

**People's Day with the Bishop and Intimate Dinners
for Kristong Hari Construction Project
Circular 2014-09**

To: All Parish Priests, PPC Chairpersons, Diocesan Heads of Ministries and Mandated Organizations, Principals of Catholic and Congregational Schools

I will be turning 73 years old on June 13, 2014. In two years' time, I will be retiring as bishop of the Diocese of Novaliches.

When Blessed Pope John Paul II appointed me bishop, I was in the midst of construction work for the church of Christ the King in Greenmeadows, Quezon City. Now, 25 years and three dioceses hence, while on the last stretch of my term as bishop, I find myself again on top of construction work for a church also in honor of Christ the King.

Call this a mere coincidence, if you will. I, however, would like to see this as the hand of God, who truly cares for His people, at work. As He did thirty-one years ago, He now is also gently asking me to build a church for His people and in His honor one last time.

We thank the Lord for giving us the chance to witness how our diocese has grown these past ten years. When the Archdiocese of Manila was sub-divided, we started with fifty (50) parishes. Now, we have sixty-seven (67). As you can see, our diocesan territory, covering mostly Quezon City and some parts of Caloocan City, has also grown in economic activity even as we see residential communities sprouting everywhere. Without doubt, there is need to open even more parishes in the future and expand some of our churches to serve our growing number of churchgoers.

The Kristong Hari Parish is one such parish. In its twenty-years (23) of existence, its church has been at the heart of the National Government Center along Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. It started as a makeshift chapel under the Good Shepherd and Holy Trinity Parish during the time when Commonwealth Avenue was still unpaved and muddy. Through the years, Commonwealth Avenue has morphed into a major thoroughfare. Beside it, Kristong Hari now looks

like the “dirty kitchen” of the more massive and, admittedly, more impressive structure of its neighbor, the Iglesia Ni Cristo.

As I have shared with you time and again, it is my dream that our diocese could build a landmark church in Commonwealth Avenue to match the infrastructure that has since risen. More importantly, such a church is necessary to serve the growing population around it. This dream is now close to becoming a reality. The Kristong Hari Parish has a 5000 square meter property that exists to make this possible

My hope is that aside from being able to accommodate at least 2,000 persons attending a single mass, this church could also serve as a venue for diocesan-wide events, seminars, and trainings. Since Kristong Hari is located in an urban poor community, we would like to create functional and fully equipped venues where endeavors that support pastoral and social development work for the poor can be accommodated. Furthermore, since we take the responsibility of evangelizing our youth very seriously, the desire is for this church to also become a major shrine for the youth in our diocese.

With these thoughts in mind, I want to do something really meaningful during my upcoming birthday. I have decided to spend my birthday this year hosting a series of INTIMATE DINNERS for you and your parishioners who are known to be supportive and generous to the Church.

In view of this, I am now asking each of you to personally select and invite prospective benefactors from the exclusive villages and well-off communities in our diocese to a dinner with me. These villages and communities shall be divided into clusters so that the number of attendees remains small enough to keep the dinner intimate. Each cluster will be invited to a dinner with me on separate evenings. During this dinner, I will personally share with them my “dream church” and boldly beg for financial contributions from them.

The first intimate dinner will take place on 13 June 2014, at 7 PM. It will kick off with the villages under the parish of Nuestra Senora de la Paz y Buen Viaje of Fr. Jose Eliseo “Joel” B. Buenviaje.

The schedule of subsequent “Intimate Dinners” in other parishes and villages will follow shortly.

Finally, in order to make our launching of our “Kristong Hari Church Construction Project” truly inclusive, I would like to organize on the eve of my birthday a **PEOPLE’S DAY WITH THE BISHOP**. This shall be on **12 June 2014 at 6:00 AM in the Kristong Hari Parish Church in Commonwealth Avenue.**

It is my hope that we can gather on this date all the Parish Pastoral Councils, Ministries, Mandated Organizations, Religious Congregations, BECS, government officials, and our parishioners in Kristong Hari. This will give me the privilege of personally launching this project and sharing with them its purpose, requirements, extent, and dynamics. This will also give me opportunity to present to them the urgent need to raise funds for the construction of their church and allow us to distribute an average of 200 Love Offering envelopes per parish.

Thank you for your usual support and fraternal love.

Given in the Chancery in Fairview, Quezon City, 25 April 2014.

Most Rev. Antonio R. Tobias, DD
Bishop

Attested by:

Rev. Fr. Reynaldo Percival S. Flores
Chancellor