

MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE

Dear Reverend Fathers, Religious, and Beloved Faithful in Christ,

As I bring to completion my episcopal ministry in the Diocese of Udupi, which began on 15 October 2012 and now concludes on 20 April 2026, my heart is filled with deep gratitude to God for His abiding grace and providence. The erection and growth of this Diocese have been a journey of faith, sacrifice, and communion, made possible through the dedicated collaboration of each one of you.

I express my profound and heartfelt thanks to all the diocesan priests of Udupi, whose tireless pastoral zeal, deep commitment, and generous service have been the backbone of our diocesan life. In a special way, I gratefully acknowledge the invaluable support of our two Vicars General, whose wise counsel and steadfast assistance have strengthened the administration and mission of the Diocese. I remember with reverence and gratitude the late Msgr Baptist Menezes. May the Lord grant him eternal rest and reward him abundantly for his devoted service. I also extend my sincere appreciation to Msgr. Ferdinand Gonsalves for his dedicated service to the Diocese of Udupi.

My thanks are due to all who have served as Chancellors and in various capacities of diocesan leadership: Very Rev. Frs. Valerian Mendonca, Stany B. Lobo, Dr Roshan D'Souza, and Stephen D'Souza. I also acknowledge with gratitude the members of the College of Consultors from 2012 to the present, whose guidance and collaboration have been invaluable.

I extend my appreciation to all members of the Council of Priests, the Vicars Forane of the five deaneries, members of the Diocesan and Deanery Pastoral Councils, Finance Committee members, Procurators, Building Committee members, Secretaries, and all who have contributed

in administrative and pastoral roles. Your commitment has ensured the steady and fruitful growth of our Diocese.

To the religious priests and religious women, I offer my sincere thanks for your witness of consecrated life and your dedicated service in various apostolates. Your presence has enriched the spiritual and pastoral life of our Diocese.

Finally, I express my deep gratitude to all the lay faithful of the Diocese. Your faith, participation, and collaboration have been a constant source of strength and encouragement. Together, we have built a vibrant community rooted in Christ and in the true spirit of synodality.

With great joy and hope, I offer my prayerful good wishes to Bishop-elect Rt. Rev. Msgr. Leslie Clifford D'Souza as he prepares to assume the pastoral leadership of this Diocese. May the Lord, who has called him to this sacred office, fill him with wisdom, courage, and pastoral charity. May his ministry bear abundant fruit, and may he shepherd the people of God with compassion and zeal, leading the Diocese of Udupi to greater heights of faith, unity, and mission.

As I take leave of this office, I entrust the Diocese of Udupi to the loving care and intercession of Our Lady of Miracles, our Patroness. May she guide and protect this Diocese in the years to come.

With gratitude and prayerful good wishes,

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+ **Gerald I. Lobo**
Apostolic Administrator
Diocese of Udupi