



DIOCESE OF SATNA

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Circular 01/2025

24 February 2025

Dear Rev. Fathers,

We begin the liturgical season of Great Fast (Lent) on 2 March 2025. In this season we commemorate the passion, death and burial of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the fifty days of fast is a time of prayer, reconciliation, repentance, penance and conversion. It is an opportune time to go an extra mile in our prayer life, charity and abstinence. The forty days' fast, as we generally call, ends on Friday before the Palm Sunday. The Holy Week is observed as a separate unit of fast. Lenten season is set apart for retrospection and to repair the damages done. Forty days are sufficient to bring transformation in the life of a person. It is a time to come close to God and neighbour.

The period of Great Fast is a time of grace for the church, for the diocese and for each one of us. Fasting is a powerful weapon to resist the evil powers and evil tendencies. The prayer in the Liturgy of Hours reminds that abstinence from food and drink is not sufficient but abstinence from anger and jealousy is more important. The church commemorates and lives the important mysteries of passion and death of Jesus by spending 7 weeks in prayer, fast, abstinence, almsgiving and penance.

Kindly note the following:

1. The season of Great Fast (Lent) begins on the midnight of Sunday and Ash Monday shall be observed in our Mission Stations to mark the beginning of the season. Even though the liturgy of Ash Wednesday is celebrated in some parishes due to pastoral reasons, the day of fasting shall be on Monday.
2. The Eparchial Day of this year will be celebrated on 05 November 2025, Wednesday.
3. The annual retreat of priests working in the diocese will be from 09 to 14 November. Bishop Mar Prince Antony Panengadan will preach the retreat.
4. All the religious houses are requested to use the Liturgy of Hours of the Syro Malabar church and the liturgical books are available in Hindi and English. Kindly contact the director of Media and Communication to learn the hymns.
5. The annual vacation of priests is for one month. Those who go for vacation shall write an email (not WhatsApp message) addressed to the Bishop and a copy to the Vicar General at least two weeks before, indicating the date of departure and date of arrival. Those who go for an emergency need, shall come back within a week. Those who travel outside the diocese for a specific purpose shall give due information. Kindly avoid frequent absence from the place assigned to you.
6. The priests shall have a healthy and cordial relationship with the sisters and teachers and other staff members working in our institutions. We shall be cautious neither to have an inordinate attachment to one person or one family nor to have partiality to anyone. It is also important not to spread gossip or calumny against our brother priests. Lack of mutual understanding, sharing, collaboration and dialogue will jeopardise the effectiveness of our mission work. Let us support and encourage each other keeping in mind only the good of the diocese.
7. Presbytery is exclusively for the stay of the priests and no one shall be given accommodation and food in the presbytery permanently. If this is continued in any place, alternative arrangements shall be made in the new academic year.

8. Salary shall be drawn by all priests of the Eparchy. The modalities will be communicated to you by the finance officer.
9. Excessive use of the mobile phone during working hours shall be avoided by priests and sisters. Kindly restrict its use for official communication during working hours. The private and lengthy telephone conversation can be made after the working hours.
10. Informal periodical discussion about our institutions, parishes and mission stations shall be done by the priests and sisters of the mission station for better co-ordination and effectiveness.
11. All shall follow the common policies of the diocese without fail.
12. In the schools and other institutions, instructions shall be given to all employees periodically by the in-charges regarding their duties and responsibilities. A separate file shall be maintained for each staff. The principals and managers shall conduct and attend staff meeting regularly and address the assemblies. I earnestly request the managers and principals to give classes and insist on English communication in English Medium Schools. Regular meeting of the parents will help for a smooth running of the institution.
13. Care shall be taken not to integrate religious programme during annual day or other school programme. It is better to focus on social themes which can give powerful gospel messages.
14. A diocesan-level retreat for the laity will be conducted from 15-17 August 2025.
15. There shall be a sister-in-charge for catechism, family and youth in each parish.
16. The priests and sisters shall ensure that the domestic staff, employed in our institutions should have completed 18 years of age. The priests and sisters shall not take initiative to send boys and girls outside the diocese. It is always better if the parents or relatives reach the girls to the convent.

Bishop's Diary

16 Feb	Pastoral Visit, Maihar	17-18 Feb	Ruhalaya, Ujjain
25-27 Feb	Syro Malabar Mission Conference, Adilabad		
28 Feb	Synodal Commission Visit, ETC	02 Mar	Pastoral Visit, Chhatarpur
04 Mar	CBMP, Bhopal	09 Mar	Pastoral Visit, Tikamgarh
16 Mar	Pastoral Visit, Panna	23 Mar	Pastoral Visit, Deosar
30 Mar	Pastoral Visit, Khajuraho	06 April	Pastoral Visit, Nowgong

Let us fruitfully spend the season of Great Fast in this Jubilee Year with great hope that strengthens us in times of uncertainties and moments of suffering. Let us also continue to pray for our Pope Francis.

Wishing you the festal greetings of Blessed Martyr Rani Maria and Praying for God's blessings on you,

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✠ Joseph Kodakallil
Bishop of Satna

