



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/150/2023

30 September 2023

Dear and Rev. Fathers,

Greetings from Bishop's House, Thuckaly!

October holds special significance for Catholics all over the world as it is the month of the holy rosary. The celebration of the feast of Our Lady of the rosary on 7 October makes this devotional practice more meaningful. This feast was established to honour and commemorate the victory of the Christian fleet over the Ottoman Turks at the battle of Lepanto in 1571, a triumph attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the praying of the rosary.

The rosary is seen as a powerful tool for seeking Mary's intercession and meditating on the life of Jesus Christ. During this month, Catholics are encouraged to pray the rosary regularly, reflecting on the mysteries of Christ's life, death, and resurrection while seeking Mary's intercession for various intentions. It is viewed as a way to seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Through the repetition of prayers and meditation on the mysteries, believers find solace, peace, and a strengthened connection with God and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Mother Mary plays an important role in the Church. In fact, throughout the history of the Church Mary does not cease, in cooperation with the Spirit, to exercise her role as Mother, whether of the Church as a whole or of the individual Christians who make it up. In the face of immense difficulties, the apostles and disciples of the Lord began their work of preaching and conversion. They were inspired in this endeavour by Mary's example and supported by the power of her intercession. From her who has been called by Pope Paul VI the 'Star of Evangelization,' they learned the same lesson which the Spirit of Jesus was teaching them in the depths of their hearts - that evangelization consists essentially of opening up a way to human hearts for the person of Christ; and that what the herald of the gospel needs most of all is something which existed first and to a surpassing degree in the soul of Mary, namely intimate knowledge of Christ and profound union with him in love.

From Mary, the apostles learned that their role in the Church was to be, like her, at the service of the Spirit in bringing forth Christ in the souls of men. That is to say, it was to be essentially a maternal role, exercised in the power of the Spirit. Everything they did in fulfilment of their ministry was to be viewed in this light, from the first proclamation of new life in Christ to the bestowal of that life in the sacrament of baptism and the celebration of its fullness in the eucharist, together with the exercise of pastoral care and the continuing formation of God's people in the mysteries of the faith.

From this, it would naturally follow that in everything the apostolic ministry should bear a maternal stamp, that it should be marked at every stage by the characteristic qualities of motherhood. This is what we find clearly inscribed in the pages of the New Testament. For how better than in terms of a mother's love and solicitude for her children can one convey the all-consuming concern for their converts of the apostles and their collaborators in the preaching of the gospel?

This explains our special love for Mother Mary. Our devotion to Mary, especially through the rosary, is one of the most distinguishable features of popular Catholic spirituality. The rosary inspires us to meditate on the mysteries of the lives of Jesus and Mary. Meditation is an important spiritual exercise in the life of Catholics. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), "Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our hearts, and strengthen our will to follow Christ. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in *lectio divina* or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him" (CCC 2708).

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen says: "When we pray the rosary ... our lips say the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be to the Father, but our mind, thinking about the life of our Lord, creates a soundless background symphony of thoughts. The rosary is psychologically one of the greatest of prayers, because it draws all our scattered human energies, mind, lips, and fingertips, into a single, unifying purpose. [...] In the rosary, all faculties, mind, will, imagination, memory, desires, hopes and muscles, are directed to the Divine."

The origin of the rosary is connected to the monastic custom of praying the 150 psalms. Depending on the particular tradition of a monastic community, the psalms would be recited over days, consecrating the hours and days to God. Efforts to make this custom accessible to both religious and lay people who for various reasons could not read or memorize all of the Psalms led to the use of repetitive prayers in sets of 150. Some would pray 150 Our Fathers, using beads or stones to keep track of their progress. Others began to pray Hail Marys similarly, often interspersing short meditations on the life of Christ.

These sets of prayers persisted and developed in various forms over several centuries. The term *rosarium* (rose garden) arose from the collection of prayers and the points of meditation. The form which we now identify as the rosary is traced to Dominic of Prussia, a Carthusian monk who, during the first half of the 15th century, popularized a set of 50 Hail Marys accompanied by 50 phrases related to the life of Mary and her Son. Another monk organized the Hail Marys into decades with Our Father before each decade. Further modifications gave us the three sets of five "mysteries" from the life of Christ. Recitation of the "complete rosary" of all 15 decades included 150 Hail Marys, retaining that seldom recognized connection with the praying of the 150 psalms.

After Vatican II, Pope Paul VI wrote an apostolic exhortation on devotion to Mary. *Marialis cultus* was published on 2 February 1974. In writing this remarkable document, his purpose was to establish the rightful place of Marian prayer in opposition to two extreme positions he saw among Catholics of the time. On the one hand, some Catholics seemed to have dropped all forms of devotion to Mary and other canonized saints as though they were relics of the past, no longer relevant in the light of more vibrant attention to the liturgy and the central teachings of the church. Other Catholics were inclined to promote all forms of Marian piety almost as though they could take the place of liturgical prayer.

As all of us are aware, it was in 2002 that Pope John Paul II added the Luminous mysteries which call attention to key moments in the public ministry of Christ that were missing in the traditional sets of

mysteries. He also recalled the teachings of Pope Paul VI (1974) and Pius V (1569) who insisted that praying the rosary included both verbal repetition and meditation on the life of Christ. Thus, the rosary should be not prayer to Mary, but prayer in the company of Mary who is a sign of the church's relationship with her son.

As a Gospel prayer, centred on the mystery of the redemptive incarnation, the rosary is, therefore, a prayer with a Christological orientation. Its most characteristic element, in fact, the litany-like succession of Hail Mary's, becomes in itself an unceasing praise of Christ, who is the ultimate object both of the angel's announcement and of the greeting of the mother of John the Baptist: "Blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk 1:42). We would go further and say that the succession of Hail Mary's constitutes the warp on which is woven the contemplation of the mysteries. The Jesus that each Hail Mary recalls is the same Jesus whom the succession of the mysteries proposes to us - now as the Son of God, now as the Son of the Virgin - at His birth in a stable at Bethlehem, at His presentation by His Mother in the Temple, as a youth full of zeal for His Father's affairs, as teacher proclaiming the advent of the Kingdom of God, as the Redeemer in agony in the garden, scourged and crowned with thorns, carrying the cross and dying on Calvary, risen from the dead and ascended to the glory of the Father to send forth the gift of the Spirit. As is well known, at one time there was a custom, still preserved in certain places, of adding to the name of Jesus in each Hail Mary reference to the mystery being contemplated. This was done precisely to help contemplation and to make the mind and the voice act in unison.

Thus, the rosary developed as a way of prayer strongly connected with the liturgy of the Church. However, it is identified as a form of private prayer because it is not in itself liturgy. It is an option, not a requirement, but one very apt way of remaining connected with the core of our faith Tradition. There is no space within this short column to recount the many ways in which the experiences of different national and ethnic groups make the rosary and other forms of Marian devotion even more precious. However, the church recognizes the value of popular spirituality and the insights it can provide into the way that our common faith is expressed in the lives of Catholics throughout the world.

In our Eparchy, we have the pious practices of conducting chain rosary according to the vuvavium and rosary rally. We shall have them this year as well. Besides, these I also request you, dear Fathers, to organise solemn recitation of the holy rosary for any ten days of October in your respective parishes. Besides these practices, let us find ways and means to inculcate love for our Blessed Virgin Mary during this month of the holy rosary.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Priests' Conference: The Priests' Conference for the month took place at Sangamam on 04 September 2023 at 09:30 am. The conference started with adoration and confession, setting 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. During the conference, a warm welcome was extended to Rev. Fr. Chacko Puthiyapampil, the new spiritual Father of Minor Seminary, who joined to the Presbytery. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal updated the process of Eparchial Assembly and Rev. Fr. Antony Jose updated the works of media committee of the assembly. Fr. Justin Cheruvellil presented the eparchial policies on liturgical celebrations with special reference to the celebration of Holy Qurbana. In my address, I provided a detailed overview of synodal news and my mission appeal programme in USA. Furthermore, important departments and associations had the opportunity to update their upcoming events. The conference concluded with Onam Sadhya prepared at Sangamam. I express my heartfelt gratitude to all the Fathers

who actively participated in the conference, contributing to its success and fruitful discussions. Your presence and engagement are deeply appreciated, as together, we strive to strengthen our communal bonds and serve our eparchy with renewed enthusiasm and dedication.

CBCI prayer day at Malaicode: On September 4, 2023, a prayer meeting was held at Holy Cross Church, Malaicode under the guidance of the CBCI intercessory prayer group. The event was attended by approximately 400 faithful, including individuals from the Manjalumoodu Forane parishes. A group of five members from the CBCI national team, led by Mr. Arockianadan, joined for this special occasion. The prayer meeting started at 5:30 PM with the recitation of the rosary, followed by Holy Qurbana celebration, which I presided over. Following the Holy Qurbana, a special adoration was conducted for our country. This was followed by a prayer rally around the parish church, where all collectively lifted the voices in prayer for our nation. The event concluded at 9:00 PM with a final blessing and a communal agape meal. I express my heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Jose Vayalil, the parish priest, for his efforts in making all the necessary arrangements for this event at the Parish. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Fr. Anil Raj, the coordinator, for his efficient organization of the prayer meeting.

Catechesis Teachers Seminar at Kalluvilai: On September 6, 2023, a one-day seminar for Sunday School Teachers took place at Sinai Retreat Centre in Kalluvilai. The seminar was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General. The seminar was skilfully conducted under the guidance of Rev. Fr. Benedict Analil, the Director of the Commission for Catechesis at TNBC (The National Biblical, Catechetical, and Liturgical Centre). Furthermore, the Malayalam session was animated by Rev. Fr. Thomas Melvettath, the Secretary of the Syro-Malabar Catechetical Commission. This was arranged for all the Catechists, drawing the participation of more than 400 dedicated teachers. The seminar concluded at 4:15 PM, providing a valuable day of learning and inspiration for all attendees. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Fr. Abilash, Fr. Jacob Aiyamathra, and the entire staff of the catechesis department for their efforts in organizing and executing this seminar.

Tenkasi Mission Meet: A meeting of Fathers and Sisters from the Tenkasi mission was convened on September 9, 2023. The meeting was conducted in several distinct sessions to address various aspects of the mission and ministry. The first session brought together the priests actively engaged in mission and pastoral work within the Tenkasi mission. This session, held at the Border, served as a platform to share their experiences, works, and the challenges they encounter in their ministries. The second session took place at the Mekkarai Presbytery and centered on discussions related to ongoing projects under the purview of the SAFF. This session aimed to assess the progress and future directions of these projects. The third session was a unifying moment when all priests and religious members gathered for the celebration of the Holy Qurbana at Mekkarai Parish, reinforcing our spiritual bonds and commitment to our mission. The fourth session was convened at the Holy Cross Convent in Mekkarai. During this session, we extended a warm welcome to Fr. Thomas Pottanparampil and conveyed festal wishes to the HCM Sisters. Fr. Dency explained the instructions issued by the Liturgy Commission concerning the celebration of the Holy Qurbana. Additionally, representatives from various missions and centres shared their experiences, challenges, and opportunities encountered in their respective areas. In my address, I emphasized the significance of the Eparchial Assembly and the need to expand our outreach to new villages as part of our mission to evangelize culture. The meeting concluded with a gathering for an agape meal, fostering fellowship among all participants. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Dency Mundunadackal for his excellent coordination of the entire programme.

Health care Seminar at Tenkasi: On September 10, 2023, a health care seminar was conducted in Kutrālam, organized by the Pulari Social Service Society. It aimed to promote awareness and strategies for

maintaining a healthy lifestyle, particularly focusing on methods to prevent heart disease. Sr. Libya CMC and Fr. Antony Mahesh, the director of Pulari, led the classes, providing valuable insights and guidance on health-related topics. They emphasized the importance of sharing knowledge and advice concerning health and well-being. Approximately 50 self-help groups consisting of women participated in it. I extend my gratitude to Fr. Antony Mahesh for his efforts in organizing health care programmes in the Tenkasi district.

Health Care campaign at Alphonsa School, Nagercoil: The Diocesan Health Commission took significant steps to raise awareness about heart health. On September 11, 2023, a heart awareness campaign titled ‘Care Your Heart’ was launched at Alphonsa Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Nagercoil. This initiative reached out to a total of 2,000 students, aiming to educate and promote heart health among the younger generation. I inaugurated the campaign. Dr. S. Senthil Kumar, a well-known social worker and the managing trustee of Sreeram Cancer Trust in Nagercoil, was the resource person for the event. Dr. Senthil Kumar provided valuable insights into the functions of the heart and discussed preventive measures to avoid heart disease, enlightening the attendees on the importance of heart health. My appreciation to Fr. Ajin C. Joseph for his efforts in spearheading these new initiatives to promote awareness programmes, especially in the realm of heart health.

Priests and Religious Sangamam at Sangamam: Priests and religious sangamam took place on September 16, 2023, at Sangamam, Thuckalay. This event was organized with the primary objective of fostering stronger interaction among the priests and religious who serve in the Eparchy. Additionally, it served as an occasion to extend warm wishes and congratulations to those priests and religious celebrating their Silver or Golden Jubilee of ordination or profession this year. This year, we did not have any priests celebrating jubilees. However, among the Sisters, we had jubilarians. The Golden Jubilarians included Sr. Alphonse SABS, Sr. Alphi FCC, Sr. Bridgit SABS, and Sr. Angela DSS, while the Silver Jubilarians comprised Sr. Jincy FCC, Sr. Vijil Maria SH, Sr. Silvy Therese CMC, Sr. Jyothis SABS, Sr. Beena LSDP, and Sr. Anitha SH. During the Sangamam, we honoured and expressed our heartfelt gratitude to these jubilarians for their dedicated and selfless service to the Eparchy. I express my gratitude to all the Fathers, with a special mention of Rev. Fr. Joshy, our chancellor, for their diligent efforts in organizing this programme. The success of the event was greatly attributed to the enthusiastic participation of all the Fathers and Sisters who added vibrancy to the occasion with their active involvement and contributions.

An attitude of Gratitude on the completion of 11th year of my Episcopal ministry in the diocese: I thank and praise our Lord Almighty for the blessings and graces that I have received in the last 11 years of my episcopacy and ministry in the Diocese of Thuckalay. My motto has been – **With God All Things are Possible** – and God has been very benevolent to me since my calling to catholic faith, the gift of priestly vocation with the Salesians of Don Bosco and choosing me to lead the Diocese of Thuckalay. I gratefully acknowledge that the priests and religious serving in the diocese have been walking with me in the fulfilment of my mission as the second bishop of the diocese. Every encounter with you has taught me lessons to be faithful to the mission. I have learnt a lot from your love for the Church and the people and I continue to learn from your life and works. All of you have effectively shared the mission of the diocese with dedicated service. I implore every one of you to continue your selfless assistance in carrying forward the mission that has been entrusted to us by Our Lord Jesus in our diocese. Your support has been immense and is highly appreciated by me. Thank you for your wishes and prayers on this day, during the Priests’ and religious Sangamam on 16 September 2023.

SMYM Leaders training at Kalluvilai: On September 18, 2023, a one-day youth training programme was organized for the leaders of SMYM at Kalluvilai. Rev Fr. Prabin SDB, the youth director for the Sultanpet Diocese was the resource person. During the training sessions, Rev Fr. Prabin SDB emphasized

the crucial leadership traits that unite and motivate everyone to actively participate in the youth movement. These sessions were designed to equip the SMYM leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective leadership. The event concluded at around 3 PM, providing the youth leaders with valuable insights and tools to enhance their roles within the SMYM. My sincere appreciation to Fr. Santhosh for his exemplary organization of the event.

Health Care TOT programme at Poondi: As the Chairman of the TNBC Health Care Commission, I organized a two-day Training of Trainers (TOT) programme for all the Diocesan Health Commission Secretaries and members from the 22 Catholic Dioceses of Tamil Nadu. It took place at Poondi Matha Retreat Centre in Poondi on September 21-22, 2023. The programme witnessed active participation, with over 100 members representing various dioceses attending. Our own diocese was well-represented, with the presence of Fr. Ajin C. Joseph, Fr. Mahesh, and 11 other dedicated members. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Sr. Josphene Mary CTC for her creative and efficient organization of the entire training programme. Her efforts greatly contributed to the success and effectiveness of the event. I thank Fr. Ajin C. Joseph and all the participants who actively engaged in the training programme.

Medical camps at Chevilai and Varuthattu: On September 16, 2023, Maria Siddha Medical College organized a Siddha medical camp in Chevilai, where Siddha medicine, a traditional system of medicine in India, was the focus. This camp provided essential medical services, consultations, or treatments to approximately 80 individuals, contributing to their improved health and well-being. Similarly, on September 23rd, Mariya Ayurveda Medical College hosted an Ayurveda medical camp in Varuthattu, highlighting the traditional Indian system of Ayurvedic medicine. This camp catered to the health needs of around 100 participants by offering Ayurvedic consultations, treatments, and valuable health advice, ultimately promoting overall wellness. I appreciate the KKSSS director Fr. Aby Poovathummoottil for coordinating the medical camps in the diocese.

Alfest 2023 at St. Alphonsa College, Karungal: ALFEST 2023, An Alphonsian Intercollegiate Cultural Contest was organized on 23 September 2023, by the Fine Arts Committee of the College. It was a wonderful platform for youngsters to showcase their varied talents. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal inaugurated the contest and presided over the concluding meeting. Guests of Honour, Dr. Arun Gladwin, Director, Vantage, Nagercoil and Adv. Gayathri Nair, Playback singer & Music Director encouraged the students with their presence and performance. More than 400 students from 26 different colleges participated in the contest, exhibited their talents and won prizes. I appreciate the entire team behind for organizing the event.

First Eparchial Assembly at Sangamam: The Eparchy of Thuckalay conducted its First Eparchial Assembly from September 28th to 30th at Sangamam. Seventy-four representatives, including priests, religious, and laity, participated in the assembly. All participants arrived at Sangamam before 9:00 am on September 28th, the first day, and received a bag containing necessary items for the assembly, such as files, notepads, ID cards, pens, mementos, working documents, and prayer books. Subsequently, at 9:30 am, everyone gathered at the chapel for a spiritual recollection session led by Rev. Fr. Vimal Das from the Salem diocese, who provided spiritual guidance in preparation for the assembly. This was followed by adoration and confession. At 11:30 am, the inaugural Holy Qurbana was celebrated, presided over by Mar Pauly Kannookdan, the bishop of the Iringalakkuda diocese, and concelebrated by me, Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, and all the fathers present for the assembly. The inaugural session began at 2:00 pm, with Mar Pauly Kannookadan inaugurating the first assembly of the Eparchy of Thuckalay, and I presided over it. During the meeting, the members were introduced, and a pledge for the assembly was taken by all attendees. A brief overview of the assembly was also provided.

Following the inauguration, the sessions commenced, totalling seven sessions, with one on the first day, four on the second day, and two on the third day. The following were the resource persons and their respective topics:

1. Rev. Dr. Thomas Melvettath (Secretary, Syro Malabar Catechetical Commission) on the renewal of faith formation.
2. Rev. Fr. Arockia Selvakumar SDB (Managing Director, Don Bosco Alaihal Media, Trichy) on Media and the Gospel.
3. Most Rev. Dr. Antonysamy Savarimuthu (Bishop of Palayamkottai) on the Holy Eucharist and Sacraments.
4. Most Rev. Dr. Vincent Mar Paulos (Bishop of Marthandam) on Catholic Community Empowerment.
5. Most Rev. Dr. Nazarene Soosai (Bishop of Kottar) on Evangelization.
6. Rev. Fr. Michael Raj (Director, KIDSS, Diocese of Kuzhithurai) on Parishes and Christian life.
7. Rev. Dr. Russel Raj (Chancellor, Diocese of Kuzhithurai) on Journeying together in the diocese.

In the concluding session, His Grace Mar Joseph Perumthottam, the Archbishop of Changanacherry, presided over the meeting. The assembly concluded at 4:15 pm on September 30, 2023. Throughout the assembly, 50 group discussions took place on the questions provided in the *Instrumentum Laboris* and those posed by the resource persons. The entire event was documented and recorded by the documentation committee. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the coordinator, Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, the General Secretary, and all the steering committee members for their meticulous planning, which ensured the successful execution of the assembly. I also express my appreciation to all 16 sub-committee leaders and members for their dedicated service before and during the assembly. Additionally, I thank the non-participant members who assisted during the assembly, and I extend my gratitude to Fr. Vinod, the Director of Sangamam, for providing comfortable accommodations and healthy food. Finally, I express my gratitude to all the participants, including fathers, sisters, and laity, for their active participation in the assembly.

INFORMATION

- **Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal** has been nominated as the diocesan coordinator for the fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly in August 2024.
- **Fr. Josy Puthenpurayil** has arrived from Germany for a one-month vacation and will return on October 14, 2023. We wish him a blessed stay in his home and diocese.
- **Fr. Shoji Puthenpurayil** has returned to Ireland after his vacation on September 6, 2023. We wish him all the best.
- **Mrs. Marykutty Varghese** (88), the grandmother (on the mother's side) of Father Toji Parambilparambil, passed away on September 6, 2023. We offer our sincere condolences and prayers to Fr. Toji and his family and pray for the departed soul.
- **A one-day retreat for the Sisters** was organized by CRI at Sangamam on September 9, 2023.
- **I extend my gratitude** to all the Fathers, Sisters, and Lay faithful who remembered and prayed for my father and participated in the memorial Holy Qurbana on September 14, 2023, on the occasion of his first death anniversary at Padanthalumoodu Parish.
- **Mr. K.S. Abraham (82)**, the beloved father of Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil, passed away on September 15, 2023. We offer our sincere condolences and prayers to Fr. Robins and his family and pray for the departed soul.

- **Rev. Sr. Eugene Mary SH (85)** has passed away on September 20, 2023. She served dedicatedly for 18 remarkable years at Kazhuvanthittai convent, including nine years as the mission superior in Thuckalay. We express our sincere condolences and prayers to the Provincial and all Sisters and pray for the departed soul.
- **Mrs. Svarnam** (88), the grandmother (on the mother's side) of Fr. Ajin Jose, passed away on September 21, 2023. We offer our sincere condolences and prayers to Fr. Ajin and his family and pray for the departed soul.
- **Mrs. Marykutty Michael** (77), the elder sister of Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, passed away on September 22, 2023. We offer our sincere condolences and prayers to our beloved Vicar General and his family and pray for the departed soul.
- **Rev. Sr. Nirmala Mathew**, one of the benefactors, visited the diocese from September 21 to September 23, 2023.
- **A cultural program committee** has been formed on September 25, 2023, for the upcoming diocesan day celebrations. The committee members are as follows: Fr. Sanal Panthichira (coordinator), Fr. Joseph Santhosh, Fr. Robin Koorumullil, Fr. Jomy Kamukamattathil, Fr. Ajin Jose, Fr. Subin Scaria, Fr. Martin Kandamparampil MST, and Fr. Ajin C. Joseph.
- **Fr. John Paul** has left for Rome on September 29, 2023, to pursue licentiate studies at Salesian University, focusing on Catechesis. We extend our best wishes and God's blessings for his stay and studies in Rome.
- **Mission Sunday Collection:** The Church, by its very nature, is missionary (AG 2). As a true missionary, the Church always prioritizes mission work worldwide. Mission Sunday is an opportunity for all believers to show solidarity with the universal Church in her evangelization efforts. The celebration allows people to express their desire to become missionaries through prayers and financial support. This year, the Church will celebrate Mission Sunday on October 22, 2023. The collection on that day will be sent to Rome to support mission work globally. Therefore, I kindly request all the Fathers to raise awareness among the faithful about mission work and encourage them to generously support the Church's missionary efforts. Please submit the Mission Sunday Collection immediately after the celebration to the Eparchial Procurator.
- **Rosary Procession:** The Rosary Procession will take place on October 29, 2023 at 02.00 pm, starting from St. Maria Gorethi Church, Athencode, and concluding at Sacred Heart Forane Church, Padanthalumoodu. The Marian Senai will organize this procession, which serves as a public demonstration of our Christian faith and our devotion to Blessed Mother. Please encourage parishioners, especially those from Padanthalumoodu Forane, to participate in large numbers.

FORTHCOMING MAJOR EVENTS

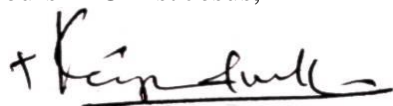
01 October	-	Month of Rosary begins
15-20 October	-	Priests' Annual Retreat at Moolamattam
29 October	-	Rosary Procession

Priests' Annual Retreat
Place: Moolamattam
Date: 15 - 20 October 2023

CONCLUSION

Dear Fathers, we concluded our first Eparchial Assembly on 30 Sep. 2023. Mar Pauly Kannoorkadan, bishop of Irinjalakuda, inaugurated the Assembly on 28 September 2023. Since then all 74 participants have been kept busy for three days with animation talks by various resource persons, discussions and drawing up an action plan to take forward the Eparchy in the coming years. The presence of Mar Joseph Perumthottam, Archbishop of Chengannachery at the concluding function made the Assembly memorable. I appreciate the meticulous planning and perfect execution of the steering committee headed by our vicar general. I also thank you dear Fathers, Sisters and lay people for your prayers for the success of the Assembly. The Month of October is definitely a beautiful month in which we manifest our devotion to Mother Mary, in a special way, by praying the Rosary. Our Blessed Lord wants the heart of every priest to be the home of Mother Mary, where she is the mother, guide and help. Let us give her the rightful place and honour her with profound love and devotion, especially on the feast of the holy rosary.

With my prayers and blessings,
Yours in Christ Jesus,



+ **George Rajendran SDB**
Bishop of Thuckalay

