

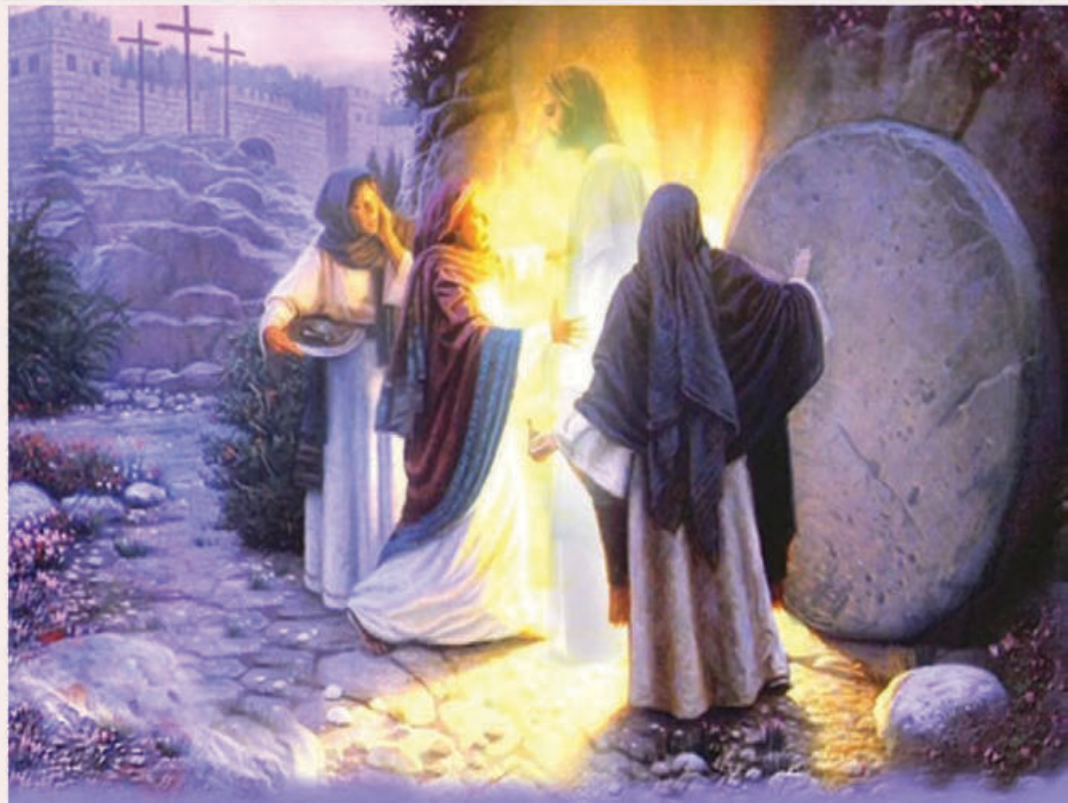
DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY

THUCKALAY TIDINGS

MARCH 2024 | VOL. 4 | ISSUE 3

EASTER

Whispers of **HOPE**, reminding us that
even in darkness, **LIGHT** prevails...





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THUCKALAY TIDINGS

March 2024 | Vol. 4 | Issue 3

A Monthly online newsletter of Diocese of Thuckalay

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Message

Dear Friends,
Greetings and best wishes from the Diocese of Thuckalay!

As we are in the season of Great Lent, preparing to enter Holy Week and the joyous celebration of Easter, let us take a moment to reflect on the profound significance of fasting and prayer during this sacred time.

Fasting, prayer, and acts of charity are vital aspects of Lent, guiding us on a journey of spiritual growth and renewal. While fasting is often associated with abstaining from food, it is more than mere physical deprivation. It is a spiritual discipline that nurtures self-control, humility, and reliance on God.

Drawing from the wisdom of Scripture, we see fasting as a pathway to deepen our connection with God. Verses such as Joel 2:12 and Jonah 3:7 emphasize the importance of fasting as a sincere expression of repentance and humility before the Lord. Moreover, fasting is often coupled with prayer, highlighting its role in seeking divine guidance and protection.

Throughout history, notable figures like Moses, Daniel and others exemplified the practice of fasting, inspiring us to approach this discipline with sincerity and devotion. In the New Testament, the fasting of Jesus is recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. One prominent instance is found in Matthew 4:1-2: "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And

after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry." Here we see a true spiritual transformation occurs when our fasting is accompanied by a genuine heart turned towards God.

Fasting not only purifies the body but also rejuvenates the soul, fostering clarity of mind and inner peace. It serves as a reminder of our dependence on God and encourages the cultivation of virtues such as love, justice, and compassion.

In today's challenging world, our fasting and prayer should extend beyond personal needs to encompass broader societal concerns. As responsible citizens, let us engage in efforts to promote good governance, justice, and peace, guided by our faith and values.

As we journey through Lent towards the joyous celebration of Easter, may our fasting and prayer lead us to a deeper relationship with God and a renewed commitment to living out the teachings of the Gospel. Wishing all the friends and benefactors of the diocese abundant blessings in the name of the resurrected Jesus. Happy Easter!

Yours in Christ



+ **George Rajendran sdb**
Bishop of Thuckalay



SHEPHERDING SOULS

Bishop's Pastoral Visit

The pastoral visit to St. Antony's Church in Vayalinkarai and Kaliyal Parish was a spiritually enriching experience for the parish community. Through worship, prayer, fellowship, and pastoral dialogue, the visit fostered spiritual growth, strengthened bonds of unity, and provided pastoral care and support to the faithful. Such pastoral initiatives are essential for nurturing vibrant and thriving parish communities, rooted in faith, love, and service.





LOVE IN HEALING

World Sick Day Celebration

On February 11, 2024, the World Day of the Sick was celebrated with fervor and compassion in all the parishes within our diocese. This annual observance, established by Pope John Paul II in 1992, serves as a reminder of the Christian duty to care for the sick and suffering, inspired by the example of Christ's healing ministry. This was a testament to our commitment to embody the love and compassion of Christ towards the sick and suffering. Through prayer, worship, pastoral care, and charitable initiatives, parish communities demonstrated their solidarity with the sick and their families, fostering a culture of compassion, inclusion, and support.





STRENGTHENING BONDS

Junior Priests' Gathering with Bishop

On the 20th of February 2024, all priests in the diocese with less than six years of ordination gathered at the Bishop's House for a day of prayer and interaction with Bishop. The meeting commenced at 10:30 am with a recollection talk by Fr. Jerald Justin from the diocese of Kuzhithurai. His focus was on the means of attaining holiness through our relationships with people and fellow priests. The talk was followed by adoration and confession. After a shared lunch, an interactive session took place where junior priests shared their experiences in their current pastoral fields and offered suggestions for the better coordination of their pastoral ministry. Nine priests participated in the meeting.



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:

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BRIDGING FAITH AND LEARNING: Bishop's visit to Schools



The visit of Bishop to the Primary and Higher Secondary Schools within the Diocese provided valuable insights into the educational landscape and opportunities for improvement. Through collaborative efforts and ongoing dialogue with school authorities, teachers, and students, the Diocese aims to enhance the quality of education, foster holistic development, and empower students to achieve their full potential. It also provided an opportunity to interact with students, teachers, and school administrators to understand their needs, challenges, and aspirations.





CELEBRATING CHILDHOOD CREATIVITY

Jesus Kids' Competition Showcase

Bible Fest 2023-2024 for the Children of Kuzhanthai Ippo Iyakkam (KII) spanned two days, the 4th and 10th of February 2024. On the 4th of February, the event took place at Kaliyal Forane Church, specifically for children from Arukani and Kaliyal foranes. The inauguration of the competition was carried out by Arukani Forane Vicar Fr. Toji Parambilparambil in the presence of Fr. Toji Kozhuvakandathil, the Director of KII. For

the remaining foranes, the competitions were conducted on the 10th of February at Sacred Heart Forane Church, Padanthalumoodu, starting from 09:30 am onwards. Fr. Thomas Sathianesan inaugurated the competitions. The programme concluded by 05:30 pm. Children showcased exceptional performances in various competitions such as byhearting the Word of God, singing, group dance, and speeches.



SPREADING THE WORD

Department of Catechesis' Outreach in Tenkasi



On the 4th of February 2024, a team from the Department of Catechesis visited the catechetical units at Tenkasi mission. Promoters dedicated their time to visit various parishes within the mission. During this visit, Director Fr. Abilash Xavier presided over the Holy Qurbana at Puliyarai parish and engaged

with the students. In the afternoon, an orientation programme was conducted for both teachers and students. Mr. Edwinson and Fr. Abilash led the session for teachers, providing valuable insights. Simultaneously, Mr. John Bright and Mr. Dinesh conducted the orientation programme for students.



FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

Rev Fr. Philip Kodiyanthara' s 11th Death Anniversary



On the 9th of February 2024, the 11th death anniversary of Rev. Fr. Philip Kodiyanthara was commemorated at Kayalpuram. The requiem Holy Qurbana commenced at 11:00 am, with Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General, as main celebrant. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Fr. Antony Mahesh, Fr. John Joseph, and Fr. Toji Parambilparambil joined in concelebrating the Holy Qurbana. Fr. Mahesh delivered the homily. In attendance were representatives from Sisters, teachers of aided

schools within the eparchy, and some parishioners from Manjalumoodu Forane Parish, all present for the memorial Holy Qurbana. Following the Holy Qurbana, the Office for the Dead was recited at the tomb of Rev. Fr. Philip Kodiyanthara. Gratitude is extended to all the Fathers who personally took the initiative to participate in this event. Let us collectively continue to pray for the departed soul of our former Eparchial Administrator.



BUILDING SPIRITUAL DEPTH

On-Going Formation Programme for priests

'The on-going formation of priests is the natural and absolutely necessary continuation of the process of building priestly personality which began and developed in the seminary with the training programme which aimed at ordination' (PDV no.71). The Presbyterium of the Diocese convened for a two-day gathering at Sangamam on the 13th and 14th of February 2024. On the first day, three distinguished scholars facilitated the ongoing formation programme in three sessions: morning, afternoon, and evening. Mar Jose Porunnedom, Bishop of Mananthavady, led the morning session, addressing the topic 'Challenges to priesthood (internal and external), Ministerial problems of priests (attitudes, parish issues, relation with bishop and authority), and spiritual life of priests (union with Christ, holiness, fidelity to the Church)'. In the afternoon, Adv. Thomas Franco, retired general secretary of All India SBI managers union, conducted a seminar on the 'Socio-Political situation of Tamil Nadu in the context of the upcoming election'. In the evening, Rev. Fr. Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the chancellor of Major Archbishopial curia, animated a session clarifying the canonical issues related to marriage and parish administration. All sessions proved to be highly informative and pastorally enriching for the priestly ministry in the diocese.

The following day, 14th February, was dedicated to the evaluation and presentation of the reports of activities from various departments and pious associations of the Eparchy. This marked the third time that the diocese allocated almost a full day for this exercise. Directors of departments came well-prepared with PowerPoint presentations, beautifully outlining the year's activities. The Presbyterium engaged in discussions and provided valuable suggestions. The comprehensive overview left everyone feeling happy and proud to be informed of the enormous work being carried out in the various departments.





IGNITING PASSION AIDACT Schools' Talent Fest 2024



Talent fest, an annual event organized by AIDACT and KKSSS, brought together students and educators from seven special schools for a day of spirited competition and celebration on 16 February 2024. Various competitions, including dances, speeches, painting, drawing, and singing, showcased the talents of the participants. Karunai Illam special school clinched the first prize, followed by Jyothinilayam special school Palappallam in second place and Santhinilayam special school Paruthivilai school securing the third position. The atmosphere was filled with joy as participants expressed their happiness. Along with Bishop, Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam and Rev. Fr. Aby Poovathummoottil addressed the gathering, emphasizing the significance of the occasion.





VISIONARY HEALTHCARE Free Eye Camp



The Free Eye Camp organized at St. Mary's Church, Vanchinagar, on February 18, 2024, in conjunction with World Day of the Sick, successfully provided essential eye care services to the underserved population. The event not only addressed immediate eye health needs but also fostered awareness about the importance of regular eye check-ups and proactive eye care practices. Such initiatives play a crucial role in promoting community health and well-being and embody the spirit of compassion and service towards the sick and disadvantaged.



CUMBUM ECHOES

Capturing the Pulse of the Town

Jakkammal (85), mother of the late Mariyappan and wife of Palaniyammal, residing at Tiruvalluvar Kalani in Thiruvalluvar Theni District. Due to financial difficulties, the family was unable to maintain her. The family applied to Kambam S.H. Center to admit her to a shelter. Jakkammal was admitted on Wednesday, 21.02.2024, with the permission of Kambam South Police Station. The admission was facilitated with a letter from Mr. Ayyappan, Head of Tiruvalluvar Colony, and with the full consent of the family. She was admitted to Anbu House, Franciscan Charitable Trust, located at 303, Naduthru, J.J. Colony, Vadaputhupatti.





HEALTHIER HORIZONS

Highlights from the Medical Camp



A health camp was organized at Madhuari Mission to provide essential medical services and healthcare support to the residents of the mission and surrounding areas. This initiative aimed to address healthcare needs, raise awareness about preventive healthcare practices, and offer medical assistance to those in need. They provided medical check-ups and consultations to the residents of Madhuari Mission and nearby communities.





BUILDING A HEALTHIER FUTURE

Health Awareness Campaigns

In the month of February, the Diocesan Health Commission successfully executed several programmes. In observance of the World Day of the Sick on 10th February, a special health awareness programme was conducted at the International Cancer Center, Neyyoor Special Hospital. Small gifts were distributed as part of the initiative. On 25th February, an extensive health awareness programme took place at St. Paul's Church, Thettiyodu, featuring an awareness rally, a free medical camp, and full-body checkups. Additionally, a heart awareness programme was held at Little Flower Forane Church, Pilankalai, on 19th February, led by Sr. Vineetha FCC. Similar heart care programmes were conducted in Tenkasi and Madurai Missions. In numerous locations, the awareness class was facilitated by Sr. Josephine CTC, the Secretary of the Health Commission, TNBC.





EMBARKING ON A NEW JOURNEY

Inauguration of II Presbyteral Council

The Inauguration and First Meeting of the 2nd Presbyteral Council were conducted at Sangamam on 27th February 2024. The session commenced at 10 am with a prayer, and after the welcome address by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Rev. Bishop delivered the inaugural speech for the 2nd Presbyteral Council. Two Fathers from the Archdiocese of Changanacherry, Fr. Tom Puthenkalam and Fr. Roby Thalachelloor, enriched the inaugural session by providing valuable insights to the council members. Fr. Tom emphasized the importance of collegiality and communion among the Bishop and Priests in the diocese,

drawing from church documents. Fr. Roby focused on the statutes of the Presbyteral Council of our diocese and offered useful suggestions for addressing our concerns. In the second session, the council assembled, and the secretary presented the report of the last Presbyteral Council. Following this, new members were elected, with Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal securing a second term as secretary, and Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Fr. Robin Koorumullil, and Fr. Printo Kurias being elected as agenda committee members. The meeting included a common discussion, concluding by 01:30 pm.





SHARING FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

Seven Deacons from Ramanathapuram

Seven Deacons from the diocese of Ramanathapuram came to our diocese for a mission and pastoral experience on 06 February 2024. They went back on 25 February 2024. After one week of tamil intensive course at Sangamam they stayed in following parishes and mission places: Nithiravilai, Killiyoor, Marappady, Varuthattu, Kalluvilai, Pathukani, Annikkarai, Kayathar, Virudunagar and Tenkasi.





MARKING A MILESTONE

Mons. Albert Anastas' Episcopal Ordination



On the 13th of January 2024, His Holiness Pope Francis appointed Mons. Albert Anastas, a member of the clergy from the Diocese of Kottar, as the new Bishop of our neighboring Diocese of Kuzhithurai. His Episcopal Ordination took place on the 22nd of February 2024 at 04:00 pm at St. Devasahayam Shrine Church, Nattalam. Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB, along with other bishops from Tamil Nadu, concelebrated in the consecration ceremony and the Holy Qurbana. Representing our presbyterium, some Fathers from the diocese also took part in the ceremony. The event saw the active participation of many religious and laity from our diocese. The Diocese extend heartfelt congratulations, best wishes, and prayers to the newly ordained Bishop, as well as to the neighboring Diocese of Kuzhithurai.



Deacons on Mission

From February 15 to 17, 2024, our dedicated deacons embarked on a village ministry program in Cumbum Mission. To provide pastoral care and support to the villages within Cumbum Mission and to engage in evangelization and outreach activities to share the message of faith and love. To assess the spiritual needs and challenges faced by the local communities and also to foster bonds

of solidarity and fellowship among the villagers. Fr. Benny Thattaparampil and Sr. Elsy SH, this initiative aimed to bring spiritual nourishment, support, and outreach to the communities in the region.



A New Chapter Begins...



Fr. Joseph Koovelloor from the Eparchy of Palai is appointed as Missionary for Evangelization and pastoral care in St. Joseph Mission, Rameswaram as well as in the entire districts of Ramanathapuram and Sivagangai with effect from 14 February 2024. We extend him a hearty welcome to our Eparchy and to its presbyterium.

Fr. Joseph (Sooraj) Kadavil MCBS is appointed as Assistant Director of Anbu Illam, Tenkasi with effect from 26 February 2024. We extend him a hearty welcome to our Eparchy and to its presbyterium.



In Memoriam

It is with heavy hearts that, the Diocese of Thuckalay express our deepest condolences on the passing of the beloved ones of our dear fathers' and Sisters'. Our thoughts and prayers are with his/her family, friends, and loved ones during this difficult time of loss and grief. During this time of bereavement, let us unite in prayer and solidarity, offering support and consolation to one another. May God grant us peace and healing as we navigate through this season of loss and sorrow.



Mrs. Brijit O.M. (64)
Sister of Reji Mathew FCC



Mr. K. J. Thomas Kavilpurayidam (103)
Father of Sr. Elizabeth Kavilpurayidam SABS



Mr. Enas Varkey Manalyil (87)
Father of Sr. Emily Rose CMC



Mr. Joji John (29)
Nephew of Sr. Ancilin and Julit FCC



Mr. Palas (63)
Father of Sr. Libya CMC



Mr. K J Thomas (60)
Brother of Sr. Leema Rose FCC



Mr. Joseph Joseph (75)
Brother of Sr. Stella Maria SH



Mr. Thomas Scaria (74)
Nephew of Fr. Mathew Kuzhinjalil



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