



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/168/2025

31 March 2025

Dear and Rev. Fathers,

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

In this circular letter, I wish to share with you some reflections on our priestly vocation and ministry in light of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. This meditation is intended to renew our priestly commitment and deepen our understanding of what it means to be shepherds after the heart of Christ in our contemporary context.

The image of the shepherd is one of the most ancient and powerful symbols of God's relationship with His people. In the Old Testament, God is frequently portrayed as the shepherd of Israel (Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34). In the New Testament, Jesus explicitly identifies Himself as the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep cares for them, protects them, and ultimately lays down His life for them. This powerful image has significant implications for us who have been called to share in Christ's shepherding ministry.

Our vocation to the priesthood begins not with our decision but with Christ's choice. Each of us has been personally called by name, just as the Good Shepherd "calls his own sheep by name" (Jn. 10:3). This reality should fill us with both humility and confidence: humility because we recognise that our vocation is a pure gift, not personal achievement; confidence because He who has called us is faithful and will equip us for the mission He has entrusted to us.

In the Syro-Malabar tradition, we understand priesthood as a participation in Christ's threefold ministry as prophet, priest, and king. Our Eastern Fathers emphasise that the priest is an icon of Christ, making Christ present to the community through word, sacrament, and pastoral care. This understanding challenges us to constant conversion so that we might become more transparent icons of Christ the Good Shepherd.

I invite each of you to recall with gratitude the moment of your calling - that mysterious encounter with the Divine Shepherd who looked at you with love and said, "Follow me." Perhaps it came through a quiet inspiration, the example of another priest, or the encouragement of family or friends. However it came, it was Christ himself who called you, seeing in you the potential to be his hands and heart for his people.

This divine choice should be a source of daily wonder and thanksgiving. In moments of difficulty or doubt, return to this fundamental truth: you are chosen by Christ for a sacred purpose. As our Syro-Malabar liturgy beautifully expresses in the prayer before the Gospel: "Lord our God, enlighten our hearts and minds to listen to Your life-giving and divine commandments. In Your kindness and mercy, grant that they bear in us the fruits of love, hope, and salvation."

Consecrated: Set Apart for Sacred Service

Our priesthood is not merely a function or a profession but a consecration - a setting apart for sacred service. Through the laying on of hands and the prayer of consecration, we have been configured to Christ in a new and deep way. This ontological transformation is not for our glory but for service to God's people.

In the Syro-Malabar tradition, the rite of priestly ordination beautifully expresses this reality. When the Bishop places the Kappa on the newly ordained, he prays: "May the Lord clothe you with the garment of salvation and the robe of gladness." This external sign points to the internal reality: we have been clothed with Christ himself and are called to manifest his presence in the world.

This consecration affects every dimension of our lives. Our "professional" identity as priests is not separated from our personal lives. We are priests at all times - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is not a burden but a privilege, for it means that Christ has claimed us entirely for himself and his mission.

Our priestly ordination calls us to a life of integrity and holiness. The faithful should be able to recognise in us men who have truly given themselves to Christ and his Church. This requires ongoing formation and a commitment to spiritual disciplines: daily prayer, meditation on the Scriptures, celebration of the Divine Liturgy with reverence and devotion, regular confession, and spiritual direction.

As ordained persons, we are called to live the evangelical counsels according to our state of life. While diocesan priests do not take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in the same way as religious, these values should nevertheless shape our lives:

- **The simplicity of life** enables the priest to avoid materialism and conspicuous consumption and practise generosity toward those in need.
- **Celibate chastity** is embraced not as a mere renunciation but as a positive testimony to the all-sufficiency of Christ and as a sign of the Kingdom where they "neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30).
- **Obedience**, not only to ecclesiastical authority but fundamentally to God's will as it is revealed in Scripture, Tradition, and the needs of God's people.

Sent: The Mission of Shepherding

The Good Shepherd is not stationary. He goes out in search of the lost sheep. Similarly, our priestly vocation is essentially missionary. We are sent to continue Christ's mission of shepherding God's people, leading them to "green pastures" and "still waters" (Psalm 23:2).

What does it mean to shepherd God's people in the context of our Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Thuckalay? Let me suggest some dimensions of this shepherding mission:

a. Shepherding through Word

As priests, we are called to break open the Word of God for our people. This requires diligent study of Scripture, familiarity with our rich Eastern theological tradition, and attentiveness to the signs of the times. Our homilies should not be merely academic lectures or moralistic exhortations, but life-giving encounters with the Word made flesh.

In the Syro-Malabar tradition, the liturgy of the Word is rich with symbolism: the procession with the Gospel, the incensing of the Sacred Text, and the solemn proclamation. These rituals remind us of the

centrality of God's Word in the life of the Church. As priests, we must not only proclaim this Word but embody it in our lives.

I encourage you to establish Bible study groups in your parishes to promote the practice of *lectio divina* and to ensure that your preaching is rooted in deep prayer and reflection. Remember the words of St Ephrem: "The Scriptures are like a mirror: if a monkey looks in, no apostle will look out."

b. Shepherding through Sacrament

Central to our priestly ministry is the celebration of the Holy Qurbana and the other sacraments. In the Divine Liturgy, we present Christ's sacrifice of love and offer His Body and Blood as spiritual nourishment for the faithful. This awesome responsibility should fill us with reverence and awe.

I urge you to celebrate the liturgy with great care and devotion, neither rushing through the prayers nor embellishing them with personal additions. The beauty of our Syro-Malabar liturgical tradition, when celebrated with reverence and proper understanding, can lift the hearts of the faithful to heaven and strengthen them for their Christian journey.

Remember that through the sacraments, especially Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, we extend Christ's healing touch to those who are burdened by sin or suffering. Be generous in making these sacraments available to your people, especially to the elderly and the homebound.

c. Shepherding through Pastoral Care

The Good Shepherd knows his sheep individually. As parish priests, we are called to know our people - their joys and sorrows, their struggles and hopes. This requires presence and availability. A shepherd who remains distant from the flock cannot effectively care for them.

Make time for regular home visits, especially to the sick, the elderly, and families in crisis. Be attentive to the youth, who face many challenges in today's complex world. Create opportunities for faith formation and community building that respond to the needs of different age groups and life situations.

In our Eparchy, with its diverse communities and mission stations, pastoral care may sometimes require crossing cultural and linguistic boundaries. Let us follow the example of Christ, who transcended social barriers to reach those on the margins.

d. Shepherding through Leadership

As shepherds, we are called to care for and lead the flock. This means providing vision and direction for our parishes and communities, helping them discern God's will and respond to the challenges of our time.

Effective leadership involves empowering the laity to fulfil their baptismal vocation. Encourage and support lay ministries, parish councils, and *Uraviams*. Remember that the priest is not meant to do everything himself but to "equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12).

Leadership also requires courage to address difficult issues and to speak the truth in love. Like the Good Shepherd who confronts the wolf, we must sometimes oppose values and practices that threaten our people's spiritual well-being.

The Priest as Shepherd 24x7: Challenges and Graces

Being a shepherd after the heart of Christ is a 24/7 vocation. Unlike a hired hand who works for wages and then goes home, the shepherd's commitment to the flock is constant and total. This total dedication is both the challenge and the beauty of our priestly vocation.

a. Challenges of the Contemporary Shepherding Ministry

Let us acknowledge some of the challenges we face in our shepherding ministry today:

- **The challenge of availability:** In an age of instant communication, people expect their priests to be constantly available. Finding a healthy balance between accessibility and necessary boundaries for prayer and rest is not easy.
- **The challenge of secularism:** We minister in a culture increasingly shaped by secular values and consumerism. Helping our people to live counter-cultural lives of faith requires wisdom and discernment.
- **The challenge of unity:** Our Eparchy encompasses diverse communities with large territory. Building unity while respecting diversity demands patience and inclusivity.
- **The challenge of personal well-being:** The demands of ministry can sometimes lead to physical exhaustion, emotional depletion, and spiritual dryness. Caring for ourselves is not selfish but necessary if we are to care effectively for others.

b. Graces of Shepherding Ministry

Yet alongside these challenges are abundant graces:

- **The grace of intimacy with Christ:** Our ministry constantly brings us into communion with Christ, especially in the celebration of the sacraments and in prayer.
- **The grace of meaningful relationships:** As priests, we are privileged to witness the most significant moments in people's lives - births, marriages, deaths, and moments of conversion and healing.
- **The grace of witnessing transformation:** We see firsthand how God's grace transforms lives, heals wounds, and brings hope to situations of despair.
- **The grace of community:** We do not minister alone but as part of a presbyterate, supporting and encouraging one another in our common mission.

Dear Fathers, as we reflect on our vocation as shepherds after the heart of Christ, let us renew our commitment to this sacred calling. Let us ask the Good Shepherd to purify our motivations, strengthen our resolve, and deepen our love for the flock entrusted to our care.

I encourage each of you to take time for personal prayer, especially during the remaining days of Lent and Easter season, focusing on your identity as a shepherd in the image of Christ. Reflect on the words of St Augustine: "For you, I am a Bishop; with you, I am a Christian." For your people, you are a priest; with them, you are a disciple on the journey of faith.

Let us support one another through fraternal gatherings, shared prayer, and honest conversations about the joys and challenges of ministry. Let us be attentive to signs of burnout or disillusionment in our brother priests and offer support and encouragement.

Finally, let us entrust our priesthood to Mary, Mother of Priests and Queen of Apostles. In our Syro-Malabar tradition, we honour Mary as the perfect disciple who said "yes" to God's call without reservation. May she intercede for us so that we may follow her example of faithful discipleship and selfless service!

NEWS AND EVENTS

Women's Day Celebrations in Kayathar and Viruthunagar Missions: On 05 March 2025 KKSSS celebrated Women's Day in Kayathar and Viruthunagar missions. The programmes were organized by Fr. Jomon Mangalamadam and Fr. Ajin C Joseph, respectively. To empower women, KKSSS distributed 20 sewing machines to needy women in each mission, providing them with self-employment opportunities. I inaugurated the programme, which was attended by Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Fr. Aby Poovathummoottil, Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal, local leaders, and community members. The event featured cultural programmes and activities. My sincere thanks to Fr. Ajin C and Fr. Jomon for coordinating the event.

Village Ulsav at Angurpalayam, Cumbum: A village celebration was held at Angurpalayam village in Cumbum Mission on 7 March 2025 at 6:00 PM, organized by the Sisters of SH Centre, Cumbum, under the guidance of the Mission Coordinator of Theni-Cumbum Missions. The event aimed to bring together all the villagers, celebrate Women's Day, provide moral values, and offer a platform for the children and youth to showcase their talents. The programme began with a prayer dance performed by the villagers. Rev. Sr. Elsy SH organized the entire event with the help of the village leaders. Around 250 people attended the celebration. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal presided over the meeting and delivered a message addressing the issues faced by the villagers, such as the lack of education, the empowerment of women, addiction to alcohol, the absence of savings for the future, and the need for self-help groups etc. Rev. Fr. Joseph Vellamattam, the Vicar General of the Kanjirappally Diocese, along with the Rev. Sisters Councillors of SH Province Kanjirappally, graced the occasion with their presence. Saris were distributed to all the women who attended the programme. Special prizes were awarded to those who had achieved good results in our Tuition Centre. Notebooks were also given to all the students of the village. The celebration concluded with an agape meal served to all attendees. I express my gratitude to Sr. Elsy and everyone involved in the village ministry in Cumbum Mission for their hard work and dedication.

Leadership training for Youth: One day leadership training programme was conducted on 8 March 2025 at SMYM Office, Kalluvilai in order to improve the leadership skills among the youth. The full day session was taken by Fr. Joseph Santhosh. He dealt with the peculiar characteristics, innovative abilities and issues related to the youth of different. He also provided the tools to improve the leadership skills and apply it effectively in the society. Twenty youngsters participated in it. My sincere appreciation to Fr. Santhosh and team for animating the youth.

Christ Jubilee of Women at KKSSS: On 08 March 2025, KKSSS celebrated Jubilee of women along with Women's Day at Kalluvilai. The event began with an awareness rally, which was attended by over 1,000 women. All cluster-level leaders and local leaders participated in the celebration. I addressed the gathering and inaugurated the Christ Jubilee Housing Project, which consists of 40 houses for needy families. KKSSS also distributed 2,000 fruit tree saplings as part of its social commitment to the community and the environment. The programme featured entertainment programmes and cultural events by Self-Help Group (SHG) members. I thank Fr. Aby and the team for organizing the programme well.

Forane Priests' Conferences: On 4 March 2025, the Forane-level Priests' Conference for the Padanthalumoodu – Nithiravilai Foranes was held at St. Xavier's Church, Varuthattu, and for the Soosaipuram – Thuckalay Pilankalai Foranes at St. Joseph's Forane Church, Soosaipuram. Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Chancellor, and Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General, participated as curia representatives at both conferences respectively. The meetings began at 10:00 am with prayer and

adoration, and concluded with an agape meal. The conference for the Arukani – Kaliyal – Manjalumoodu Foranes took place on 11 March 2025 at the St. John Paul II SABS Convent Chapel, Kulasekharam, with Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal participating as the curia representative. The meeting began at 6:00 pm with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The priests present engaged in discussions focused on pastoral coordination among the parishes and departmental activities. The main topics of discussion were based on the diocesan agenda, including the planning and sharing of Jubilee 2025 programmes in the parishes, questions regarding the catechetical department and its formative programmes, as well as Lenten activities in the parishes. Thanks to the smaller number of participants and the ample time allocated, the atmosphere was lively, leading to numerous suggestions for the improvement of pastoral activities. All suggestions will be presented at the upcoming priests' conference. I express my gratitude to the Forane vicars for their effective coordination of the meetings.

Tenkasi Mission Meet: A meeting of the Fathers and Sisters from the Tenkasi Mission was held on 15 March 2025 at 5:30 pm at Pulari Matriculation School, Pudur. The meeting began with a time of prayer, the Rosary, and Ramsa, followed by the Sacrament of Confession. The meeting officially commenced with Fr. Dency Mundunadackal extending a warm welcome to all those present. The report from the previous meeting was read and approved. Representatives from various missions and centres then shared their experiences, challenges, and opportunities encountered in their respective fields. A total of 23 members participated in the meeting. Rev. Fr. Thomas Pottampampil expressed his gratitude to everyone in attendance. The meeting concluded with an agape meal, fostering fellowship among all participants. I thank Fr. Dency for coordinating the entire programme.

Convent Chapel Blessing at Mukkoottukal: The renovated chapel of SH Convent, Mukkoottukal, was blessed on 15 March 2025 by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General. The blessing ceremony began at 11:00 am with the celebration of Holy Qurbana, presided over by Fr. Vicar General and concelebrated by Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal, the Parish Priest of Mukkoottukal Parish. All the sisters from the SH congregation working in the diocese, along with the fathers from the parishes where the convents are located, participated in the event. The programme concluded with lunch. I thank Sr. Tessa Maria SH, the mission superior, for taking the initiative to renovate the chapel by providing more space and beautifying the Madbaha while preserving its sacredness.

Migrants' Sangamam at Bangalore: The Migrants' Sangamam, for the first time in Bangalore, was held on 16 March 2025 at St. Thomas Forane Church, Dharmaram, Bangalore. The gathering began with the solemn celebration of Holy Qurbana, presided over by Fr. Sumesh Valliyamthadathil, the diocesan director of the Migrants' Apostolate. This was followed by the public gathering. Although I had eagerly planned to preside over the meeting, I was unable to attend due to an unavoidable circumstance. However, I shared my message with the participants through an online platform. Fr. Sumesh Valliyamthadathil officially inaugurated the meeting. Mr. Edwinson coordinated all the programmes, and Miss Jasmine anchored the events. Mr. Praveen and Mr. Aneesh were elected as the coordinators of Bangalore Migrants. Twenty-six migrants from different areas of Bangalore participated in the meeting, introducing themselves and sharing their experiences in the city. Rev. Fr. Anto (Vicar), Rev. Fr. Jomon (Chancellor of the Diocese of Mandya), Fr. John, and Fr. Arun participated in the event, conveyed their greetings, and assured their spiritual and pastoral support to the migrants. This event brought together people from our diocese who have migrated to Bangalore for work and education. At the end of the programme, each participant was given a memento of the Sangamam, a diocesan diary, and a rosary as gifts. The meeting concluded with a delightful dinner. I thank Fr. Sumesh, the director, and the entire team for coordinating the gathering so well.

Last respects to Rev. Sr. Alice Vigi CMC (72): It is with profound sorrow that we received the sad news of the passing of Sr. Alice Vigi CMC (Vigiyamma) on 17 March 2025. Her dedicated service to our Diocese spanned an impressive 12 years. Mother Vigiyamma served as the Provincial Superior of the CMC

Province, Changanacherry, for six years. She arrived in the Diocese on 3 March 2013 and initially served as the Regional Superior of CMC. When it became a Vice Province, she was appointed as the Vice Provincial of CMC in Thuckalay. Upon its elevation to a Province in 2019, Sr. Vigiyamma became the first Provincial of CMC Chavara Province, Thuckalay. From 2022 onwards, she served as the House Superior of the CMC Convent, Chithankudiyiruppu. The birth of the CMC Province in Thuckalay is the result of Mother Vigiyamma's tireless hard work and commitment. She contributed immensely to our diocese, not only through financial support but also spiritually—through her constant prayers and by sending dedicated sisters to serve in various ministries. The Diocese of Thuckalay is forever grateful to Mother Vigiyamma for her selfless sacrifices for the glory of God and the good of the Diocese.

The mortal remains of Sr. Vigiyamma were kept at Carmel Villa (Carmel Mount Retreat Centre, near St. Thomas Hospital, Chethipuzha, Changanacherry) on 18 March 2025 for final respects, and the funeral service began at 10:00 am on 19 March 2025. I presided over the funeral Holy Qurbana and the rest of the liturgical services. Rev. Fr. Antony Elamthottam CMI, Provincial, Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Rev. Fr. Mathew Arekalam CMI, and many Fathers from our diocese concelebrated the Holy Qurbana. Many Fathers, Sisters, and lay faithful visited, prayed for the departed soul, and participated in the final funeral rites. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the Rev. Sisters of CMC Chavara Province. Let us thank God for her service in our diocese and pray that the Merciful Lord may grant her eternal joy.

Last respects to Rev. Sr. Bridget Paul Thekeparambil SDS (77): It is with deep sorrow that we received the sad news of the passing of Sr. Bridget Paul Thekeparambil SDS on 21 March 2025. Sr. Bridget was a native of St. Sebastian's Church, Mutholapuram, Palai. As a religious sister, her dedicated service spanned an impressive 18 years in our diocese—seven years in Karode (1980–1987) and 11 years in Manjalumoodu (2003–2012; 2023–2025). The funeral service took place on 24 March 2025 at 10:00 am at the SDS Convent Chapel, Manjalumoodu. The first two parts of the ceremony were presided over by Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, and I presided over the Holy Qurbana and the remainder of the funeral rites. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the SDS Sisters. Let us thank God for her service in our diocese and pray that the Merciful Lord may grant her eternal joy

Religious Superiors' Meet with Curia and Forane Vicars: For the first time, a meeting of the religious superiors of both men and women religious congregations in the diocese, along with curia members and forane vicars, was held on 22 March 2025 at Sangamam. It was a valuable occasion to reflect on the presence and mission of the religious in our diocese. The meeting began at 10:00 am with a prayer, followed by the welcome address by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil. The three Provincials—CMC, FCC, and SABS—and their councillors were felicitated at the beginning of the meeting. The meeting was conducted in two sessions. In the first session, an orientation talk was given by Rev. Fr. Isaac Alencherry, Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Changanacherry, on the presence of religious in the diocese and their contribution to its pastoral ministry. In the second session, an interactive discussion took place based on the prepared agenda, which included the challenges faced by the religious in the pastoral field, vocation, mission, activities of CRI, and more. The meeting concluded with lunch. A total of 26 members, including the four Provincials and the regional superiors of CMI and MCBS, participated in the meeting. The suggestions from the discussions have already been communicated to the attendees. Decisions and guidelines from the meeting will be communicated later. I thank Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal for coordinating the meeting so effectively.

Last respects to Rev. Fr. Jose Koolipurackal CMI (74): It is with profound sorrow that we received the sad news of the passing of Fr. Jose Koolipurackal CMI on 29 March 2025. Upon receiving the news, curia members and the Fathers from nearby forane parishes gathered at Kaliyal and recited the Office of the Dead. The mortal remains of Rev. Fr. Jose Koolipurackal CMI were taken from Kaliyal to Rita's Hospital, Nalukody, by 12:30 pm on the same day. Fr. Jose was a native of Chambakulam. He spent almost five years

at St. Mary's CMI Bhavan, Kaliyal, where he provided pastoral assistance to the parish priest and to neighbouring parishes. While serving as the counsellor for social service activities of the CMI Trivandrum Province, he initiated job opportunities for women in Pilankalai in 1988 and helped provide shelter to poor families in Pilankalai. The funeral service took place on 31 March 2025 at 2:00 pm at the Sacred Heart Monastery Church, Chethipuzha. I presided over the last part of the funeral ceremonies. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the CMI Provincial and Fathers. Let us thank God for his service in our diocese and pray that the Merciful Lord may grant him eternal joy.

Taize Prayer by SMYM: Taize prayer, led by the youth, during the Lenten season, was conducted at St. Antony's Church, Vayalinkarai for the Nithiravilai and Padanthalumoodu foranes on 23 March 2025, Sunday at 6 PM and for the Thuckalay - Pilankalai forane on 30 March 2025, Sunday at 2 PM. Almost 50 youths participated in it and meditated on the passion, death and crucifixion of Jesus Christ and prayed. They also made use of the chance to make good confession. I thank the forane directors for organizing the prayer gathering for youth.

INFORMATION

- **Pastoral Visit to St. Joseph's Church, Karode** was conducted on 09 March 2025.
- **Mr. Alexkutty (64)**, brother of Sr. Alice Kattakkayam SABS, was called to the eternal abode on 12 March 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Alice and her family members and pray for the departed soul.
- **Seven Deacons** from the diocese of Ramanathapuram who came to our diocese for mission and pastoral experience on 25 February 2025 went back to their home diocese on 13 March 2025.
- **Mr. Joseph Kattakkayam (80)**, elder brother of Sr. Alice Kattakkayam SABS, was called to the eternal abode on 14 March 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Alice and her family members and pray for the departed soul.
- **Mr. A. D. Sebastian (70)**, brother of Sr. Marykutty Sebastian MMM, was called to the eternal abode on 18 March 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Marykutty and her family members and pray for the departed soul.
- **Sr. Elsy Mathew Chengandayil SDS (79)** was called to the eternal abode on 20 March 2025. Sr. Elsy was a native of St. Joseph's Church, Chennamkary. As a religious sister, she served in various places, including Bangalore, Kandavilai, Pulluvilai, Mysore, and Aruvikkara. For the past five months, she had been at the Manjalumoodu convent under medical treatment due to health issues. The funeral service took place on 21 March 2025 at 11:00 AM at the SDS Convent Chapel, Manjalumoodu. The first two parts of the ceremony was presided over by Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal and I presided over the Holy Qurbana and the rest of the funeral ceremonies. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to the SDS Sisters and pray that the merciful God grant her eternal rest.
- **Nambikkai Alayam, School for the intellectual disabled, Kazhuvanthittai** celebrated its 27th annual day on 20 March 2025.
- **Pastoral Visit to St. Martin De Porres Church, Kazhuvanthittai** was conducted on 23 March 2025.
- **Bro. Jubin Joseph** received the Minor Order of *Heupadiyaknusa* in Rome on 27 March 2025 from Mar Bosco Puthur. Congratulations!
- **St. Alphonsa College of Arts and Science, Karingal** celebrated its 11th annual day 'Sacfiesta 2025' on 29 March 2025.
- **Mrs. Eliyamma Joseph Vayalil (92)**, beloved mother of Sr. Deepthi Jose SD (Provincial Superior, SD Province, Changanacherry), was called to the eternal abode on 29 March 2025. We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to Sr. Deepthi and her family members and pray for the departed soul.

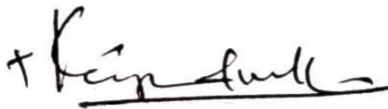
FORTHCOMING MAJOR EVENTS

13 April	-	Palm Sunday; Kayathar Church blessing
14 April	-	Vestition and Minor Orders at Sangamam
15 April	-	Diaconate Ordination at Paraicode
16 April	-	Recollection for Priests and Religious
17 April	-	Pesaha Thursday
18 April	-	Passion Friday
20 April	-	Easter Sunday
21-25 April	-	Work camp of Major Seminarians
27 April	-	VPV Begins
30 April	-	Ordination of Dn. Sunil Antony at Killiyoor

CONCLUSION

As I conclude this circular, let me remind you that we are still in the holy season of Lent. We are called upon to spend these days spiritually undertaking the disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in a meaningful way. Let us not lose the fervour of this season and not deprive ourselves of the graces that this holy season brings. During this period, even as we discipline our bodies through self-denial and fasting, let us emphasise embodying the values we preach. Let us underscore God's love and how we need to embody this love in our ministries. Love consists not in limiting God by our human equations of love but by allowing God's infinite love to redefine our own utterly. Let us also prepare ourselves to enter into the holiest week in the Catholic Calendar with the celebration of the Palm Sunday on 13 April 2025. May the commemoration of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus enable us to become shepherds after the heart of the Good Shepherd who willingly laid down his life for his sheep!

With my prayers and blessings,
Yours in Christ Jesus,



† **George Rajendran SDB**
Bishop of Thuckalay

