



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/172/2025

31 July 2025

Dear Rev. Fathers,

Greetings and Prayerful wishes from Bishop's House, Thuckalay!

As we navigate the sacred calling of our priestly ministry, I write to you today to reflect upon the profound relationship between our priesthood and the maternal love of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In her, we find not only the Mother of our Saviour but also our own spiritual mother, who watches over us with tender care and guides us in our sacred duties.

Our Blessed Mother: Queen and Protectress of Priests

The title "Queen of Priests" given to Our Lady finds its deepest meaning in her special relationship with Christ, the eternal High Priest. At the foot of the Cross, when Jesus entrusted John to Mary with the words "Behold, your mother" (John 19:27), He was not merely caring for His mother's earthly needs. Instead, He was establishing Mary as the spiritual mother of all who would share in His priesthood throughout the ages.

Mary's queenship over priests is not one of dominion but of maternal care. She who pondered all things in her heart (Luke 2:19) understands the weight of priestly duty. She who stood faithfully beneath the Cross knows the sacrifices demanded of those who serve in *persona Christi*. Her crown is woven not with jewels but with prayers for her priest-sons, and her sceptre is the rosary she uses to intercede for us before the throne of grace.

In the Upper Room, Mary was present with the apostles as they awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:14). This presence was not coincidental but providential, for she who had received the Spirit at the Annunciation now assisted at the birth of the priestly Church. Today, she continues this maternal ministry, breathing spiritual life into our priesthood through her constant intercession.

Mary Protects Her Priest-Sons

The protection that Our Blessed Mother offers to her priests is both spiritual and practical, covering every aspect of our ministerial life. Like a mother watching over her children, Mary anticipates our needs and intercedes for us with her powerful advocacy.

Spiritual Protection: Mary shields us from the snares of the evil one, who seeks especially to ensnare those who serve at the altar. She who crushed the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15) continues this victory in the lives of her priest-sons. When temptations attack us, when discouragement weighs heavily on our hearts, and when the burden of ministry feels overwhelming, Mary's maternal presence offers comfort and strength. She enfold us in her mantle of protection, just as tradition tells us she protected Juan Diego at Guadalupe.

Intercession for Vocations: Mary prayerfully intercedes for priestly vocations, presenting to her Son the needs of His Church for worthy ministers. She who said, “Do whatever He tells you” (John 2:5) at Cana continues to inspire young men to respond generously to Christ’s call to the priesthood. Through her intercession, hearts are opened to receive the grace of vocation.

Preservation in Holiness: Our Lady, the Immaculate Conception, desires that her priest-sons reflect her purity and holiness. She assists us in upholding the sacred commitments of our ordination, particularly our promise of celibacy. Like a mother who helps her child grow in virtue, Mary shapes us in the likeness of her Son, teaching us His gentleness, His compassion, and His total dedication to the Father’s will.

Protection from Scandal: In these times when the priesthood faces particular scrutiny and attack, Mary serves as our advocate and defender. She who is terrible as an army set in battle array (Song of Songs 6:10) fights for the honour of her priest-sons. When we are falsely accused or when our ministry is questioned, we can take refuge in her Immaculate Heart, knowing that she who defended her Son will defend those who serve in His name.

Cultivating Tender Devotion to Our Lady

Dear Fathers, our relationship with Mary must not remain merely intellectual or ceremonial. It must be characterised by the tender devotion of a son for his mother. This devotion springs from recognising Mary’s unique role in our priestly life and responding with filial love and trust.

Daily Consecration: Each morning, as we begin our priestly duties, let us renew our consecration to Mary. Following the example of St Louis de Montfort, we entrust all our prayers, works, joys, and sufferings to her, asking her to present them to Jesus with her own merits. This act of consecration transforms our entire day into an offering made through Mary’s hands.

The Holy Rosary: The rosary should be our constant companion, the breviary of our Marian devotion. Through the mysteries of the rosary, we contemplate the life of Christ through Mary’s eyes. As we pray the rosary daily, we unite our voices with hers in praising God and interceding for the needs of our people. Let the rosary beads be worn smooth by our frequent use, a testament to our faithful devotion.

Marian Antiphons: The Church’s ancient practice of singing Marian antiphons provides us with beautiful prayers to honour Our Lady throughout the liturgical year. Whether we chant the “Alma Redemptoris Mater” during Advent and Christmas, the “Ave Regina Caelorum” during Lent, or the “Regina Caeli” during Easter, these prayers should flow naturally from our lips as expressions of our love for Mary.

Personal Prayer and Conversation: Beyond formal prayers, we must cultivate a personal relationship with Mary, speaking to her as a son speaks to his mother. Share with her your joys and sorrows, your hopes and fears, your successes and failures in ministry. She who treasured all things in her heart will receive your confidences with maternal love and respond with wise counsel.

Visits to Marian Shrines: When possible, undertake pilgrimages to Marian shrines within our region. These sacred places, blessed by Mary’s presence and miracles, provide special opportunities to deepen our devotion and receive her maternal blessing on our priesthood.

Spreading Marian Devotion Among the Faithful

Our love for Mary must not remain hidden but should overflow into our pastoral ministry, inspiring the faithful entrusted to our care to develop their own tender devotion to the Mother of God. We are called to be apostles of Mary, spreading her message of love, conversion, and hope.

Preaching and Teaching: In our homilies and catechetical instruction, we must often speak of Mary's role in salvation history and her ongoing maternal care for the Church. Help the faithful understand that devotion to Mary is not optional for Catholics but a vital part of our faith. Teach them that Mary always leads us to Jesus, never away from Him.

Liturgical Celebrations: Ensure that Marian feasts are observed with fitting solemnity in our parishes. The major feasts of the Annunciation, the Assumption, and the Immaculate Conception should be times of joy and devotion for our communities. Promote participation in Marian devotions such as the May crowning, October rosary devotions, and First Saturday observances.

Family Consecration: Promote the consecration of families to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Visit homes during May to bless family altars dedicated to Our Lady. Encourage parents to lead the family rosary, fostering a home that becomes a domestic church where Mary's presence is felt and honoured.

Youth Formation: Pay special attention to nurturing young people in Marian devotion. Establish youth groups dedicated to Our Lady, organise pilgrimages to Marian shrines, and encourage young people to wear the brown scapular and the miraculous medal as signs of their consecration to Mary. Remember that many priestly and religious vocations originate from early Marian devotion.

Care for the Suffering: Following Mary's example of compassion, encourage devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows among those who suffer. Visit hospitals and homes of the sick, bringing images of Mary and leading prayers for her intercession. Show how Mary's own sufferings at the foot of the Cross unite her intimately with all human pain.

Social Justice and Mary: Present Mary as the model of Christian social concern, she who sang the Magnificat, proclaiming God's preferential love for the poor and humble. Help the faithful recognise that true Marian devotion involves caring for those on the margins and committing to justice, following Mary's example of serving others.

Our Lady's Promises

Beloved Fathers, as we deepen our devotion to Our Blessed Mother and encourage this devotion among our people, let us remember the promises she has made to those who honour her. At Fatima, she promised that her Immaculate Heart would be our refuge and the path that leads us to God. She assured us that those who wear her scapular will not suffer eternal fire, and that those who pray her rosary will receive great graces.

These promises are especially true for us, her priest-sons. Mary's protection is not just a pious feeling but a spiritual reality we can depend on. In times of trial, discouragement, opposition, or misunderstanding, we can confidently turn to our heavenly Mother, knowing she will not abandon those she has spiritually adopted.

Fortunately, in August, we celebrate the solemnity of the Assumption of our Blessed Mother. The mystery of Mary's Assumption—her bodily ascent into heaven—reveals not only the glory of her destiny but also

the fullness of her maternal authority over all the Church, and in a special way, over us who share in the priesthood of her Son. From her throne in heaven, crowned as Queen of Angels and Saints, she exercises her royal right as protector and guide of priests worldwide. Her Assumption assures us that our faithful service, united with her intercession, will lead us to share in the glory she now enjoys.

Similarly, we observe the feast of the Queenship of Mary, celebrated on 22 August, which honours the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth. It recognises her unique role in salvation history as the Mother of Christ the King. This feast highlights Mary's intercessory power and maternal care for all believers, including priests who look to her as a model of perfect surrender to God's will and faithful service. Priests often turn to Mary, Queen of Heaven, for guidance in their pastoral ministry, drawing inspiration from her "yes" to God's plan and her presence at the foot of the cross, seeing in her both a spiritual mother who intercedes for their priestly vocation and an example of complete devotion to Christ.

Let us, therefore, renew our commitment to live as true sons of Mary, allowing her maternal love to shape us into priests after the heart of her Son. May our lives be so filled with Marian devotion that all who meet us are drawn to love and honour the Mother of God! Through our example and teaching, may our parishes become centres of genuine Marian spirituality, places where Mary's presence is felt and her intercession is sought.

I entrust this letter and all of you, my dear brother priests, to the loving care of Our Lady, Queen of Priests. May she bless your ministry abundantly and draw you ever closer to the Sacred Heart of her divine Son!

NEWS AND EVENTS

Sabhadinam Celebration at Mount St Thomas, Kakkanad: 3rd July is observed as *Sabhadinam* in our Church. As per tradition, the Feast of Dukhrana was solemnly celebrated at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 3 July 2025. Representatives from each diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church took part in the event. From our Diocese, the following members participated this year: Rev. Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal, Sr. Emily CMC, Sr. Jaisy FCC, Sr. Geo Maria SABS, Sr. Tessa Maria SH, Mr. Clinton (Killiyoor), and Mrs. Latha (Nithiravilai). Following the solemn *Raza Qurbana*, our Major Archbishop, Mar Raphael Thattil, inaugurated the public gathering, which was then followed by an agape meal. I extend my sincere gratitude to all the participants for representing our Eparchy at the Sabhadinam celebration.

Academic Year Inauguration at Minor Seminary, Mukkoottukal: The inauguration of the new scholastic year at St. Mary's Minor Seminary, Mukkoottukal, took place on 10 July 2025 at 11:00 a.m. Rev. Fr. Bobby Kochuparampil MST, Rector of the Minor Seminary, welcomed everyone and highlighted that seminaries are given primary importance in every eparchy. Referring to Pastores Dabo Vobis (PDV 63), he emphasized that minor seminaries serve as places for nurturing the seeds of vocations in the hearts of young people, "providing careful discernment and accompaniment." I presided over the gathering and, in my address, I exhorted that the Minor Seminary must offer ample opportunities for young seminarians to receive basic human, spiritual, intellectual, and missionary-pastoral formation. The primary objectives of minor seminary formation are: to help students develop essential human qualities, to nurture in them a genuine desire for a well-lived spiritual life, to prepare them academically for higher studies, to help them attain proficiency in languages, and to provide a basic orientation toward priestly life. Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Protosyncellus, felicitated the gathering and noted that special attention is given to instilling a missionary spirit throughout the formation process. The seminarians presented a variety of cultural programmes during the event. In the current academic year, the seminary has five brothers: one in the first year, two each in the third and fourth years, and none in the second year. Additionally, two brothers

pursuing their postgraduate studies are residing at the seminary. The event was attended by the seminary staff, priests, and religious sisters from neighbouring parishes. The inauguration ceremony concluded with prayers and an agape meal. I thank Fr. Rector and the entire seminary team for having organized very well the ceremony.

Last Respects to Rev. Sr. Mary Joseph OMMI: Sr. Mary Joseph OMMI (87) was called to eternal rest on 14 July 2025. She was one of the pioneer missionaries who actively contributed to the Kanyakumari Mission—and later to the Diocese of Thuckalay—for over 28 years. Arriving in 1970, she faithfully served in various missions and ministries, including: Sacred Heart Mission, Padanthalumoodu (from 1970 onwards), St. George Mission, Munchirai (1971), St. Paul Mission, Thettiyode (1972), St. Maria Goretti Mission, Athecode (1980), Little Flower Mission, Puliyarai (1997–1999), First Headmistress, Primary School, Padanthalumoodu (7 years), Teacher, Sacred Heart Matriculation School, Padanthalumoodu (12 years) and Numerous Mother and Child Health Centres under the Kanyakumari Mission. The funeral service was held on Tuesday, 15 July 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the Chapel of Vimala Matha House, OMMI, Changanacherry. The burial took place at the cemetery of the Cathedral Church, Changanacherry. I presided over the Holy Qurbana and delivered the homily. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the OMMI Sisters. Let us thank God for the dedicated service Sr. Mary Joseph rendered to our diocese, and pray that the Merciful Lord may grant her eternal peace and joy.

Junior Priests' On-going Formation Programme: A two-day ongoing formation programme for the junior priests of our diocese was held at Sangamam on 15 and 16 July 2025. All junior priests—Fathers Jose Paul Purayidathilkunnel, Antony Mahesh, George Kandathil, Prince Cherippanattu, Ajin C. Joseph, Liju Marattukalam, Linto Thakidiyel, Sanjo Thenepackal, Amanto Edakkoottathil, Sunil Antony, and Anoop Thathappally—were present for the sessions. The programme was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil. On the first day, in the morning, Rev. Fr. Devadas, Procurator of the Diocese of Marthandam, conducted two sessions on the priestly life and its commitments—towards God, the Bishop, fellow priests, and the faithful. In the afternoon, Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal led a session on the canonical dimensions of pastoral issues, followed by Rev. Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal, who addressed various account-related queries raised by the priests. In the evening, the members of the Curia, along with myself, met with the junior priests for an open discussion during which they shared their pastoral experiences, challenges, and concerns. On the following day, 16 July, Rev. Fr. Stephen, Correspondent of Nanjil College from the Diocese of Kuzhithurai, animated two insightful sessions on Psycho-sexual Integration in Priestly Life and Ministry. The ongoing formation programme concluded by noon on the same day. I extend my heartfelt congratulations and gratitude to all the junior priests for their enthusiastic and active participation.

Priests' Conference: The monthly Priests' Conference for July was held at Sangamam on 16 July 2025. Almost all priests arrived in time for lunch, and the official session of the conference began at 1:40 p.m., coordinated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil and presided over by myself. The meeting commenced with an opening prayer led by Rev. Fr. Jose Vayalil. Rev. Fr. Linto Thakidiyel extended a warm welcome to all participants. The minutes of the previous conference were presented by the Secretary of the Presbyterium, Rev. Fr. Justin Cheruvilil, and were unanimously approved by the assembly. The presbyterium extended a special welcome to Rev. Fr. Anoop Thathappally, who was attending the conference for the first time following his priestly ordination. On behalf of the presbyterium, Rev. Fr. Antony Jose offered words of heartfelt welcome to him. Two main agenda items were taken up for discussion during the conference. The first agenda, concerning the pilgrimage and Nadaipayanam in connection with the Feast of St. Alphonsa, was introduced by the Protosyncellus, Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil. This was followed by a detailed presentation of the celebration programme by Rev. Fr. Sanil Panthichirackal, Parish Priest of St. Alphonsa Shrine, and Rev. Fr. Anil Raj, who elaborated on the Nadaipayanam scheduled for 26 July 2025 under the leadership of the SMYM.

Following the conclusion of the first agenda, Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Secretary of the Presbyteral Council, conducted the election of three new members to the council. The election process was carried out concurrently with the presentation of the second agenda. The second agenda focused on the proposed construction of a Cathedral Church for the diocese. The convenors of the respective subcommittees presented the action plans developed in the core committee meeting. The following six subcommittees have been constituted, each headed by a core committee member: Spiritual Animation and Liturgical Committee, Architectural Committee, Fundraising and Animation Committee (within the diocese and parishes), Communication and Media Committee, Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee (outside the diocese) and Construction Site Support Committee. In my concluding remarks, I emphasized the importance of wholehearted cooperation and collaboration from all priests to ensure the success of the Nadaipayanam and the pilgrimage to the St. Alphonsa Shrine. I also urged everyone to actively support and engage with the initiatives undertaken by the subcommittees in the preparatory phase of the Cathedral Church construction. The conference concluded with a final blessing at 4:15 p.m. I extend my sincere gratitude to all the priests for their active participation, valuable insights, and meaningful contributions, which greatly enriched the discussions and ensured the success of the conference.

Forane level Retreat for Uraviyam Leaders: Under the direction of the Diocesan Uraviyam Department, a half-day retreat and orientation programme was conducted at the forane level for Uraviyam animators, leaders, and organizers from each parish. For Manjalumoodu and Kaliyal Foranes, the programme was held at Manjalumoodu Forane Parish on 12 July 2025, with around 115 leaders in attendance. For Padanthalumoodu and Nithiravilai Foranes, the retreat took place at Nithiravilai Forane Parish on 19 July 2025, with approximately 85 leaders participating. I extend my sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Mijo Puthenpurackal and the respective Forane Directors for organizing the programmes effectively and with great commitment.

Annual General Body Meeting of CML: The Annual General Body Meeting of the Sirumalar Mission League, CML, was held on 20 July 2025 at 2:30 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Matriculation School Campus, Padanthalumoodu. The meeting was attended by Forane Directors, Forane Animators, Parish Animators, Organizers, and student representatives from various parishes. I presided over the meeting. Mission collections from the parishes were brought and submitted during the gathering. The meeting also reviewed parish-level activities and formulated action plans for the upcoming period. I extend my sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Printo Kurias and Rev. Fr. Shijo for their dedicated efforts in coordinating the meeting effectively.

Welcome to the New Bishop of Jalandhar: Pope Leo XIV has appointed Rev. Msgr. Jose Sebastian Thekkumcherikunnel as the new Bishop of Jalandhar, Punjab. The official announcement was made on Saturday, 7 June 2025. This appointment is a source of great joy for our diocese, as Bishop Jose Sebastian is the brother of Rev. Sr. Rose Martin SABS, the Provincial Superior of the SABS Thuckalay Province. In recognition of this special connection, many sisters from the SABS Thuckalay Province and I participated in the Episcopal Ordination and Installation of the Bishop-elect, Msgr. Jose Sebastian, which took place on 12 July 2025 at Trinity College Campus, Jalandhar.

Our diocese had the privilege of welcoming the newly ordained bishop on 23 July 2025. A simple reception was held at the Bishop's House just before lunch, followed by a more solemn diocesan reception in the evening at Soosaipuram. The formal reception began at 5:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Forane Church, Soosaipuram. Rev. Fr. Johnsilal Arackaparampil, the parish priest of Soosaipuram, together with me and the gathered faithful, warmly welcomed the new bishop. This was followed by the celebration of the Solemn Holy Qurbana, presided over by Mar Jose Sebastian and concelebrated by me and the priests present. The bishop delivered a touching and inspiring homily during the liturgy. After the Qurbana, a public meeting was held during which I offered the felicitation on behalf of the Diocese of Thuckalay and assured him of our prayers and support for his new episcopal ministry. Many priests and religious sisters from Soosaipuram

Forane and other foranes were present for the occasion. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Rev. Fr. Johnsilal Arackaparampil for organizing the event so meaningfully, with the generous support of the SABS Sisters at Soosaipuram.

Presbyteral Council New Members: Following the transfers that came into effect on 24 May 2025, the following priests are no longer members of the current Presbyteral Council. This change is due to the fact that some were ex officio members and ceased their membership upon transfer from their respective offices, while others are no longer engaged in pastoral ministry within the Eparchy: Rev. Fr. Johnsilal Arackaparampil (ex officio), Rev. Fr. Thomas Sathianesan (ex officio), Rev. Fr. Joseph Santhosh (nominated), Rev. Fr. Sajan Nettaponghu (nominated), Rev. Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal (elected), Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil (elected), Rev. Fr. Martin Kandamparampil MST (elected).

In their place, the following priests have been appointed to the Presbyteral Council: Rev. Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal (ex officio), Rev. Fr. Bobby Kochuparampil MST (ex officio), Rev. Fr. Thomas Koippuram (elected), Rev. Fr. Toji Parambilparambil (elected), Rev. Fr. Shijo Jose Aikkarakunnel (elected), Rev. Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil (nominated) and Rev. Fr. Antony Mahesh (nominated). I sincerely thank the Fathers who have completed their term of service on the Presbyteral Council for their valuable contributions. I also extend a warm welcome to the newly appointed members and wish them every blessing in their ministry and service to the Eparchy.

Presbyteral Council at Sangamam: The third General Body Meeting of the 2nd Presbyteral Council was held on 25 July 2025 at Sangamam, beginning at 10:15 a.m. Of the 18 members, 14 were present for the meeting. The primary purpose of the gathering was to reflect on and provide suggestions to me regarding the following agenda items: 1. Discuss the proposals presented by the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly for implementation at the diocesan, parish, family, and personal levels, and to identify those most suitable for our diocesan context. 2. Engage in a critical discussion on the decline in the number of faithful in our parishes and offer constructive suggestions. 3. Deliberate on how to conclude the Christ Jubilee Year both at the diocesan and parish levels. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Secretary of the Council, presented the agenda and invited the members to engage in open and meaningful discussion. The members actively participated and shared several valuable and insightful suggestions for the good of the diocese. Based on these discussions, appropriate decisions will be taken and the outcomes will be shared during the next Priests' Conference. I express my sincere gratitude to Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal and to all the members of the Council for their active engagement and thoughtful contributions, which helped make the meeting fruitful for the spiritual and pastoral well-being of our diocese.

St Alphonsa Nadaipayanam: As part of the annual celebration of the Feast of St. Alphonsa, the Diocese organizes Nadai Payanam (Pilgrimage on Foot) to the St. Alphonsa Shrine in Nagercoil under the leadership of the SMYM. This year, the pilgrimage took place on 26 July 2025, beginning at 6:30 a.m. from the Bishop's House, Thuckalay. Pilgrims were served breakfast at the Bishop's House before the journey began. Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Protosyncellus, inaugurated the event with a prayer and blessing. Another group of youth and faithful took the Colachal route to Nagercoil, and breakfast was arranged for them at Manavalakurichi. Upon reaching the Shrine, Rev. Fr. Jose Paul Purayidathilkunnel led the Navanal prayers, which was followed by the celebration of the Holy Qurbana by Rev. Fr. Anil Raj, Eparchial Director of SMYM. After the Qurbana, lunch was served to all participants. Approximately 750 youth and faithful participated in this meaningful spiritual journey. I sincerely thank all the priests who took the initiative to bring the faithful for Nadai Payanam, and I extend special thanks to Rev. Fr. Anil Raj for his dedicated coordination of the entire programme.

Grandparents' Day Celebration: World Grandparents' Day was observed in all our parishes on Sunday, 27 July 2025, following the guidelines provided by the TNBC Health Commission. Special liturgical texts,

including the introduction to the Holy Qurbana and Karosusa prayers, were prepared and used for the occasion. At KKSSS, Kalluvilai, the celebration was anticipated and held on 19 July 2025. A large number of elderly people, especially from women's Self Help Groups, took part in the event. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Rev. Fr. Antony Mahesh for his dedicated efforts in coordinating and promoting the celebration of this meaningful day across the diocese.

Webinar for the Catechism Teachers: The Syro-Malabar Catechetical Commission organized a webinar from July 23 to 31, 2025 from 8:30 PM to 9:30 PM, aimed at the ongoing formation of all catechists of the Syro-Malabar Church. Considering the importance of Jubilee Year, the online classes were centred around the theme “*The Role of the Word of God in Catechesis.*” The catechists could participate through digital platforms such as Zoom and YouTube. At the end of each day’s session, questions based on the class content was given. Catechists who participated in the classes, are asked to prepare correct answers to the questions, and submit them to the Diocesan Catechetical Centre by August 30 so that they will receive certificates from the Syro-Malabar Catechetical Commission. From our diocese, so many teachers attended the course and I thank Fr. Abilash Xavier, the Director of catechesis for coordinating the programme in our diocese.

INFORMATION

- **Fr. Jogesh Polachirayil** has been perpetually and definitively incardinated into the Eparchy of Thuckalay with effect from 03 July 2025, after having completed all the required documentation and in accordance with can. 359, CCEO.
- **Sr. Archana FCC and Sr. Christy Maria CMC** have successfully completed their Bachelor Degree in Religious Sciences from Marthoma Vidhyanikethan, of the Archdiocese of Changanacherry. Our heartfelt Congratulations to dear Sisters!
- **SMYM Central Executive Committee Meeting** was held at SMYM Office, Kalluvilai on 06 July 2025. During the meeting it was decided that to conduct election in all units and the details of the office-bearers should be submitted to the SMYM office by 17 August 2025.
- **Mr. Russel Raj**, the beloved father of Sr. Rani Maria SABS, slept in the Lord on 06 July 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Rani Maria and her family members. Let us pray that the merciful Lord grant him eternal joy.
- **Fr. Cyriac Thekkekkutt MCBS (90)**, the elder brother of Fr. Mathew Thekkekkutt, slept in the Lord on 08 July 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Fr. Mathew Thekkekkutt and his family members. Let us pray that the merciful Lord grant him eternal joy.
- **SMYM Central Executive Committee Members** – Manoj, Anjana and Merin Sujith – conducted a one-day training session for the major seminarians at Sacred Heart Seminary, Poonammallee on 10 July 2025. Discussions were held on the ongoing youth ministry activities in the Diocese of Thuckalay, the challenges faced in the mission, and responses to questions related to the current mindset of young people.
- **Fr. James (Shan) Ayalloor** is relieved from the Office of the Assistant Director of Theni – Cumbum Mission on 10 July 2025. He served two and a half years in our mission helping the Mission Coordinator of Cumbum -Theni in providing pastoral care, promoting mission visits and engaging himself in charitable activities for the development of the mission. He is returned to his diocese of origin – Kanjirappally for higher studies. We express our sincere gratitude for his selfless service in our mission and wish him God’s blessing in his future ministry.
- **Mrs. Soosi Cheriyan (82)**, the elder sister of Sr. Rosamma CHF, slept in the Lord on 17 July 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Rosamma and her family members. Let us pray that the merciful Lord grant her eternal joy.

- **Mrs. Eliyamma Devasya (92)**, the beloved mother of Sr. Tresa SABS, slept in the Lord on 18 July 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Tresa and her family members. Let us pray that the merciful Lord grant her eternal joy.
- **Mr. Sukumaran (73)**, from Vayalinkarai Parish slept in the Lord on 19 July 2025. He was one of the strong pillars of the early Kanyakumari mission and later of the Diocese of Thuckalay. He was a committed lay leader who gave his full support to the early missionary fathers. We acknowledge and appreciate his valuable contribution to the growth of our diocese and thank God for his selfless service to its growth. May the merciful Lord grant him eternal joy.
- **Rev. Sr. Margita Tusanova**, the Superior General of SDS Congregation visited me at Bishop's House and joined in the supper on 24 July 2025.
- **Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil** has successfully completed his MA studies in Cinema and Television with First Rank from MG University. Congratulations dear Father!
- **Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal** participated in the Syro Malabar Public Affairs Commission Meeting held at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 28 July 2025.
- **Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil and Mr. Edwinson** participated in the Syro Malabar Media Commission Meeting held at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 28 July 2025.
- **The Department Meeting** was held at Sangamam on 29 July 2025 at 10.00 AM. The Directors who were present shared their present activities, future programme and challenges that they face. New proposals were suggested each department for the better coordination of their ministry for the good of the diocese.
- **Mrs. Cicly Devasya (84)**, the beloved mother of Sr. Vineetha FCC, slept in the Lord on 30 July 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Vineetha and her family members. Let us pray that the merciful Lord grant her eternal joy.
- **KII (Kuzhanthai Issu Iyakkam)** conducted the diocesan level competition for all its members to colour the Christ Jubilee logo in any Sunday of the month of July. Almost all children took part actively in the competition.
- **From 1 August we begin the 15-day fast.** I request you to observe this traditional practice as much as possible in order to celebrate the feast of our Blessed Mother on 15 August.
- **The Syro-Malabar Bishops' Synod** begins on 18 August 2025. I request you to pray for our Church and for the success of the Synod.
- **Mr. Varghese (84)**, the grandfather of Dn. Bibin Kouickakudiyil, slept in the Lord on 31 July 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Dn. Bibin and his family members. Let us pray that the merciful Lord grant him eternal joy.

FORTHCOMING MAJOR EVENTS

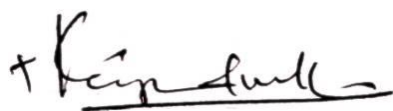
03 August	-	Pilgrimage to St. Alphonsa Shrine, Nagercoil
04 August	-	Vianney Day Celebration at Minor Seminary
18-29 August	-	Syro Malabar Bishops' Synod
31 August	-	Vincent de Paul Christ Jubilee Celebration at Kalluvilai

Vianney Day Celebration
Place: St. Mary's Minor Seminary, Mukkoottukal
Date: 04 August 2025
Time: 09.00 am – 01.30 pm

CONCLUSION

On 4 August, we celebrate the feast of St John Maria Vianney, known as the Curé of Ars, who served as a parish priest in the small French village of Ars from 1818 until he died in 1859. He became renowned for his extraordinary dedication to the sacrament of confession and his profound spiritual guidance. His simple yet profound approach to priestly ministry—characterised by long hours in the confessional, fervent preaching, and deep personal holiness—made him a model for diocesan priests worldwide seeking to serve their parishioners with complete devotion. Pope Pius XI declared him the patron saint of parish priests in 1929, recognising his exemplary life as the ideal standard for diocesan clergy who minister directly to the faithful in parish settings. As previously mentioned, we also celebrate the Assumption of Mary on 15 August and the Queenship of Mary on 22 August. The Assumption is one of the four Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church. The word ‘assumption’ is derived from the Latin word *assumere*, meaning ‘to take up’. Pope Pius XII defined it in 1950 in his apostolic constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*: “We proclaim and define it to be a dogma revealed by God that the immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever virgin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven.” The day also marks the 78th Independence Day of our country. As we celebrate Independence Day and sing the national anthem with pride, let us pray with Tagore, saying, “Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.” May the Virgin Mary, assumed into heaven, intercede for all of us!

With my prayers and blessings,
Yours in Christ Jesus,



† **George Rajendran SDB**
Bishop of Thuckalay

