



# Bishop's *Circular*

For Priests / Sisters

**Bishop George Rajendran sdb**

**Diocese of Thuckalay**

Bishop's House, P B No: 12, Thuckalay PO,  
Kanya kumari Dt- 629 175, Tamil Nadu, India

**Ref. No. Priests/GR/152/2023**

30 November 2023

Dear and Rev. Fathers,

Warm greetings in the spirit of the upcoming Christmas season from Bishop's House, Thuckalay!

As we joyfully anticipate the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, I extend my heartfelt wishes to you.

The liturgical year of our Syro-Malabar Church begins with the period of Annunciation. The four weeks in preparation to the feast of the Nativity of Jesus, celebrated on 25th December constitute this season. We call this period also "25 days Lent". This period of annunciation, in our Church, holds special significance in our faith journey, serving as a time of reflection, prayer, and spiritual preparation. In keeping with our tradition, we embark on a sacred journey of 25 days of fasting leading up to the joyous occasion of Christmas. A question that always rings in our minds is why we undertake fasting.

St John, in his first letter, declares: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, we make [God] a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 Jn 1:8-10).

Thus, the Sacred Scriptures declare our guilt to be universal, hence the universal obligation to repentance, which St Peter, in his sermon on Pentecost, declared necessary for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Hence, the Church's constant admonition is that all the faithful are required by divine law to do penance. From the fact of sin, we Christians can claim no exception. Similarly, from the obligation to penance, we can seek no exemption.

Forms and seasons of penance vary from time to time and from person to person. But the need for conversion and salvation is unchanging, as is the necessity that, confessing our sinfulness, we perform, personally and in community, acts of penance in the pledge of our inward penitence and conversion.

For these reasons, the people of God, who are at once holy, penitent, and always in the process of renewal, have from the beginning observed seasons and days of penance. They do so by community penitential observances as well as by personal acts of self-denial; they have imitated the example of the spotless Son of God Himself, concerning whom the Sacred Scriptures tell us that He went into the desert to fast and to pray for forty days (Mk 1:13). Thus, Christ gave the example to which St Paul appealed in teaching us how we, too, must come to the mature measures of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13).

The spiritual benefits of fasting, though, can be so rich that this practice should be embraced throughout the whole liturgical year. Christian texts, as well as the Old and New Testaments, show fasting was common in the early Christian community. Drawing from the example of Christ and the disciples, early Christians saw fasting as a way to increase closeness with God through denial of self. Fasting breaks the enslavement to material objects (in this case, food) and “helps us acquire mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart,” as the Catechism of the Catholic Church stipulates in Article 2043.

“The 25 days fast”, which we are about to enter, is a penitential season in which we participate through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Just like during Lent and other days of fast, we prepare ourselves through fasting to gird our hearts and souls for the coming of the new-born King.

In a sermon, Pope St Leo the Great shared the necessity of fasting for spiritual growth. Traditionally, fasts were observed at five different times during the year so that they were in sync with the seasons. The liturgical fasts allow the Christian to serve the Creator in union with his creation and to build a consistent pattern of self-restraint. “When the body, therefore, fasts from food, let the mind fast from vices and pass judgment upon all earthly cares and desires according to the law of its King,” the pope said.

The Pope also expressed the spiritual duty of fasting in December. “You must observe the fast, whereby, for the complete harvest of all fruits, there is most fittingly offered to God, the giver of them, an offering of self-mortification,” Pope St Leo said. “For what can be more salutary for us than fasting, by the practice of which we draw near to God and, standing fast against the devil, defeat the vices that lead us astray.”

As I said, in our Syro-Malabar Church, 25 days before the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ are always kept as days of fasting. According to Fr Mathias Mundadan, a Church historian, observing *noyambu* is one of the finest forms of preparing for Christmas. He explains that *noyambu*, coming from the Malayalam words *novu* (pain) and *anpu* (mercy), designates a period for performing penance and showing Christian charity. Abstinence is a unique way of showing one’s faith.

When speaking of fasting, we need to keep in mind that it is not an external action. It has to come from within, spread to all our actions, and raise us to the heavens. Fasting is not a period of sadness; it is a period of enjoyment. It is a period of enjoying heavenly bliss. It is a period for celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* and the Liturgy of the Hours in the most solemn manner possible. It is a time to be with God in His temple. In fasting, more than not eating, drinking, or taking part in any bodily entertainment, it is the spiritual entertainment that is more important, namely, the celebration of the liturgies.

If fasting in the Old Testament was a sign of repentance, in the New Testament it is for acquiring divine qualities and is equal to the heavenly life. Fasting is for purifying the heart. It is for humbling ourselves in the presence of God in the heavenly kingdom. We know the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Luke 18:9–14). The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed, “God, I thank you that I am not like other people - robbers, evildoers, adulterers - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.” But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven but beat his breast and say, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” We know that the tax collector and not the Pharisee, who went home, justified before God.

Let us meaningfully spend the twenty-five days that are at hand preparing ourselves well to receive the child Jesus. Whenever we think of Christmas, we are reminded of the nativity scene with the stable, the ox, the donkey, the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and, on Christmas, the image of the Child Jesus. This is an opportunity to reflect on the mystery of God’s love for us, which we are celebrating.

Christmas - the birth of God in a poor manger - is the most celebrated feast in this world. Christmas offers us all an opportunity to recapture glimpses of childhood's sacred memories. There is something unique about gazing into the crib and coming face-to-face with the truth that God came down from heaven and dwelt among us as a helpless baby. The gospel story tells us that at Bethlehem on a starry night, the Son of God was born. A burst of light startled the shepherds, and angels sang at his birth. In the simplicity of the stable, amid the lowly animals and the humble shepherds, God reveals His grand plan for salvation. The birth of Jesus is a testament to the God who enters into our human experience and who chooses to dwell among us amid our joys and struggles. It is a divine proclamation that no one is beyond the reach of God's love, no matter how insignificant or broken we may feel.

As we exchange gifts and express our love for one another during this season, let us be mindful that the truest gift is the one we received on that starry night in Bethlehem - a gift wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. The gift of Jesus is a beacon of hope in a world often darkened by sin and suffering. It is a light that dispels the shadows of despair and illuminates the path to eternal life.

During this season, let us unwrap the gift of love bestowed upon us by God. Let us embrace the message of the Christ-child - a message of peace, goodwill, and reconciliation. In a world hungry for meaning and purpose, the birth of Jesus reminds us that true fulfilment comes from aligning our lives with the will of God

I invite you, dear Fathers, to enter into these important moments - the season of Annunciation and the season of Christmas - of our Christian living with greater commitment and devotion so that we can reap rich spiritual benefits not only for ourselves but also for the people for whom we have dedicated our lives.

## NEWS AND EVENTS

**Forane Priests' Conference:** On November 2, 2023, the Forane-level Priests' conference for Thuckalay – Pilankalai and Soosaipuram Foranes took place at Christ the King Church, Palappallam, commencing at 10:00 am with the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, the chancellor, participated as the curia representative. The attendees engaged in fruitful discussions regarding pastoral coordination among the parishes and departmental activities. The discussions primarily focused on the participation of the laity in evangelization activities in mission territories, the CML Rally, Diocesan Day celebration, Forane-level coordination of departments, and suggestions for the Curia. Thanks to the smaller number of participants and ample time allotted, the atmosphere was vibrant, leading to numerous suggestions for the enhancement of pastoral activities. Heartfelt gratitude is extended to the Forane vicars for their effective coordination of the meeting.

**Golden Jubilee of SDS Congregation at Manjalumoodu:** The Sisters of the Divine Saviour (SDS) joyously commemorated their Golden Jubilee in India on November 4, 2023, at Little Flower Forane Church, Manjalumoodu. Exactly fifty years prior, on December 5, 1973, twelve Sisters embarked on a mission to establish the congregation's charism on Indian soil, specifically in Manjalumoodu. Over the years, they endeared themselves to the local population in the district of Kanyakumari through dedicated humanitarian service, considering it the most profound form of service. Their impactful initiatives included promoting gospel values through catechism, aiding home deliveries, conducting mother and child welfare programmes, tending to leprosy patients, providing healthcare services through hospitals, and offering primary education through nursery schools.

The Jubilee celebration commenced at 9:30 am with a solemn thanksgiving Holy Qurbana officiated by myself. Most Rev. Anthonysamy Savarimuthu, the Bishop of Palayamkottai, delivered the homily, and numerous Fathers from the diocese of Thuckalay and neighbouring dioceses concelebrated. Following the Holy Qurbana, a public meeting unfolded at 12:00 noon. The pioneer missionary sisters received well-deserved honours from the Provincial Superior, Sr. Anish SDS, with the Assistant General Superior also gracing the event. On behalf of the diocese, I express gratitude to the superiors and sisters of the SDS congregation for their dedicated service over the past 50 years, and for orchestrating the Golden Jubilee celebration in a truly fruitful manner.

**SMYM Central Executive Meeting and unit visits:** The Central Executive Meeting of the SMYM Diocese of Thuckalay took place on November 5, 2023, at 2 PM in St. Paul's Church, Thettiyode. Fr. Joseph Santhosh presided over the meeting, with the participation of Central Executives. It was decided during the meeting that the Christmas celebration would be held at Soosaipuram Church on December 10, 2023. Additionally, both Forane Executives and Central Executives conducted joint visits to the following units: Mankarai Unit on November 5, Pilankarai Unit on November 12, and Thackalivilai, Mukkuttukal, and Kaliyal Units on November 19.

**Writing Competition at Padanthalumoodu:** The Eparchial Level Bible Fest Writing Competition took place on November 5, 2023, at 2:30 PM on the Padanthalumoodu Forane Church campus. The participants of the competition comprised the first and second-place winners of the Forane level writing competitions. A total of 168 students took part in this competition. The results are scheduled to be published on January 13, 2024. I extend my gratitude to the entire team of the Catechesis Department for their excellent organization of the Eparchial level competitions.

**Mathru Jyothis Animators' Meet at Kalluvilai:** A meeting of all animators at diocesan, forane, and parish levels for Mathru Jyothis took place at Kalluvilai on November 5, 2023. The director, Fr. Jimmy Thekkekadumathil, presided over the meeting. Discussions during the meeting included collaboration with forane directors, planning the celebration of Christmas at the diocesan level, and outlining the programme schedule for the year 2024. Nearly 80 animators actively participated in the meeting.

**Social awareness programme at Palappallam:** KKSSS - CTWWC team conducted a Social Awareness Programme at Palappallam Anganwadi, Kanyakumari on 7 November 2023. They outlined a project aiding children during Covid-19, assisting 300 kids across 16 villages. The case manager emphasized extending support to more families and spreading awareness about family importance. The session concluded with a 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' awareness campaign, well-received by attendees.

**'Varnam' Competition at Kalluvilai:** In connection with Children's Day celebration, KKSSS organized "VARNAM 2023" an interschool Drawing and painting contest for school children on 10 November 2023. Fr. Thomas Powathuparambil inaugurated the programme, and Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal distributed prizes to the winners. Fr. Jomy Kamukumattom conducted a magic show on the theme of Say No to Drugs and Alcohol. The main focus of programme was to promote the creativity of children and to inculcate awareness about their dignity. Above 700 students actively participated in the competition and showed their talents. I thank Fr. Aby Poovathummoottil for the successful coordination of *Varnam*.

**Quiz Competition for Sisters:** As part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of St. Mary's Minor Seminary in Mukkoottukal, a quiz competition was conducted on November 11, 2023, at 5:00 pm for all the religious sisters of the diocese. The competition covered three main topics: Vatican Council document, Ad Gentes, Acts of the Apostles, and the history of the diocese. Six teams participated in the competition. The CMC

congregation secured the first prize, FCC the second prize, and SDS the third prize. Prizes were distributed by Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal. I extend my congratulations to the winners and participants, and I express my appreciation to the seminary staff for coordinating this programme for the religious community.

**27<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Day Celebrations:** In commemoration of the Diocesan Foundation Day on November 11, the diocese celebrated its 27th Diocesan Day on November 12, 2023, at Sacred Heart Forane Church, Padanthalumoodu. The festivities commenced at 2:30 pm with a concelebrated Holy Qurbana, which I presided over. Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General, extended a warm welcome to all the faithful. An offertory procession, featuring contributions from the Kaikars of each parish and the Local Superior of the convents, took place before the Holy Qurbana. Following the Holy Qurbana, a cultural programme unfolded in the parish auditorium, showcasing presentations from various departments and parishes. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, the Chancellor, presented a concise audio-visual report on the diocese. Those who successfully completed their diploma course in theology from Sinai Theological Institute were honoured with certificates. Numerous Fathers, Sisters, and Faithful actively participated in the event. Credit goes to Rev. Fr. Sanil Panthichirackal and all the members of the cultural committee who worked tirelessly to ensure the event's grand success. Gratitude is extended to Rev. Fr. Thomas Sathianesan, the parish priest, and the fathers actively involved in different committees, as well as to all attendees, for contributing to the memorable success of the event.

**Tenkasi Mission Meet:** A gathering of Fathers and Sisters from the Tenkasi mission was convened on November 13, 2023, at 04:30 pm at Pudur Border, with Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General, presiding over the meeting. The meeting comprised several sessions aimed at addressing various aspects of the mission and ministry. During the initial session, Fr. Dency Mundunadackal led a class on the anaphora of Mar Theodore and Mar Nestorius. The second session provided a platform for sharing experiences, works, and challenges encountered by priests and religious in their ministries. A productive discussion ensued regarding the activities of various departments, emphasizing the need to deepen catechetical formation and promote vocations. The meeting concluded with evening prayer and confession, followed by an agape meal. My sincere appreciation goes to Fr. Dency Mundunadackal for coordinating the entire programme.

**Missionary Meet at Madurai:** A gathering of all Fathers and Sisters working in the extended mission territories took place at Ariyur, Madurai on November 14, 2023. The event commenced with the Holy Qurbana at 10:00 am, which I celebrated and was concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil and Fr. Mathew Kuzhinjalil, along with other Fathers. Following the Holy Qurbana, a meeting convened at 11 am, during which all Fathers and Sisters shared their mission experiences and discussed challenges. Missionaries expressed their concerns about mission activities in various districts, underscoring the immediate attention needed for both missionary activities and the well-being of the missionaries. The meeting concluded with the formulation of resolutions aimed at supporting mission renewal. I extend my gratitude to all the Fathers and Sisters in the extended territories for their dedicated service and valuable sharing of experiences.

**Remembrance Holy Qurbana at Marappady:** To commemorate and express gratitude for the enduring mission and lives of the pioneers who have departed to their eternal abode, a remembrance Holy Qurbana was solemnized at St. Thomas Church, Marappady, on November 15, 2023, at 6:00 PM. The ceremony centered around commemorating Fr. Thomas Muttathukunnel, Sr. Ann Maria SH, Sr. Anni Jameson SH, and Sr. Eugene Mary SH. Following the Holy Qurbana, a prayer for the departed was recited, with Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal and Fr. Justin Cheruvellil co-celebrating the ceremony. The occasion saw the presence of SH

Sisters from all their convents, and it concluded with an agape meal served for all the faithful. Special appreciation goes to Fr. Robin Koorumullil, the parish priest, for his meticulous organization of the event.

**Heart awareness campaign at Carmel Jyothi School, Colachel:** The Health Commission of the Diocese of Thuckalay initiated several programmes aimed at raising awareness about heart health. Specifically, on November 16, 2023a ‘Care Your Heart’ campaign was launched at Carmel Jyothi Matriculation Higher Secondary School in Velliyakula, Colachel. This campaign successfully engaged 700 students. I inaugurated the campaign, and Dr. S. Senthil Kumar, a renowned social worker and the managing trustee of Sreeram Cancer Trust in Nagercoil, served as the resource person. During his presentation, Dr. S. Senthil Kumar discussed the multifaceted roles of the heart and provided valuable insights on preventing heart diseases. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a nutritious diet, advising the students to steer clear of colourful fast food. This guidance proved instrumental in helping the pupils take proactive steps to safeguard their heart health. I extend my sincere gratitude to Fr. Ajin C Joseph for his efforts in organizing and coordinating this impactful campaign.

**Golden Jubilee of FCC at Azhakiyamandapam:** On 18th November 2023 at 10:00 am, the Franciscan Clarist Congregation, San Jose Province, Thuckalay, joyously celebrated the Golden Jubilee of their presence in the Kanyakumari mission. The commemorative event took place at San Jose Province, Azhakiyamandapam. The pioneer missionaries, Sr. Francelet FCC and Sr. Anila FCC, arrived at Azhakiyamandapam on 19th November 1973, marking the initiation of their evangelization work. Currently, the FCC province boasts 12 convents and 66 dedicated sisters.

The Golden Jubilee celebration commenced with a Solemn Thanksgiving Holy Qurbana, which I presided over, joined by numerous Fathers. The homily during the Holy Qurbana was delivered by Rev. Fr. Mathew Arekalam CMI, the regional superior of CMI. Following the Holy Qurbana, the Jubilee Gathering was inaugurated by me and presided over by Rev. Mother Litty FCC, the Superior General. Representatives from both the religious and lay communities expressed their felicitations, acknowledging the significance of the occasion. The programme concluded with a heartwarming agape meal. I extend the gratitude of the entire diocese for the dedicated service rendered by FCC Sisters across various ministry placements. Special appreciation goes to Rev. Sr. Celia FCC, the Provincial Superior, for her proactive initiatives in extending the services of the Sisters to the mission territories of the diocese.

**Priests’ Conference:** The Priests’ Conference for the month took place at Sangamam on November 21, 2023, at 9:30 am. The conference commenced with adoration and confession, creating a prayerful atmosphere for the gathering. At 11:15 am, the meeting officially began, with Fr. Vicar General coordinating the proceedings, and I presided over it. In the first session, an animation programme was led by Rev. Fr. Vaisilin Xavier from the diocese of Kuzhithurai. He presented the working document issued from Rome for the Synod of Bishops – Synod on Synodality - held in Rome in October. He emphasized the need to journey together in the diocese and provided insightful reflections based on the document. During the second session, I shared some general information, and various departments provided their news updates. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the Fathers who actively participated in the conference, contributing to its success and engaging in fruitful discussions.

**First Governing Body Meeting at Moolamattam:** For the seamless operation of Snehavilla – Home for Senior Citizens, a trust named Snehavilla Charitable and Educational Trust was established. Its inaugural General Body Meeting took place at Moolamattam on November 23, 2023, with the presence of Mrs. Mercy Jose, the donor, Fr. Ginoy Thottiyil, and the curia members. During the meeting, the rules and regulations of Snehavilla were presented, and after some amendments, they were approved. Members actively contributed valuable suggestions for enhancing the functioning of the home. Following the meeting, a Holy

Qurbana was celebrated at Geetha village, commemorating both the first anniversary of the blessing of Snehavilla and the death anniversary of Geetha, the daughter of Mrs. Mercy Jose. The programme concluded with a communal agape meal. I express my gratitude to Fr. Ginoy Thottiyil for efficiently organizing the event.

**CML Forane level Rally:** This year, the CML Rally took place in different Foranes on November 26, 2023, at 02:30 pm. For Arukani, Kaliyal, and Manjalumoodu Foranes, the rally spanned from Malaicode to Manjalumoodu. For Padanthalumoodu and Nithiravilai Foranes, it extended from Vayalinkarai to Varuthattu. For Thuckalay Pilankalai and Soosaipuram Foranes, the rally covered the route from Kalluvilai to Kattathurai. Curia members served as representatives at each location. This marked the first time we organized the rally at the Forane level without a competitive element. We witnessed enthusiastic participation in all areas, with students actively engaging in the event. I commend the Forane directors of animators of CML and Forane Vicars, who played a pivotal role in the rally's success. Special thanks to Fr. Printo Kurias, the director, for providing guidance that contributed to the rally's successful execution in the Foranes.

**Presbyteral Council at Sangamam:** The VII General Body Meeting of the Presbyteral Council took place on November 28, 2023, at Sangamam, commencing at 10:15 am. The purpose of the gathering was to reflect and deliberate on the following agenda items: 1) Renewal of faith formation in liturgical matters, the life of departments, and the priorities of the diocese; 2) Participation of the laity in evangelization in the extended territory; and 3) Celebration of the Jubilee Year 2025. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, the Secretary, presented the agenda and invited the members to engage in an open discussion. Actively participating in the discussions, the members offered fruitful suggestions for the benefit of the diocese. From these suggestions, decisions were made, and the outcomes will be communicated in the next priests' conference. This concluded the last Presbyteral Council of its first session, with the next Presbyteral Council set to be formed in the upcoming year. I express gratitude to Secretary Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal and all the members whose active intervention in the discussions contributed to making the Council fruitful for the well-being of the diocese.

**Karunalayam Silver Jubilee at Kalluvilai:** Karunalayam, a school for differently-abled, managed by the CMC Sisters, joyously marked its Silver Jubilee on November 29, 2023, at the Karunalayam school auditorium in Kalluvilai. The public meeting commenced at 04:00 pm, and I participated as the chief guest. Rev. Mother Vinaya CMC, the Provincial Superior of the Chavara Province, presided over the meeting. Mr. Sivasankaran (DDAWO, Kanyakumari district), Fr. Aby Poovathummoottil, Mr. Tiby Thomas (Lions Club of Marthandam), and Mrs. Jenusha Ajith (Panchayath President) graced the occasion with their presence and offered felicitations. The students showcased a variety of entertaining programmes, adding vibrancy to the jubilee celebration. I extend my gratitude to the principal and the correspondent sisters for their efforts in making the jubilee celebration a colourful and memorable event.

## INFORMATION

- **Sr. Lilly Payyappilly SJSJ**, the Provincial Superior of SJSJ congregation visited the Bishop at Bishop's House on 01 November 2023.
- **Dn. Lintomon Thakadiyel** started his diaconate ministry at Mukkoottukal Parish and Minor Seminary on 07 November 2023.
- **Popular Mission Retreat** was conducted at Christurajapuram Parish from 12 to 17 November 2023.

- **Fr. Tobin Alapurackal** is appointed as the mission coordinator of extended mission territories with effect from 14 November 2023.
- **Fr. Sumesh Valliyamthadathil, Fr. Robin Koorumullil and Fr. Justin Cheruvellil** were given charge to promote the film ‘face of the faceless’ and make it available for the people.
- **Dn. Amanto Sunny** started his diaconate ministry at Vayalinkarai Parish on 28 November 2023.
- **Dn. Sanjo Theneplackal** started his diaconate ministry at Malaicode Parish on 29 November 2023.
- **Bro. Godwin** has completed the first session of his regency ministry in Minor Seminary, Mukkoottukal on 15 November 2023 and he will be sent to the new ministry place in the first week of December 2023.
- **Alphonsa’s Cherubs Pre-School** was blessed and inaugurated by me on 17 November 2023 at 10.00 am in Alphonsa Matri. Higher Secondary School campus, Nagercoil.
- **Dn. Liju Marattukalam** completed his diaconate ministry on 30 November 2023 and will be leaving home for the preparation for his ordination in the first week of December. He will be ordained priest on 02 January 2023 at 09.30 am at Sacred Heart Church, Chethipuzha.
- **Fr. Jinu Thekkethala** will reach from Rome for a one-month vacation on 10 December 2023. We welcome him back and wish him a happy stay.
- **Christmas Greetings:** Dear Fathers, you will receive my personal Christmas Greetings to the faithful, liturgical wall Calendar 2023 and Christmas poster in the first week of December. Kindly distribute it when you go for Christmas carol singing to the families. There is a self-addressed envelope in the pack, kindly encourage all the faithful to contribute generously to the diocese. You are personally asked to collect the envelope from the faithful and later submit the same to the diocesan financial officer.

### **FORTHCOMING MAJOR EVENTS**

01-03 December	-	Bible Convention at Kalluvilai
14 December	-	10 <sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of Rev. Fr. Thomas Thekkel
16 December	-	CRI Pre Christmas celebration at Kattathurai
19 December	-	Priests’ Conference and Pre Christmas-Gathering

**Diocesan Bible Convention**  
**Place: Sinai Retreat Centre, Kalluvilai**  
**Date: 01-03 December 2023**  
**Time: 08.30 am – 04.30 pm**

### **CONCLUSION**

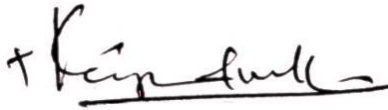
My dear fathers, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has declared 2025 as the Jubilee Year of Our Lord and entrusted the responsibility to the president of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization to find suitable ways for the Holy Year to be planned and celebrated with deep faith, lively hope, and active charity. All the dioceses have received instructions from the above dicastery for the active



celebration of this Jubilee. The Holy Father has chosen "Pilgrims of Hope" as the motto of the Jubilee. **This Jubilee for the year 2025 was discussed in our last presbyteral council, and a four-member committee was constituted, namely, Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Fr. Thomas Sathianesan, Fr. Justin Cheruvellil and Fr. Jimmy Thekkekadumathil, to prepare a two-year programme for our diocese based on the programme envisaged by the dicastery.** I believe the committee will present it at our next Priest conference.

Although there will be occasions when we can personally wish one another during this month, still let me, through this letter, wish you, dear Fathers, a Merry Christmas and a God-filled New Year 2024. May you have a faith experience of the Babe of Bethlehem as you prepare to celebrate Christmas! May our Blessed Mother intercede for each one of us!

With my prayers and blessings,  
Yours in Christ Jesus,



+ **George Rajendran SDB**  
Bishop of Thuckalay

