

Diocesan Theological-Pastoral Congress
Circular 2013-21

To: All Parish Priests

First of all let me thank you for your earnest effort and active cooperation in making sure that the *Year of Faith* make an impact in our communities and thus make sure that, in union with Rome, our Diocese of Novaliches has fruitfully observed this year of grace.

To bring formally to a close the Year of Faith which as a Diocese we formally opened last year on the eve of the Feast of Christ the King, may I invite you once again to come together as one community of faith representing the whole diocese to a Theological Pastoral Congress this December. The topic is in line with the theme and goal of the Year of Faith and likewise consistent with the vision of the Second Plenary Council (PCP II) itself, namely: Renewed Integral Evangelization and Faith Formation. The Congress is to be held on Saturday, December 14, 2013, from 7AM-5PM, in the Church of Mary the Queen Parish, Belfast Avenue, Neopolitan, Fairview, Quezon City. The venue is so chosen to enable our people participating in the Congress to come and make it there with the least inconvenience on their part transport wise.

The Church of Mary the Queen can only accommodate one thousand people. Though limited in capacity we can make up for it, however, by making sure that we have all the important leaders and decision makers of our communities present in the Congress. It will therefore be a sort of a summit conference as well on a topic so important for us as Church. The One Thousand People of God of Novaliches Congress, as it were, will be composed of Parish Priests with their new sets of Parish Pastoral Council Officers (maximum of 10 per parish), Religious Men and Women, Teachers from Catholic, Private Non-Sectarian, and Public Schools, Professional and Volunteer Catechists, Diocesan Heads and Deputies of various Church Mandated Organizations, Movements, and Communities, Diocesan BEC Coordinators, and Youth. With all of us policy makers and shapers present there, we shall have a wonderful opportunity to reflect together, pray together, celebrate together our faith in the One Lord Jesus Christ, to proceed with “hearts burning” towards a long process of commitment and faith renewal of which our December Theological-Pastoral Congress is simply a part. I am sure that our understanding and appreciation of new evangelization and faith formation today can never be the same again as new insights from our resource speakers and audience can help us rethink and improve our methods and expressions at evangelization as well as increase our fervor and commitment to doing the same. Enclosed please find materials relative to the Congress.

Finally, may I endorse to you for implementation in your communities the theme chosen for the liturgical celebration of the Simbang Gabi leading to the Solemnities of Christmas. The theme reflects the general idea that we want to be developed serially as well as the ultimate objective we wish to accomplish in the long run: ***Let the Light of Faith Shine Forth and Illumine Our Human Experience from Within, Accompanying Us in Our Journey of Life***. Thus, in line with our efforts to give formal closing ceremony to the Year of Faith as a Diocese at the Congress and also to share with our people in the parishes and small communities the fruits of serious reflections on faith made and written not only by Pope Francis but also by his predecessor Pope Benedict XVI who called for the Year of Faith before his retirement early this year, the series of homilies that we shall deliver on this common theme during this festive period of December will redound to our people's better understanding of our Christian faith. May I therefore refer you to the enclosed schema carrying the important points for your consideration as you prepare your homilies for this year's *Simbang Gabi* and Christmas liturgies. May I also encourage you to come up with your homilies this early and possibly to write and so be ready to share them with our brother priests. In this way, we help one another with available sample homilies and enrich one another with so many reflections and approaches for each of those blessed days.

Thank you very much for your usual cooperation.

Looking forward to seeing you with your group of participants to the Congress and praying for your earnest efforts to achieving our common goals in Christ and for the sake of Christ and His people, I am.

Given in the Chancery in Fairview, Quezon City, 4 November 2013.

Most Rev. Antonio R. Tobias, DD
Bishop

Attested to by:

Rev. Fr. Reynaldo Percival S. Flores
Chancellor