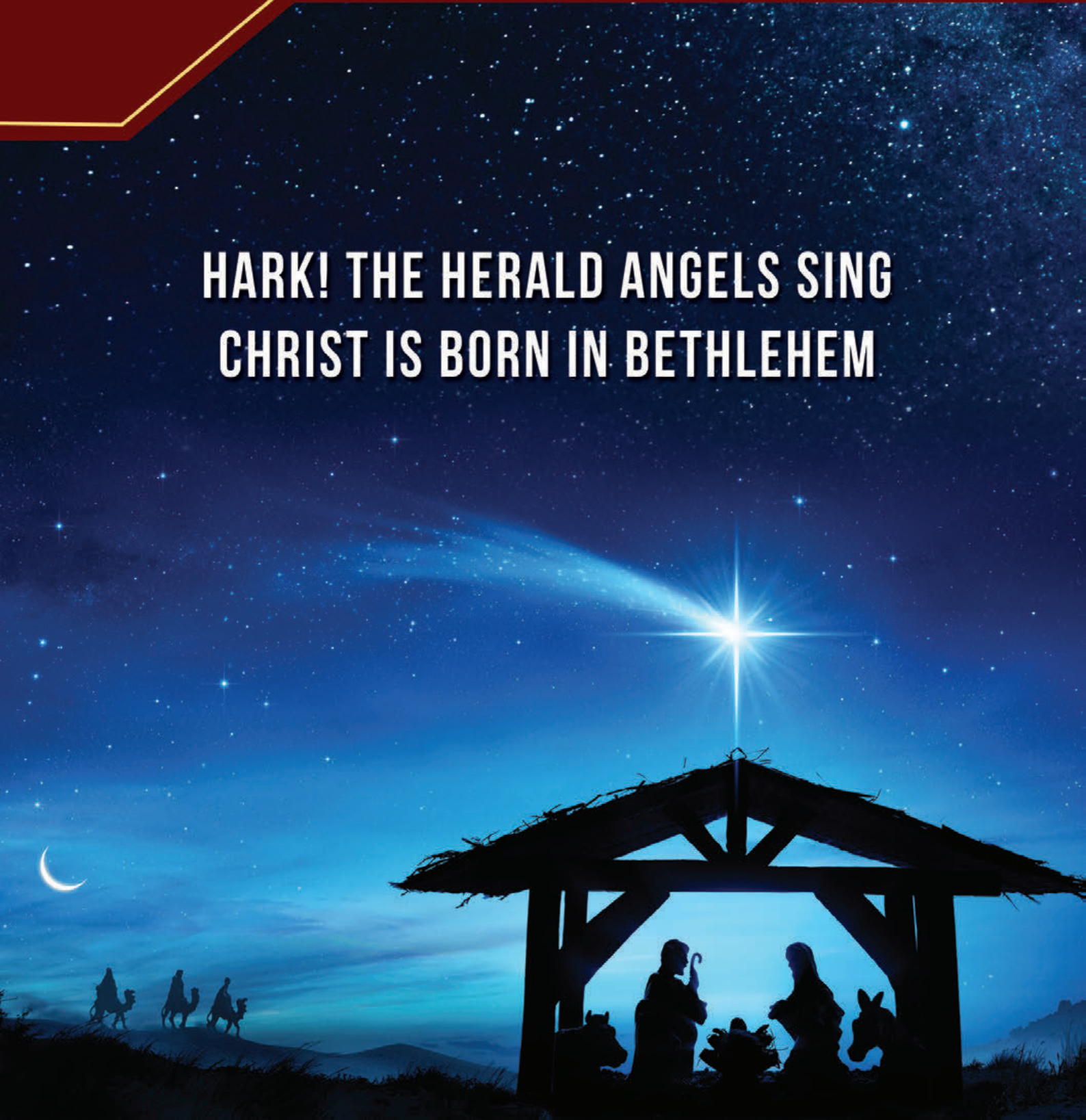


THUCKALAY TIDINGS

DECEMBER 2022 | VOL. 2 | ISSUE 12
DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY

**HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING
CHRIST IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM**





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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,

Greetings and prayerful wishes from Diocese of Thuckalay.

It's a **GOOD & GREAT TIDING. JESUS IS BORN!** On the Day of Christmas, during the Eucharist, we gather around the little Babe of Bethlehem. It is my privilege to wish you a Merry Christmas. May the joy and peace of the Lord Jesus always be in your hearts and your homes as it is on Christmas Day. Every newborn child is a wonder, a mystery, a gift of God. No matter whether the family is wealthy or poor, whether the child is the firstborn or the latest in the long line, all who gather around are moved. We smile, cry, laugh, bring a gift, and wish happiness and peace for the little one. For us, this Child is a sign of hope and faith in the future.

This season tells us that Emmanuel - God with us - left His Divinity to enter into our humanity to raise us to a higher level, a higher purpose, to transform our lives, to redirect our lives, and to plant our feet on higher and solid ground. When we understand the real value of Advent in our lives, we would be led into a much greater understanding and appreciation for Christmas; and when we have a greater understanding and appreciation of these two seasons, we will find ourselves in the place where we can no longer think only of cards and cribs and cakes but move beyond it, recognizing God in ourselves and especially in the working of God in history and the people. Christmas is about a definitive moment in time, in human history, when God showed that He cares for every one of us by entering into our humanity so that He could walk with us, live with us, lead us, carry us and lift us to that better place. It is, therefore, not just about celebrations, but rather about the love of our God who wanted to become one with us so deeply, that He gave up His Divinity to enter into our wretched humanity.

Christmas - the birth of God in a poor manger - is the most celebrated feast in this world. Christmas offers us all an opportunity to recapture glimpses of childhood's sacred memories. There is a timelessness about gazing into the crib and coming face to face with the truth that God came

down from heaven and dwelt among us as a helpless baby Jesus. The Gospel tells us that, at Bethlehem, on a starry night the Son of God was born. A burst of light startled the shepherds, and angels sang at His birth. It is the simplicity of this event that captures the imagination. Christmas is more than a story that is told – it is about a birth that brings Heaven right down to earth. Love came down at Christmas, broke the sacred barrier between creature and Creator and gave eternal value to our lives. God has given us the gift of reaching beyond ourselves and discovering the joy of heaven.

Along with our Blessed Mother let us prepare ourselves to welcome Child Jesus. He comes knocking. He stoops low and invites us to find Him in the lowly places of our own lives, in the lowly places of our own families, and in the lowly places of this world. In our lives, what are the things, that may be crowding out Jesus; what obstacles and preoccupations leave little or no room for him; what keeps us from recognizing Jesus and opening the door wide when He comes? If we have already opened the door to Him for many years, praise God and ask the Lord to help us to open wider. Even though many of us have invited Jesus in, we have given Him poor accommodations, perhaps relegating Him to the couch or the floor. Let us hold on to Him who is born as a human to show us the way to the Father.

I wish all the readers, friends and benefactors MERRY CHRISTMAS and GRACE FILLED NEW YEAR 2023.

Yours in Christ,



+ **George Rajendran sdb**
Bishop of Thuckalay



Diocesan Day Celebrations

In remembrance of the Diocesan Foundation Day on 11 November, the Diocese celebrated its 26th Diocesan Day at **Sacred Heart Forane Church, Padanthalumoodu** on 13 November 2022. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb presided over the concelebrated Holy Eucharist. Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General welcomed all the faithful. A meaningful offertory procession was carried out by the Kaikkaras (Church Leaders) of each parish and the local superior of the convents. An open-stage cultural programme was also organised to present events by various departments and parishes. Rev. Fr.

Joshy Kulathumkal, Chancellor of the Diocese, presented a brief audio-visual report of the Diocese. The first batches of the Sinai Theological Institute, who have completed their Degree Course in Theology, were honoured with a degree certificate. Many Fathers, Sisters and faithful from the Diocese participated in the event. We thank God for the incessant blessings received from God through the years and we gratefully acknowledge the support and assistance of all our friends and benefactors within the country and abroad that have helped us to be faithful and keep alive the mission of Christ in our Diocese.





Vestition and First Profession



San Joe Province, Thuckalay of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation (FCC) was blessed by God when four novices made their First Religious Profession and Vestition on 19 November 2022 at St. Joseph's Church, Karode. The ceremony began with Solemn Holy Eucharist presided over by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb. Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General and five other priests were the concelebrants. We congratulate the newly professed Sisters – Rev. Sr. Majitha M. P., Rev. Sr. Abisha R., Rev. Sr. Merin Suju M.R. and Rev. Sr. Benishma Theres S.B. We wish them God's blessings in their religious life and mission. We request prayers for more vocation to religious life in various Congregations of the Universal Church and for strengthening those who have said 'Yes' to His call.

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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Tamilnadu – 629 175, INDIA

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LSDP Turns Silver

The religious congregation of Little Servants of the Divine Providence (LSDP) founded by Rev. Sr. Litty in the year 1978 started its mission at Thuckalay Diocese in 1997. Providence Home started to function in a rented house at Kalkurichy near Thuckalay with four Sisters and 7 inmates. Later they bought a new plot at Peunchilambu and constructed the house. Blessing of the newly built Providence Home was done on 20 December 1999. The Jubilee Year was inaugurated on 03 December 2021. The concluding celebration of the Silver Jubilee was

held on 16 November 2022 at Providence Home, Perunchilambu. A thanksgiving Holy Eucharist was celebrated by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb, with Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil and other priests concelebrated. Rev. Sr. Rosily LSDP, Superior General of the Congregation was accompanied by a good number of Sisters from the Generalate. Many Fathers, Sisters, faithful, friends and benefactors were present for the cultural function presided over by our Bishop and all shared the agape meal.

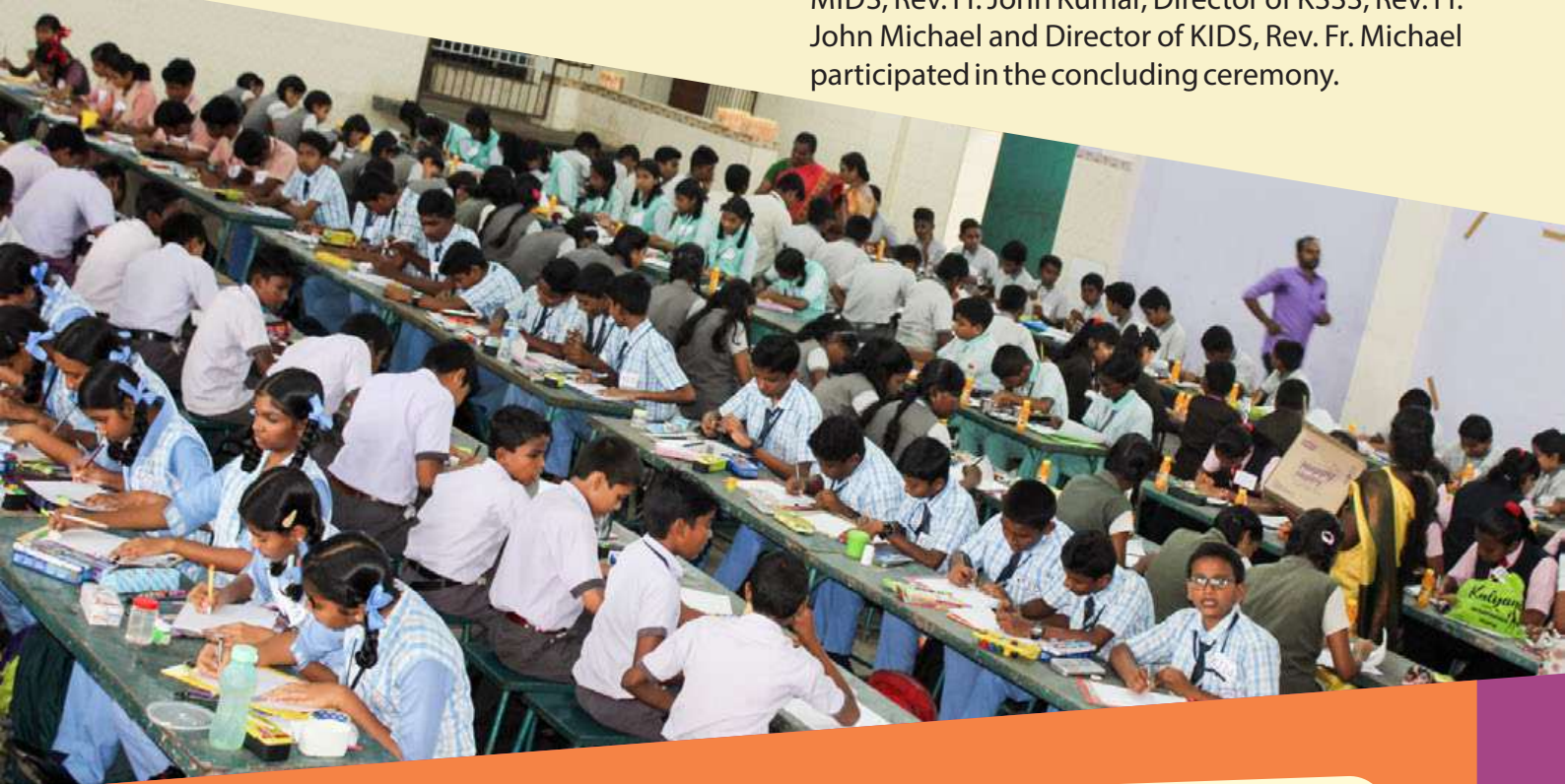




Varnam Competition

In connection with Children's Day celebration, the Kanyakumari Social Service Society (KKSSS) organized Varnam 2022, an Inter-School Drawing and Painting contest for children on 10 November 2022. The programme was inaugurated by Dr. S. Isias, Principal of St. Alphonsa College of Arts and Science, Karungal. The main focus of the program was to promote

the creativity of children and to inculcate awareness about their dignity. About 700 students actively participated in the competition and exhibited their talents. Winners of painting and drawing competitions are awarded cash prizes and trophies and participation certificates were issued to all. CRS Director, Rev. Fr. Celestin, Director of TASOSS, Rev. Fr. Albert Thambidurai, Director of MIDS, Rev. Fr. John Kumar, Director of KSSS, Rev. Fr. John Michael and Director of KIDS, Rev. Fr. Michael participated in the concluding ceremony.



You can come forward to partner the Educare Sponsorship Program of the Diocese of Thuckalay.

You can help a Child for Education at different levels.

School Education : 5 - 7 Years

College Education : 3 Years

For details contact

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Dance Fest for *Mathru Jyothis*



A dance competition was held at Aseer Auditorium, **Kalluvilai** on 05 November 2022 for the members of *Mathru Jyothis* (Mothers Movement), the initiative being taken by the Family Apostolate of the Diocese. Rev. Fr. Abin Poovathumoottil, Director of KKSSS, inaugurated the competition by lighting the lamp. 12 teams from different parishes participated in the event. The first prize was secured by the team from Soosaipuram Parish, the second prize went to Marappady Parish and the third prize was won by Thakkalivilai and Thuckalay Parishes. The participation, enthusiasm and energy of mothers showed the team spirit and unity in *Mathru Jyothis*.



SMYM: Training of Animators and Resource Team

The Syro-Malabar Youth Movement (SMYM) organised a one-day special training for the selected members at **Kalluvilai** on 01 November 2022 on the theme of CARE FOR THE YOUTH under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Joseph Santhosh, Director of SMYM Thuckalay. The morning session of the programme was animated by Ms. Sherin of Velicham Foundation, Chennai. The trainer helped with methods to analyze the problems faced by the youth in society and discussed at length the tools to find solutions. The afternoon session was animated by Rev. Fr Arul Antony sdb, Director of Vazhikatti along with Rev. Fr John Paul sdb. It was a practical session wherein the youth were asked to take classes on various themes. Twenty youths took part in the training out of which six are part of a youth resource team. At the end of the training programme Ms. Sherinad dressed 30 religious and lay animators on the problems in society and the need for attitudinal change for a better response as social workers.



Home Mission

Reverend Sisters of the Adoration of Blessed Sacrament (SABS) from St. Joseph's Province, Thalassery, Kerala conducted a Home Mission Programme at **St. Thomas Church, Palugal** from 31 October to 19 November 2022. A group of 10 Sisters spent three weeks visiting all the families of the Parish. They conducted seminars for youth, Eucharistic Retreat for children and elders and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and thus helped in the spiritual renewal of the Parish. On the conclusion of Home Mission on 19 November 2022, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb celebrated Holy Eucharist and expressed gratitude to the Sisters for their dedicated services to the Diocese.





Mission Quest

Mission Quest, an Online Quiz Competition, is a unique opportunity for each of the faithful to gain a deeper understanding of the apostolic mission that Christ entrusted, to grow in missionary zeal and learn about missionary activities. This Mission Quiz was conducted on 20 November 2022. In the whole Diocese, 114 students and 243 adults participated in the programme. Diocese-level results were published and it was wonderful to observe that the participants prepared very well to take part in the event.



PRIZE	NAME	PARISH
STUDENTS GROUP		
First	Jeswin S.	St. Joseph's Church, Soosaipuram
Second	Christy M.	St. Little Flower Church, Puliyarai
Third	Kavyadas T.	St. Little Flower Church, Puliyarai
ADULT GROUP		
First	Ms Jency	St. Joseph's Church, Soosaipuram
Second	Mrs. Regina Bai	St. Joseph's Church, Soosaipuram
Third	Mrs. P. Sindhu Rani	St. James Church, Mankarai




Thuckalay Tidings congratulates all the winners and appreciate the initiatives taken by the catechesis department of the Diocese for organizing it very well.



NEED PRAYER SUPPORT!

The Diocese has prayer groups.

Please write the following and send SMS


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Name:

Place:

Intentions:

In detail you wish to express,

 : bishopofthuckalay@gmail.com



Blessing & Inauguration

of Jyothi Community Animation Centre

Blessing and Inauguration of the Jyothi Community Animation Centre, along with the conclusion of the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate (OMMI), was held at **Padanthalumoodu** on 25 November 2022. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb blessed the newly built Animation Centre and the Chapel. The sisters were very happy to dedicate the Animation Centre to the service of the people. The blessing ceremony was followed by a public function presided over by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb. Rev. Fr. Jesurethnam, Vicar General of Kuzhuthurai Diocese, Rev. Fr. Jose Bright, Vicar General of Marthandam Diocese, Rev. Fr. Thomas Sathiyanesan, Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Dency Mundunadackal, former Parish Priest, Ms. Thresiamma Mathew OMMI, Director of JyothiJeevaPoorna Trust and many other officials felicitated the event.





Anniversary of Sangamam Garments Unit



It was a joy to celebrate the first anniversary of Sangamam Garments on 28 November 2022 at Sangamam, the Pastoral Centre of the Diocese. Around 75 current beneficiaries prepared well to celebrate the event with meticulous planning under the guidance of the Director. In the presence of the directors of Sangamam and KKSSS and the Panchayat President, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp. The women presented beautiful cultural programs to exhibit their talents and as a means to express their happiness for the opportunity to provide a means for their families. It is a great joy to see the objectives of established enterprising activities of the Diocese are well advanced and the beneficiaries gain good profit.



Seminar on Diocesan Assembly

His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb had sent out the Decree of Convocation of the First Diocesan Assembly during 28-30 September 2023. The Assembly is motivated to review the past and to meet the new challenges of today. The Assembly is an instrument for providing a direction to the governing and renewal of the Diocese. As a remote preparation, a seminar was organized at Sangamam on 26 November 2022 for a selected group of persons among priests, religious and laity. A special invitation was given to Curia members, College of Consulters, Forane Vicars, Directors of selected departments,

Provincials and delegates from congregations, representatives from the Pastoral Council, Youth and *Mathru Jyothis* (Mothers Movement). Rev. Fr. Jose Ettolil from the Archdiocese of Changanacherry animated the seminar and gave a detailed presentation of everything related to the Diocesan Assembly and provided practical suggestions on the procedure of conducting it. In the interactions and discussions that were pursued, participants shared some relevant themes for discussion in the Assembly. We pray that the Lord continues to shower His abundant blessings in the preparation and process.





Pastoral Council Meet

The Pastoral Council meeting of the Diocese Thuckalay was held at Sangamam on 01 November 2022. In the absence of His Excellency Mar George Rajendran SDB, with a special mandate Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General presided over the meeting. In the TNBC Meeting held in July, it was decided to organize awareness programmes at the Diocesan level about different welfare schemes of the government for the good of deserving Catholic faithful. Therefore, an awareness class was organized in the pastoral council on the rights and duties of unorganized workers. Advocate

Thenpandian and Rev. Fr. John Paul sdb were the resource persons of the day. In the second session, a fruitful discussion took place on the possibility of beginning a welfare committee in our Diocese under the guidance of the Laity Commission to provide a helping hand to the workers who belong to the unorganized sector. Around 63 members participated in the Pastoral Council. Rev. Fr. Thomas Sathianesan, Director and Mr. John Kumarithozhan, Secretary organised the event for the advancement and growth of the Church and its flock.



Bible Fest Writing Competition

The Diocesan level Bible Fest Writing competition was held on 06 November 2022 at the Padanthalumoodu Forane Church campus. The winners of the competition at the Forane level were the participants of the competition. 168 students participated in the competition. The motivation spirit of the young is very much appreciated and it is encouraging to make young children learn the Bible. The results will be published on 14 January 2023.





KKSSS Jubilee competitions for Self Help Groups

The Kanyakumari Social Service Society (KKSSS), the social arm of the Diocese, organised Dancing and Singing competitions for Self Help Groups (SHG) at **Kalluvilai** on 12 November 2022. 21 SHG groups participated in the song competition and 13 SHG groups participated in the dance competition. A *Kolam* (floor drawing made from coloured flour) competition was also conducted on the theme KKSSS Golden Jubilee Emblem. 52 SHG teams participated in the competition enthusiastically depicting the golden jubilee emblem through their colorful art of putting *kolam*. We congratulate the winners and all the participants for their interest and enthusiasm.





Visit of the Pioneer Missionaries

It was indeed a joyous moment on 10 November 2022 for the Diocese as a whole, to receive the pioneering missionary fathers, Rev. Fr. Kurian Puthenpura, Rev. Fr. Antony Poroorkkara and Rev. Fr. Philip Vaikkathukaran who dedicated their services for the development of the diocese. All three priests visited the parishes and places established/ served by them. They shared fond memories and the challenges of the past to bring the mission to some of the centres. They affirmed that God's mission and missionary activities will always flourish despite the various hardships that may be faced from time to time and the fruits of hard labour are always sweet. We acknowledge them with gratitude for all their sacrifices and contributions to the people of Thuckalay.





BLESSING & INAUGURATION of Home for Senior Citizens



It has been indeed a blessing from God for the Diocese of Thuckalay to be recognized for its quality service to society with the invitation to **Moolamattam, in Idukki District of Kerala** to serve the elderly through *Sneha Villa* (Home of Love). Mrs. Mercy Jose Kappen donated one and a half acres of land, along with a spacious and beautiful building at Moolamattam to our Diocese to start a Home for senior citizens. She built it in memory of her late husband, Mr. Jose Tharian, Founder of Geetha Village, a home for children.

On 23 November 2022 was the day when a large number of people gathered around Moolamattam and our Diocese witnessed the handing over, blessing and inauguration of *Sneha Villa*. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb blessed the Chapel of the Home and celebrated the Holy Eucharist. Mar Sebastian Pozholiparampil, Bishop of Hosur, was one of the concelebrants for the Holy Eucharist along with other priests. In the presence of Bishops, political leaders, Fathers, Sisters and people, Mrs. Mercy



Jose inaugurated *Sneha Villa* by cutting the ribbon. Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Bishop of Palai, blessed the building. The blessing ceremony was followed by a public function. Mar George Madathikandathil, Bishop of Kothamangalam inaugurated the public function. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb officially welcomed the dignitaries and thanked Mrs. Mercy Jose for the generous donation and the faith she reposed on the Diocese of Thuckalay.

Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, Bishop of Palai and Mar John Nellikunnel, Bishop of Idukki felicitated the event. Mr. Dean Kuriakose MP, Mr. P. J. Joseph MLA, Mr. Mani C Kappan, MLA, Mr. Francis George, Ex. MP, Rev. Fr. KurianKalayil, the Forane Vicar of Moolamattam, Mr. Augustine Kappen,

Chairman of Kappen Group, Advocate BijuParayanilam, Catholic Congress Global President, Rev. Sr. Biji ASSJM, Delegate Superior of Augustinian Sisters and Mr. K. S. Vinod, Panchayat President felicitated Mrs. Mercy Jose and the Diocese of Thuckalay. Rev. Sr. Rose Chakkalakunnel, Mother General of FDSHJ was present for the function. During the meeting, the Diocese honoured Mrs. Mercy Jose for her generosity to donate the *Sneha Villa* to our Diocese. Colourful cultural dances and songs were presented by the children from Geetha Village. Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparapil, Vicar General of the Diocese delivered the vote of thanks. Let us pray that the will of God continues to prevail in all the services of our Diocese.



VOCATION AND MISSION

Rev. Fr. Jose Paul Purayidathikunnel Persistent in the Divine Call

Rev. Fr Jose Paul Purayidathikunnel, an young priest of the Diocese of Thuckalay shares his life and vocation straight from his heart.

I was born on 19 June 1989 as the third child to my parents. First, let me say with joy and pride that my family is a joint family. My childhood was spend with my grand parents, my aunt and her family and my family living in the same house. My parents are Paul Abraham and Molly Paul Purayidathikunnel. My father



is a businessman and my mother is a home maker. My native parish is St. Joseph's Church, Kannimala, which belongs to the Diocese of Kanjirappally. I remember my childhood very vividly with great joy and enthusiasm. Even though we are living in the land of Lord Ayyappa, the Hindu God, my parents have strong Catholic faith. My grandmother and aunt influenced me a lot to direct my life toward ecclesiastical functions, especially how to participate in the Holy Mass and other Sacraments of the Church. As a homemaker, my mother was greatly influenced by the great homemaker Blessed Virgin Mary. My mother's life induced in me a special piety towards Mother Mary.

During my schooling, my great inspirations were the teachers and my friends. The treasure of my schooling was the deep friendship that I had with many, especially the friendship with Aby, a man of care. Till 7th standard, I studied at St. James U P School, Kannimala, and then went to St. Antony's School, Mundakayam to continue high school studies.



Even though I wished to join the minor seminary after the completion of 10th standard, I could not do so. Then I joined the SNDP HS School for higher studies. After the completion of 12th standard, I wished to join the minor seminary of the Diocese of Kanjirappally, but my parents had not allowed me to do this. So I joined St. Dominic's College, Kanjirappally for my graduation. When I joined the department of Mathematics, I had a strong desire to become an Astronaut. For achieving this goal, I joined Ponjesly College of Engineering, Nagercoil, after the completion of my first graduation.

During this time a great change had taken place in my life. During my stay with my cousin, Rev. Fr Thomas Thekkeyil, a priest in the Diocese of Thuckalay, I could witness the life of a priest and then, I changed my desire to become an astronaut and once again, a strong desire filled me to become a holy priest. When I informed my desire to Rev. Fr Thekkeyil, he was struck with wonder and his interaction with me showed that he was truly confused. I

waited for a month and I spoke to him again about the same. Probably he found in this young man some seriousness about what I had expressed. He bought me to the then Bishop of Thuckalay and the present Major Archbishop, His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry. When I informed him about my vocation to the priesthood, he invited me to the minor seminary of the mission Diocese of Thuckalay. These things happened while I was studying in my second year of Engineering.

When my parents knew about this decision, they were disappointed and strongly opposed my decision. For them, this decision was very painful. In spite of the objection from my family, I officially joined the minor seminary immediately after the completion of the engineering course. After the studies in the minor seminary, the Diocese sent me to St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, Kottayam. I did my Philosophy and Theology from the same institution. This formation strengthened my vocation and formed me in my journey to priesthood.



The life at St. Thomas was a great opportunity and a gift of God. It helped me to grow in understanding and diligence. I learnt the heritage of the Syro-Malabar Church in a special manner and learnt a lot about the special liturgy. During the formation period, I had undergone so many struggles from different sides. I considered all these struggles and the subsequent corrections were the intervention of Holy Spirit and tried my level best to form myself.

During the years of my formation, I was influenced by Rev. Fr Varghese Kochuparambil, a priest from the Diocese of Kanjirappally. He had a clear vision about priestly formation and priesthood. Because of this reason, I took him as my Spiritual Confessor. When I opened my self to him, he made me as his own and helped me as his own younger brother. I am very happy to continue this relationship.

Once my seminary formation was over and my bishop decided to accept me to the eternal priesthood of Christ, I said 'Yes' to the will of God to offer myself totally for His service in the Diocese of Thuckalay. I was ordained on 20 April 2022 at St. Mathew's Church, Annikarai. Today I serve our Diocese as the Assistant Parish Priest at St. Joseph's Forane Church and Assistant Correspondent of A P J M Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Soosaipuram.

Today, I can reflect and find what influenced me to offer myself for the service of the Lord. It is the saintly life of many priests that I have come across at different stages of my life, and of course, the prayer life of my mother.

I urge our young friends in Catholic Faith not to be afraid of the world but to open your hearts to Jesus and to listen to His Inner Voice to share His Eternal Priesthood and to serve the world through the Church.





Thuckalay
MISSION
DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY

Yet another **NEW YEAR**
to add more Experience



**LET OUR MOMENTS SPARKLE WITH JOY
AND
SMILES SHINE BRIGHT IN THE NEW YEAR 2023!**

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