preached world wide. Kindly mark your calendar for the month of November 2012 and I shall let you know once the details of his work is planned out.

Vestition of Brothers

Three of our Brothers, Martin Mhasikholie (SFS Parish, Kohima), Stephen Shayhunlo (St. Joseph's Parish, Tseminyu) and George Vekupa (St. Mary's Parish, Lozaphuhu) will be vested in priestly habit on Thursday, 3rd May 2012 at Good Shepherd Seminary, Dimapur. As we congratulate these brothers for their willingness to go ahead in their study towards priesthood we also assure them of our support and prayers. May God bless us with more vocations.

Fr. Carolus, the VG will see to the appointment and transfers for the Regency Brothers.

Religious Professions of Sisters

On Thursday, 26th April 2012, Sr. Anju Kindo, Sr. Rose Rhozusa and Sr. Agathy Lalduzuali and Novices Celine Kedukhrole Thopi, Christina Tamut, Geeta Lakra, Mary Mech, Catherine Neiketounuo and Selila Sangtam made their Perpetual and First Profession respectively in the Ursuline Franciscan Congregation, Northeast Province in Assisi Convent, Khermahal, Dimapur.

On Friday, 27th April 2012, Sr. Sushila Daimari made her Final Profession and Novices Mary Dole, Marina Pao, Lucy Pamei, Angela Lily and Soni Therese had their Vestition & First Profession in the Congregation of the Mother of Carmel, Sanjoe Province, Dimapur at Carmel Novitiate, Chumukedima.

On Saturday, 28th April 2012, Sr. Angela Pao, Sr. Tejohonu Kera and Sr. Roselyn made their Perpetual Profession in Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Mary of the Angels at the Khuzama local ground.

First of all we congratulate each and every one of them for their willingness to serve God and His people through religious commitment. We thank the parents and relatives for their sacrifice. It is a sign and means for the growth of faith and we pray that more and more people may come forward to serve God through a life of total dedication. In all these celebrations the presence of large number of priests, religious sisters, relatives and friends of the candidates and faithful was a great sign of appreciation for the vocation to religious life. We continue to pray for more vocations.

Useful Information

Shri Vincent Pala, the Union Minister of State for Water Resources and Minority Affairs, has given the following information with regard to the project and social benefits schemes available from Ministry of Minority Affairs. I have given a copy of his letter and in case if anyone can make use of the information to help someone, you are most welcome. I believe it will be very useful.

Preshita Sangamam (Gathering of the Missionaries) in Archdiocese of Trichur

The Archdiocese of Trichur, as part of its Post Centennial Silver Jubilee, cordially invites all religious men and women from the Archdiocese to take part in the *Preshitha Sangamam* (Gathering of the Missionaries) on 19th May 2012. Please contact, Msgr. George Edakulathur, Vicar General, Catholic Archbishop's House, East Fort, Trichur – 680085, Kerala. Ph: 0091-487-2333325; 9495053386; curiatcr@yahoo.com

Pastoral Guidelines and Faculties

I am pleased to inform all the Priests working in the diocese that the revised booklet of the Faculties and Guidelines in the Diocese of Kohima is ready. You may collect it personally from the chancellor's office as and when you drop-in to the Bishops' House, Kohima.

HSLC & HSSLC Results

I was indeed very happy to hear about the very good performance of the children from all our schools in the HSLC & HSSLC exams. I know, it was possible only because of the whole-hearted and dedicated service of all of you; Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, Teachers and Staff members. I take this opportunity to thank you and congratulate you for your great service. May God continue to bless all your efforts in the realization of the dreams of our children in Nagaland, and I extend my blessings and best wishes to the children in their future studies.

Transfers (Diocese)

Name	Appointment	To reach the place
Fr. Peter Pithungo	Assistant Priest, St. Paul's Church, Pungro	23-05-2012
Fr. Joseph Kath	Assistant Priest, St. Thomas Church, Tuensang	26-05-2012
Fr. Isaac Sema	Studies in Pastoral Management, JDV, Poona	
Fr. P. Mariadoss	Studies in Formative Spirituality and Counseling, Dharmaram, Bangalore	
Fr. C. Joseph	Studies in Psychology & Counseling, Chennai	

Transfers (Others)

Salesians of Don Bosco (SDB)

Fr Kalappurayil George	Rector, Director & Administrator	DBVTC 3 Mile, Dimapur
Fr. Minj Christopher	Assistant Parish Priest	Wokha, Don Bosco
Fr Ashuli Lonuo Linus Christopher	Vice Principal, Asst. Priest & In-charge of Youth Centre	Needs two work very hard.
Br. Ekka Ranjan Counellor		Zubza / Savior Home

Bethany Sisters (BS)

	Incoming	Outgoing
St. Joseph's Convent Viswema	Sr. Elicia BS	Sr. Margaret Mrinmoil
Holy Cross Convent, Dimapur	Sr. Hildigard, Sr. Maria, Sr. Manjula, Sr. Lucy Gonmei	Sr. Mildred Sr. Susan Maria

MSMHC Sisters

St. Mary's Convent Padampukri	Sr. Elizabeth Jacob Sr. Maria Jacob	Sr. Daisy Jacob, Sr. Scholastica Soreng, Sr. Rose Mary Angamliu
Study House, Dimapur	Sr. Jessy James Sr. Josephine Kath Sr. Bridget Renthlei	Sr. Mary Perunilam, Sr. R. D. Maria Sr. Virginia Ekka
St. Mary Convent, Kohima	Sr. Virginia Ekka Sr. Teresa Chote	Sr. Juliana Awungshi Sr. Anita Kamei
Little Flower Convent, Chiephobozou	Sr. Rita Kera	Sr. Julie Sadhana
St. Joseph Convent, Tseminyu	Sr. Juliana Awungshi	Sr. Fatima Sasa
Mary Hill Convent, Jalukie	Sr. Ancita Jacob Sr. Maria Goretti	Sr. Jilda Marbaniang Sr. Auxilia Rayappa
St. Mary Convent, Lozaphuhu	Sr. R. D. Maria	Sr. Promila Kerketta

FCC Sisters

St. Mary Convent, Kohima	Sr. Annie Alphonse Sr. Ans Tom	Sr. Francy
Alphonsa Convent, Lakhuti	Sr. Francy (Superior) Sr. Blessy	Sr. Tessy George Sr. Agnes Sr. Archana
Clare Bhavan, Kacharigaon	Sr. Anslit Sr. Jenny	Sr. Josepha Maria Sr. Eliza Sr. Jacinta
St. Paul Convent, Phesama	Sr. Asha Mary	Sr. Ans Tom

Condolences and Prayers

Death of Fr. P. D. George SDB

We express our sincere condolence at the sudden passing away of Rev. Fr. George Padingareparampil (popularly known as Fr. P D George) on 19th April 2012. He was 75 years old. Fr. George was the pioneer missionary among the Rengmas and started the parish of Tseminyu in 1976. After making the parish on a firm and strong footing with a strong community, he volunteered for African missions. He continued to be an African missionary until his death, although he died in his home while on his holiday. The diocese of Kohima and the people of Tseminyu in a particular way are grateful to him for his zealous and committed missionary work. May his soul rest in peace.

Others:

- Mr. Joseph, the brother of Fr. George Punnolil passed away on 18th April 2012.
- Mr. Sebastian, the uncle of Fr. Joseph Ottukalathil, passed away on 7th April 2012.
- Mrs. Annamma Mathew Chollanal (70) the sister- in-law of Sr. Sibia SABS passed away on 27th March 2012.
- Mathias, the father of Sr. Bridget FCC passed away on 3rd April 2012.

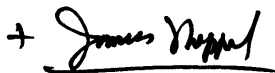
We offer our sincere condolences and prayers to the family members and dear ones.

Prayers Requested:

The mother of Fr. Carolus Neisalhou (Vicar General), (90) is very ill due to old age.
The brother of Fr. Siby John had a stroke and is partially paralyzed.
Let us pray that the Lord takes care of them.

Bishop's Programme – May to September 2012

May 2012	1-2	Pastoral Visit to Holy Cross Parish, Dimapur
	3	Vestition in GSS
	4-31	Italy, Germany
June 2012	1-7	Italy-Germany
	09	Returns from Europe
	10	Zubza – Confirmations, 3.00 pm. HRHC Governing Body Meeting
	11	Kohima, Senate Meeting (10.00 am) Consultors Meeting (2.00 pm)
	11-16	Spiritual Retreat Mt. Tabor
	16	Retreat ends; Golden Jubilee of Sr. Blasilia SABS (10.30 am)
	17	Kohima, Mao Community
	19-21	Shillong, Diaconate
	22-30	USA
July 2012	1-31	USA
August 2012	02	Returns from US; UFC Post Centenary Jubilee (5.30 pm)
	03	St. John Mary Vianney Celebrations (Anticipated)
	04	Kohima
	05	Profession LFS (9.30 am), Malayalam Mass – CPC (12.00)
	06-09	Kohima
	10-21	Holidays
	23	Kohima
	24-28	Pastoral Visit to Wokha
	29	Kohima
	30	Leaves for Rome - Course for New Bishops
September 2012	1-30	Bishops' Course – Europe visits



Most Rev. Dr. James Thoppil
Bishop of Kohima