

TRANSLATION

DIOCESE OF MANDYA

KARNATAKA – INDIA

Ref. M/BP/CIR/5.2026

DIOCESE OF MANDYA

Bishop's House, Kalenahalli P.O. – 571 402, Mandya District, Karnataka, India

Phone: +91 7338657382

Bengaluru Office: Regional Pastoral Centre, Santhome Church, Hulimavu, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru – 560 076, Karnataka, India

CIRCULAR

August 6, 2026

May grace be granted to know and love Thee.

Beloved Priests, Religious, Parents, Brothers and Sisters, and Dear Children in Christ,

"O Eternal Priest Jesus, keep Thy priests, Thy servants, within the shelter of Thy Sacred Heart, where none may harm them." For several decades, this poignant prayer—recited at our altars during and after the celebration of the Holy Mass—reveals the grandeur of the priestly ministry. Whilst nurturing the faith life of priests, it instils in them the firm conviction that they are called to live out the eminent priesthood inherited from Jesus, the Eternal High Priest.

A fundamental responsibility in the priestly life is to examine one's own ministerial path and to pray for the grace and strength required to fulfil the Divine Will. There are 116 priests directly engaged in pastoral activities within the Diocese of Mandya. Their Annual Retreat for this year will be held from Monday, 14 September to Thursday, 17 September 2026, at the Dharmaram Campus. You are requested to pray for all the priests participating in this retreat, as well as for the spiritual renewal of the Diocese through these exercises.

In the light of the pastoral experience of shepherding alongside you over the past seven years, what I can primarily affirm is that the Diocese of Mandya is one that immensely respects, loves, and obeys its priests. We have 16 priests who are incardinated members of this Diocese, alongside 100 priests seconded to our service from other dioceses and religious

congregations. As I witness them ministering to the People of God with great integrity, I render thanks to Jesus, the Eternal High Priest.

With profound respect, I remember the parents and siblings who nurtured these priests and imparted the faith to them, as well as the religious communities that formed them. The Diocese of Mandya remains eternally indebted for the good works they perform, their dedicated efforts toward the growth of faith, and their community service.

Priests are the ministers of Christ who stand in greatest need of prayer. Through the confessional, priests are enabled to discern the anxieties of the souls of the faithful and to lift their thoughts and intentions before the Divine Presence. Standing as representatives of Christ when offering the Sacrifice of the Last Supper upon the altar, they are called to administer Holy Baptism to children and the elderly alike—thereby admitting them into the Kingdom of God—and to proclaim the Word of God.

When a priest approaches the sanctuary accompanied by a person seeking God's gifts and fruits to enter into matrimony, he invokes divine grace to unite them as husband and wife in the name of God. Likewise, priests are called to dispense food for the journey to the soul and to guide the faithful toward the heavenly haven. Imparting the Holy Spirit, priests must strengthen every individual to face life's trials, illnesses, and failures with joy. Let us pray that their words may remain firmly rooted in the Gospel and that their supplications may reach the throne of God.

During the days of the Annual Retreat from September 14 to 17, the entire People of God are requested to pray for the 116 priests ministering in the Diocese. Parish affairs on those days ought to be arranged in such a manner that our priests are enabled to attend the retreat without impediment. Please offer special prayers for Fr Shaji Karimplani, Capuchin, who will be leading the retreat. May God reveal to us the depth of the circumstances in which the People of God are constantly wounded. Through prayer, may the Spirit manifest to us the arduous nature of the efforts made by parents desiring to lead their children in the path of faith. Should our speech or actions severely hurt anyone in the parish or the field of ministry, may the grace be granted to us to recognise it. May the Crucified One bless us to seek the Bread of Life with Christ alone as our goal.

When priests and the laity pray together and share the Word of God, heavenly grace touches their hearts. As priests wipe away the tears of the people and bestow peace, the faithful love them and sustain them through prayer. Mutual dedication and love are what render our Church perennially beautiful. May your prayers stand as a support unto us.

Beloved, since the priests of the Lord are also human, moments of weariness and solitude may arise in their lives. At all such times, let us support their hands so that the care of divine love may serve as a light. Let us press forward together for the sake of a virtuous Church and a spiritual communion anchored in love. Kindly remember my humble self and my ministry in your prayers at all times.

With love,

Your loving Father,

(Signed)

Bishop Sebastian

Bishop of the Diocese of Mandya

Instruction:

This circular shall be read out during Holy Mass in all churches of our diocese on Sunday, 9 August 2026, and due care should be taken to disseminate it as widely as possible via social media.