

THUCKALAY TIDINGS

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Alleluia! Everlasting Grace



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THUCKALAY TIDINGS

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A Monthly online newsletter of Diocese of Thuckalay

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Message

Dear friends in Jesus Christ,

Once again Thuckalay Tidings keeps us united to share the joy of Risen Christ. Ultimately, what Easter teaches Christians and the world is that Christ's patient love is forever victorious over the forces of hatred, lies, sin, evil, injustice, which led Him to the Cross. Patient love is not resigned, passively inert; least of all it is resentful or vengeful. Christ's patience, carried to the Cross, is His way of reacting not to evil with evil, but with good; not to respond to hatred with hatred, but with forgiveness; to seek a future not in the selfish defense of one's life, but in full trust in God and in the unreserved gift of oneself to one's brothers.

Patient love is that which knows how to hold out in difficulties and trials, and which actively prepares the future, welcoming it from the hands of God and, at the same time, actively witnessing the renewing power of charity which he hopes, endures everything. We need this patient and creative love, fruit of the Lord's Passover, for the present hour and to open ourselves to a different future, especially in favor of those who are suffering most from the pandemic and its consequences.

Easter is the feast of hope. Among the definitions of hope I was struck by one in particular by Gabriel Marcel: «Hope is the memory of the future». Let me explain myself with an image. In Hebrew hope is expressed with the word that indicates the rope. It is nice that hope has a soul of rope: it drags, ties and allows knots. In hope, therefore, there is a sense of being tied to someone and something that does not leave alone. Although hope does not always show its resistant fibre, it is nice to know that it has that original tenacity. It is nice to think of hope as a rope which bonds. Life is to be lived like this, holding hands, hoping and dreaming together. Because hope starts all over again with clasping hands, with clenched hands in each other. Start over and make the impossible happen! For us, hope also means striving towards that God who has bound us to Himself with the love of His Son Jesus. Dear friends in Jesus Christ, you are the real ropes for the Diocese of Thuckalay to fulfil the Will and Mission, which is entrusted to us by God to expand the Kingdom of God to all the boundaries.

Jesus Christ, witness of patient and generous love, is truly risen! We ask Him to sustain our patience in the hour of trial, to open ourselves to life and joy that do not fail.

Happy Easter!

With my prayers and blessings,

+ **George Rajendran sdb**
Bishop of Thuckalay



Vacation Ministry of MAJOR SEMINARIANS



The future of the Church depends on the vocations to priesthood and how well the seminarians are formed to take the Church and its Ministry forward. Our major seminarians have come to the Diocese from their respective seminaries towards the end of March 2021 for their annual vacation. This year the brothers came to the Diocese without first going to their families. Soon after their arrival in the Diocese, they were sent to various parishes and mission centres. During their stay for gaining important experience, they are expected to help in the Holy Week services and conduct *Viswasa Payirchi Vizha* (Vacation Bible School) for children. In the beginning of May, they will be asked to gather at Sangamam for the language class and the vocation camp. On April 23, some brothers will receive minor orders and on May 8 two brothers will receive Diaconate ordination and then they will go to their homes for 15 days of vacation. As members of the Church, we are called upon to pray for vocation to priesthood and pray for strengthening of faith and missionary spirit in the seminarians who are at different stages of formation.

You can support the missionary activities by sponsoring a Seminarian in his formation:

Please write / mail to us for any enquiry / details. We shall contact you with all further details soliciting your generous support:

Postal Address:

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CANCER AWARENESS PROGRAMME

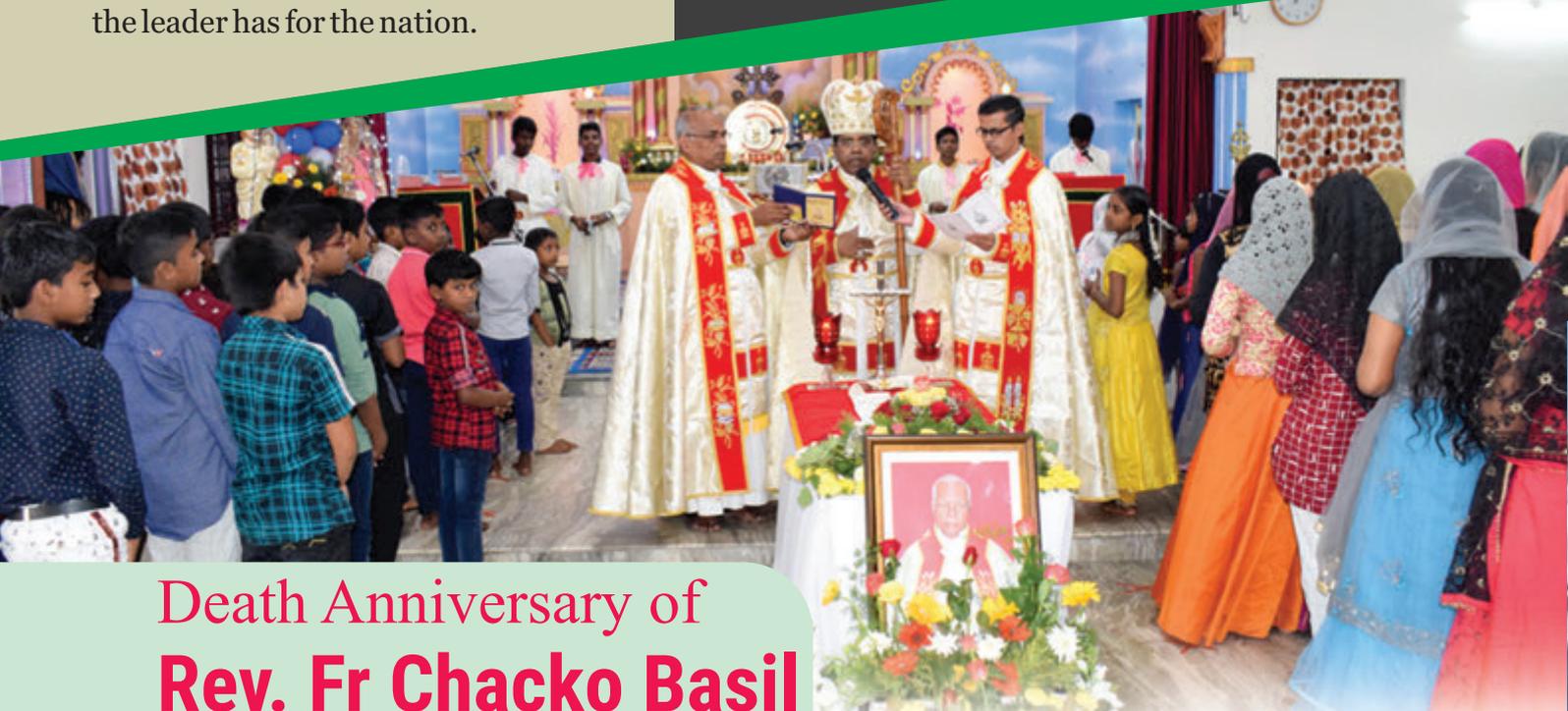


Kanya Kumari Social Service Society (KKSSS), the social arm of the Diocese of Thuckalay, organized a Cancer Awareness Programme for families in around Thuckalay on March 22, 2021. The programme aimed to educate the community about the key risk factors of cancer and the steps to be taken in order to prevent the disease. The programme was held in homes of people taking clusters of families. Mr. Rajasekar, the Field Coordinator highlighted the dangers of cancer, the kinds of cures available, the support that the family members have to provide for patients within the family and the preventive steps required in the homes. We also took this opportunity to assist a few cancer patients in the area. Mrs. Helen Rani from Thuckalay had actively coordinated the programme. KKSSS could provide such a benefit of the programme to 52 people.



Kanyakumari Bishops meet **SHRI RAHUL GANDHI**

All the Bishops of the Catholic Dioceses of Kanyakumari District had an opportunity to meet Shri Rahul Gandhi on March 1, 2021 at St Mary's Basilica, Mulagumoodu. It was a private and an informal meeting, where the Bishops had an interaction with the Congress leader regarding the socio-political situation in the district. There was an open discussion wherein the group express freely on important developmental activities for the welfare of the people of the district. While talking to him, one could feel the dream and aspiration that the leader has for the nation.



Death Anniversary of **Rev. Fr Chacko Basil**

The first death anniversary of Rev. Fr Chacko Basil, a pioneer missionary of CMI Congregation in the Diocese, was commemorated at St Thomas Church, Muzhucode on March 21, 2021. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb celebrated the Holy Qurbana along with Fr Sony Palathara CMI, Vice Provincial, Trivandrum Province, priests and parishioners of Muzhucode. We all remember with gratitude Fr Chacko Basil's commitment to God and to the Church. The missionary zeal of the CMI priest can be an example for the priests and religious to emulate. Let us pray for the departed soul.

CANCER CARE Fundraising Programme

The fundraising programme is the pillar of Kanya Kumari Social Service Society (KKSSS) activities. KKSSS conducted fundraising programme on the Regional Women's Day programme for the cancer affected patients. KKSSS launched the programme *Ezhuvom Iyakkam* (Cancer-Care Movement) for the welfare of cancer affected patients in our working areas. Initially, KKSSS identified 65 patients in different parts of Kanyakumari and conducted home visits, and assessed their needs. All the patients' important and emerging needs of medical support were documented for their further treatment. To fulfill the needs of the patients, Rev. Fr Thomas Poovathummootil, Director of KKSSS conducted bucket collections in all five regional meetings. Apart from that charity boxes were distributed to all the Self Help Group (SHG) members for the welfare of cancer-affected patients. The medical help was distributed to the cancer-affected patients in their respective SHG clusters. The SHG members, Rev. Sisters, and KKSSS staff visited and participated in the events.



Blessing of FOUNDATION STONE

The FCC Community at Sukkangalpatti, Chinnamannor has been carrying out the mission work staying in a rented house. The Sisters bought a plot of land at Poomalkunduvilakku village in order to build a Convent. The foundation stone was blessed by Rev. Fr Benny Thattampampil on March 4, 2021. Rev. Fr Anil Raj and the Sisters from Madurai mission took part in the blessing ceremony. The FCC Provincial of Idukki and many Sisters from the Province were present to witness the event. The building work has now begun. We wish the Sisters God's blessings.



REGIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION



Kanya Kumari Social Service Society (KKSSS) animates 369 Self Help Groups (SHGs) with about 7000 women members, who are actively contributing to the development of the family and society. KKSSS celebrated the Regional Level Women's Day and Annual Day on the theme *“Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a COVID - 19 World”*. The meeting was organized during March 6 - 15, 2021 at Pandanthalumoodu, Kalluvilai, Soosaipuram, Muzhucode, and Arukani Regions. The day was celebrated to honour the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women from all walks of life. Rev. Fr. Thomas Poovathummootil, Director of KKSSS attended the function in all five regions and delivered inspirational messages. Rev. Fr. Printo Kuriakose conducted an hour long session for women. The stakeholders like panchayat presidents, teachers, bank managers, and heads of educational institutions participated in the celebrations. Our group members presented various cultural programmes like skit, dance, awareness songs, and the like. We have been able to achieve important milestones in our empowerment of women.



St Joseph's Feast

Holy Father Pope Francis announced this year as the Year of St Joseph and urged upon us to increase our closeness to God and receive blessings through the intercession of the great saint. In our Diocese, this year we kept the month of March as the month of St Joseph. On the Feast of St Joseph this year, the Bishop concelebrated Holy Qurbana at St Joseph's Mission station at Kunnuvilai, a substation of Padanthalumoodu Parish. All the Parishes had Holy Qurbana. The efforts of the fathers in spreading the intercessory prayers through St. Joseph is praiseworthy.

There are many priests in the Diocese who bear the name of St. Joseph and their feasts too are celebrated in a befitting manner. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb wished all the priests and celebrated with few priests who sought his blessings at the Bishop's House.

May St. Joseph intercede for us all!



Palm Sunday Celebrations

Palm Sunday was celebrated solemnly on March 28, 2021 in our Diocese. The missing of the celebrations last year was noticed as many faithful gathered in different to participate in the service and the preceding procession to the Church. The Bishop had given clear direction to take precautionary steps according to the directions of the government due to the corona situation. This was an opportunity which enabled us to create a strong witness to Christ through the procession being taken out on the streets. We do hope that this would bring abundant blessings to the people.



Home for the Homeless



On the occasion of the celebrations of the Silver Jubilee of the Diocese, we had decided to construct 25 houses for the homeless people in the Diocese. We shall use the Lenten charity collection of 2020 and 2021 for this purpose. The Bishop had requested all of the faithful of different parishes and mission centres to be generous for the Lenten *Undiyal* (box) collection and submit the money to the procurator of the Diocese in order that the benefit could reach the homeless at the earliest during the Jubilee Year of the Diocese. The Diocese has already surveyed the needy families and made them aware of our intentions to provide them a small home for an honourable living for them. The priests and volunteers who are involved in this exercise can see the true joy in the beneficiaries.

The religious missionaries serving in the Diocese have also been participating with their bit in the Home for the Homeless Project in honour of the Silver Jubilee of the Diocese. The CMI Fathers serving in the Diocese have already completed handing over one home for a very poor homeless family in Karode Parish on March 21, 2021 when Rev. Fr Sony Palathara CMI, Vice Provincial, Trivandrum Province cut the ribbon and opened the home and handed over the key to the family. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb blessed the home and the family in the presence of the CMI Regional Superior, the Parish Priest and the faithful of Karode Parish.



PRIESTHOOD DAY and RECOLLECTION for Priests and Sisters



Like previous years, the priests and religious came together for the celebration of Priests' Day on March 31, 2021 on Holy Wednesday. All took part in the recollection in preparation for the the Holy Week. Rev. Fr Sebastian Chamathara CMI, Provincial of Trivandrum Province, preached the recollection. It was followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Opportunities were provided for those who wanted to make their confessions. During the Holy Qurbana that followed, Holy Oils were blessed. The day had been duly observed as a day of grace and blessings.

Release of First Issue of Thuckalay Tidings

Every new fruit is sweet and the same applies to our desire to reach out to the friends and well wishers of the Diocese with the introduction of the monthly online magazine Thuckalay Tidings. The first issue of Thuckalay Tidings was released on March 31, 2021 by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb. The first and printed copy was presented to Very Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General of the Diocese. The intention of the Bishop and the Curia has been to provide a glimpse of the major activities and programmes of the Diocese of Thuckalay to all who encourage and support our missionary and developmental activities for the Church and the poor and needy in the Diocese. We are very happy to pledge our commitment for the cause that the Universal Church and the Diocese stands for and every little support is recognised in our effort to give our best for God's Glory.



NEED PRAYER SUPPORT!

The Diocese has prayer groups.

Please write the following and send SMS



+91 94871 65903:

Name:

Place:

Intentions:

In detail you wish to express,



: bishopofthuckalay@gmail.com

Inter-Eparchial Bishops' Meeting at Changanassery



Bishops of Changanacherry Metropolitan Archeparchy Province gathered at the Archbishop's House in Changanacherry on 11 March, 2011. It was for the first time after many years that the Bishops of the Archeparchy province gathered to discuss the political and educational situation of the State of Kerala. To better guide and give accurate information to the Bishops, Siby Mathew, IPS (Rtd) belonging to Archdiocese of Changanacherry gave an orientation talk on the present political situation of various constituencies of Changanacherry, Palai and Kanjirapally. He requested the Bishops to help the Christians to stand together to save democracy. He was sad to note that our people are divided on the basis of different political ideologies. He expressed that there was an urgent need to bring our faithful together. The Bishops discussed at length and resolved to stand for democracy and the nation and accordingly take every step to lead the people in the right path.

KNOWING A MISSION THIS MONTH

St. Mother Theresa Mission, Sundarapandiyapuram

Cultivators – Yielding Souls for God

The St. Mother Theresa Mission is one of the newest missions of the Diocese in one of the newest districts of the state of Tamilnadu, Tenkasi District. While Tenkasi district was established towards the end of 2019, the mission began in 2018.

The Diocese serves a Scheduled Caste community at Sundarapandiyapuram who are engaged in agriculture. Some cultivate in their own agricultural land, while others either cultivate in leased land or work as agriculture labourers. It is sometimes in 2017 that a few people approached Rev. Fr John Paul at Pudur Mission, Sengkottai through a lay person organizing retreats at Mathalamparai expressing their desire to join the Church in order to enrich themselves in the faith of God. Rev. Fr John Paul visited Sundarapandiyapuram about 22 kms from Sengkottai and met the people numbering about 30 from 14 families initially and assessed their desire to join the Church. He also enquired about the possible causes for their embracing the Faith and identified that the intervention of the Syro-Malabar Church was necessary for the people longing for pastoral care in the Catholic way of worship and life. He found the people to be good and simple and the area has the future possibilities for growth in Faith. The people,





though in poverty, were ready to render all support for the establishment of a mission. One of the families came forward to offer their home for conducting prayer services.

The Fathers from Pudur, Sengkottai began the mission work by the priest and sisters visiting the people once a month for prayer service, organizing the people on *Uraviyam* (Small Christian Community) way in one of the two houses being offered for gathering and prayer. The people of Sundarapandiyapuram gradually organized themselves and travelled for 22 kms to the St. Thomas Mission Centre at Pudur, Sengkottai for Sunday Holy Qurbana. With the blessing of God and permission of the Bishop, St. Mother Theresa Mission, Sundarapandiyapuram was established in 2018 with Holy Qurbana on a Saturday evening once a month there in the house of a faithful and on rest of the Sundays, the faithful came to Pudur Mission. As the faith increased and made fervent week after week, the frequency increased to two Sundays and now there is Holy Qurbana every Sunday at Sundarapandiyapuram, being served by priests and sisters from Pudur under the leadership of Rev. Fr Justin Sudeesh. The faithful have organized themselves very well and conduct their *Uraviyam* well and are undertaking pious activities to consolidate their faith. Currently there are 19 families with about 60 Catholics.

It has been a joy to observe them grow their faith from strength to strength. The agricultural cultivators who have become good souls for God will need all encouragement. However, we are yet to fulfill their hearts' desire for a Church / Prayer Hall. We do strongly believe that God will provide at the right moment. Let us pray that the faith continues to grow and that the faithful continue to live for His Glory.

From the Diary
of a
Pioneer Missionary
Rev. Sr. Missy Maria SJSM

Date of Birth : May 23, 1969
First Profession : December 7, 1992
Final Profession : November 27, 1998

My vocation story begins with a powerful crisis from the part of the family especially from my parents. We are totally five children, 3 brothers, one sister and myself. As the school studies were over, my friends and myself were about to select the courses for higher education. We were very much confused and the discussions went quite long. Accidentally, now I believe that it was an inspiration, I was attracted to the religious life and expressed my desire to join a Convent. I had never thought earlier about any desire to become a nun and we had never discussed about this in the family. I believe strongly that it was completely an intervention from the part of God. During my schooldays, I was not confident of myself and I had never come to the frontline to participate in any activity. But today, looking back I shall say, God was lifting me in His hands, while I was crying for my inabilities. One of the important incidents that I can never forget is the miraculous recovery from an autorickshaw accident. The incident happened in Kozhikode. I wanted to go to the University and couldn't find any conveyance to the University from the town and finally I took an auto rickshaw. While I was travelling, I got an inner vision that I was travelling with St. Joseph for more than 15 minutes in that rickshaw. The auto driver was new and was travelling through a narrow road and was about to meet with a serious accident. But I believe it was St. Joseph who worked miracle and spared me from that serious mishap.

When I took my first profession, I had only one desire for my life, to serve the poor and to be with them. Even though I could not have fulfilled this dream completely, wherever I was sent especially in the missions, I was with the poor people.



Their loving smiles give me strength for my spiritual growth. Another important power and source for my religious life is the untiring support from my parents, though they are above 80. Now and then, I find time to share with them my joys and difficulties and they listen to me always and bless me.

Madurai Mission is another important milestone in my religious life. I would like to call those days in the mission as the days of religious satisfaction. While I had seen the great enthusiasm from the part of superiors for that mission, I was ready to say, YES to the will of God to accept the life as a missionary. I had never thought of taking a leisure there. Nights, we utilize to think and pray and the day time we pay visits to the villages. While the village people see us, they call out *Devathaigal* (Angels) and *Kadavizhin Kuzhanthaigal* (Children of God). Even though it was tough time in the beginning, our unceasing visits created a kind of friendship among us the sisters and the people in the villages. Long three years, but I felt as if they were just three months in the mission. Unknowingly God was working in us through His Spirit to propagate His Kingdom in these remote villages near Madurai. We always trust in God by fasting and prayers. I can't even remember how long we avoided meat as a part of fasting for the mission propagation. There are many days we remained without sufficient food, water, and other basic necessities of life. But we never felt weak or tired.

As I step down from the mission, initially I was thinking that I am losing something great. But I should say, nothing is lost as God uses us only as instruments for the propagation of His love to all people, beyond man-made boundaries. If I get another chance to return, I am always ready to take up again this mission to be with people and to live with them.

Let more and more young people listen to the call of God to become His missionaries and may God shower all blessings to inspire such young minds.

I thank God for my vocation to religious life.

Sr. Missy Maria SJSM





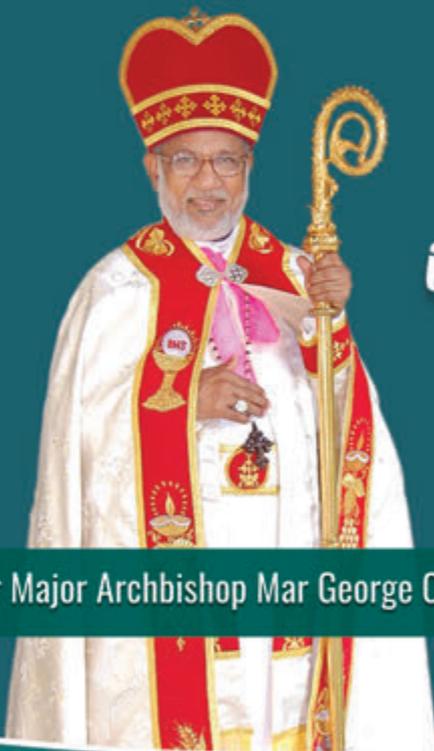
THUCKALAY
MISSION
BISHOP OF THUCKALAY

FEAST OF ST GEORGE

A patron to overcome Evil Forces

The Second Patron of the Diocese of Thuckalay

We in the Diocese of Thuckalay are happy to wish a Happy Feast of St. George to all who bear his name on April 24, 2021.



Our Major Archbishop Mar George Cardinal Alencherry

*We wish
in a special way
to*



Our Bishop Mar George Rajendran sdb

May God bless all of us through the intercession of St George

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