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DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY

Thuckalay Tidings



**UNDER THE SILENT
STRENGTH OF A FATHER'S
SHADOW, WE FIND OUR
WAY HOME**



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THUCKALAY TIDINGS

March 2026 | Vol. 6 | Issue 3

A Monthly online newsletter of Diocese of Thuckalay

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INSIDE STORY

➔ Message from the Bishop	3
➔ Called to Serve Chosen to Lead	4
➔ Lamb to My Feet	5
➔ Missionary Who Lives in Our Hearts	6
➔ Fuel for the Journey	7
➔ Healing Hands, Shifting Gears: The TNBC Health Commission Welcomes New Visionary Leadership.	8
➔ Art. Heart. KII Kids	9
➔ A Joyful Welcome: Mr. & Mrs. Dominique Blétry Honor Our Diocese with a Special Visit	10
➔ Built on faith. Rooted in love. The Cathedral Dream begins Today	11
➔ Grace for the body, peace for the mind.	12
➔ Foundations of Faith: A Bible Bowl for Moms	13
➔ Walk in the Sacred Path.	14
➔ Missionaries united together	15
➔ Social Service at a glance	16
➔ Digitalized Library @Minor Seminary	17
➔ In Memoriam: Mr. Muthaiah.	18
➔ In Memory of a Life Well-Lived.	19



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Message

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Greetings from the diocese of Thuckalay!

As we have entered in the month of March and to the solemn celebration of the Paschal Mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ, I write to you with a heart full of gratitude for the prayers and support you offer to the diocese.

It is with joy and heartfelt gratitude to God, on Tuesday, 17 February 2026, the Foundation Stone of our St Joseph Cathedral Church was solemnly blessed and laid at Soosaipuram. Dear friends we begin this sacred construction not with an abundance of material resources but with an abundance of faith, trusting entirely in Divine Providence. As the Psalmist reminds us, “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain” (Ps 127:1). It is God who wills this Cathedral, and it is God who will bring it to completion through our prayers.

In this issue of Thuckalay Tiding let’s reflect on the life of St Joseph whose Solemnity we celebrate on the 19th March is not merely a date on our liturgical calendar — he is the Patron of the Universal Church, the silent guardian of the Body of Christ, and, in a most personal way, the model and companion of every family. Pope Francis beautifully described him as “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet, and hidden presence,” yet one who played “an incomparable role in the history of salvation. The Holy Scriptures, though sparing in words about St Joseph, paint a portrait of extraordinary virtue through his actions alone. Not a single word of his is recorded in the Gospels, yet his life speaks volumes about faith, obedience, courage, and selfless love.

St Joseph’s foremost virtue was his prompt and unconditional obedience to God’s will. St Matthew records four divine interventions in his life, each demanding an immediate and costly response. “When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him” (Mt 1:24). This phrase, repeated in various forms throughout the narrative, reveals a man who never questioned, delayed, or negotiated with God. When commanded to flee to Egypt, leaving his livelihood and security, he “rose and took the child and his mother by night” (Mt 2:14) — unhesitatingly, in the darkness. How often, like Joseph, are we called to respond promptly when the hour is inconvenient, the directive unexpected, and the cost real

Faithful Guardianship. St Joseph was entrusted with the two greatest treasures of heaven — Jesus and Mary. His primary mission was to protect, provide for, and create the conditions in which the Son of God could grow, be formed, and fulfil His salvific mission. He shielded the Holy Family from danger, secured their safety in Egypt, guided their return to Nazareth, and maintained the sacred order of the household of Nazareth. St Joseph was also the guardian of Israel’s sacred traditions. He brought the child Jesus to be presented in the Temple, observed the prescriptions of the Law with faithful devotion, and led the Holy Family on the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover. He did not reinvent the faith he had received — he transmitted it with reverence and love.

As we cross the threshold of Great Lent, the Church calls us once again to the threefold discipline of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving — not as burdens imposed from without but as graces offered to those who hunger for God. Let our prayer deepen during these fifty days: lengthen your time before the Blessed Sacrament, pray the Stations of the Cross with your parish members, go for frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Let your fasting be genuine — a discipline that truly costs something and opens the heart to solidarity with the poor. And let your almsgiving be generous, teaching your faithful by example that our possessions are not our own but held in trust for those in need.

I commend each of you to the loving intercession of St Joseph. May he, who was silent yet faithful, hidden yet indispensable, teach us the beauty of family life wholly given to God and to those entrusted to our care! May this Lent bring each of us ever close to the risen Lord.

Yours in Christ

+ **George Rajendran sdb**
Bishop of Thuckalay



Called to Serve Chosen to Lead



On February 2, 2026, eleven members gathered at the FCC Convent in Kayathar for the Extended Territory Mission Get-together. The day opened with the Holy Qurbana and moved into a series of inspiring updates on local outreach. Highlights included the launch of the 'Educare' initiative in Kayathar and a celebration of the Tirunelveli Mission's successful community fundraising for their new church. Looking ahead, the Cumbum and Theni Missions proposed building a Home for the Destitute, while the Virudhunagar Mission introduced a career guidance program and a unique 'Mobile Convent' project by the Sacred Heart Sisters. Organized by Fr. Tobin Alapurackal, the meeting wrapped up with a heartfelt call for commitment, communion, and continuity, followed by a shared agape meal.



Lamb to My Feet

The Diocesan Bible Quiz held in Padanthalumoodu on February 8, 2026, was an outstanding success, bringing together 487 students from Classes 5 to 12. It was deeply impressive to witness such a significant number of young people demonstrating their scriptural knowledge and dedication across the various age categories. Sincere commendations are extended to every participant for their diligent efforts, as well as to the organizers, whose exceptional coordination and meticulous planning ensured the event proceeded seamlessly.



Missionary Who Lives in Our Hearts



The diocese gathered in St. Joseph's Church in Kayalpuram to observe the 13th death anniversary of Our former Diocesan Administrator, Rev. Fr. Philip Kodiyanthara. The memorial began at 11:00 AM with a Requiem Holy Qurbana celebrated by Rev. Fr. Jithin Kodiyanthara as the main celebrant, concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, Rev. Fr. Josy Puthenpurackal, and Rev. Fr. Toji Parambilparambil. During the service, Fr. Josy delivered a meaningful homily reflecting on Fr. Philip's lasting legacy and influence. The event was well-attended, notably by parishioners from the Manjalumoodu Forane Parish who traveled to join the local community in prayer. Following the Qurbana, the congregation moved to Fr. Philip's tomb for the Office for the Dead.

Fuel for the Journey

On February 10–11, 2026, the Presbyterium of the Diocese convened at Sangamam for two-days of On-going Formation Programme, emphasizing that priestly development is a lifelong continuation of the journey begun in the seminary. The event opened with a welcome from Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, followed by three insightful sessions led by Rev. Fr. Mani Puthiyidam, who focused on teamwork, mission orientation, and the centrality of the Word of God. After a spiritual evening of prayer and Adoration led

by Fr. Printo Kurias, the second day was dedicated to PowerPoint evaluations and reports from various diocesan departments. These presentations sparked productive discussions and fostered a collective sense of pride in the extensive apostolic work being carried out. The program concluded with expressions of gratitude to the organizers, Fr. Jose Muttathupadam and Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil, and to all the fathers for their active and enriching participation.



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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Kanyakumari District,
Tamilnadu – 629 175, INDIA

Contact Mission Procure:
Fr. Sunil Antony
+91 4651 250633; +91 94871 65903;
Email: bishopofthuckalay@gmail.com

HEALING HANDS, SHIFTING GEARS:

The TNBC Health Commission Welcomes New Visionary Leadership.

Serving as the Chairman of the Health Commission at the Tamil Nadu level for the past six years has been a transformative period for the Diocese of Thuckalay, marking a significant era of leadership in strengthening the Church's health ministry across the state. This responsibility served as a profound recognition of the Diocese's commitment, allowing the Health Commission's influence to extend deep into every parish through the establishment of active volunteer groups. These dedicated teams brought the ministry to the grassroots level, fostering vital health awareness and providing compassionate care to the sick and those in need. The success of this mission was underpinned by the unified leadership and unwavering support of the Reverend Fathers who served as Directors—Rev. Fr. Thomas Poovathummoottil, Rev. Fr. Jimmy



Thekkekadumathil, Rev. Fr. Ajin C. Joseph, Rev. Fr. Subin Puthenpurackal, and Rev. Fr. Mahesh Antony. Their collective dedication and spirit of cooperation were essential in building a lasting legacy of healing, leaving behind a deep sense of gratitude for all who journeyed together to serve as instruments of hope.



Art. Heart. KII Kids

On February 8, 2026, the KII department hosted the KALAI VIZHA competition for the Kulanthai Isho Iyakkam children of the Kaliyal and Arukani Foranes at Kaliyal School. The event was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Varghese Kottoor CMI, the Kaliyal Forane Vicar, and saw enthusiastic participation from all local parishes. A second phase of the competition for the remaining Foranes took place on February 14, 2026, at St. Michael's School, Kattathurai, where Rev. Fr. Joshy Thevelekara CMI performed the inauguration. The gathering was also addressed by Rev. Fr. Abilash Xavier Raj, the Catechism Department Director, who offered his felicitations. The successful execution of these events, which drew active involvement from every parish, was credited to the effective organization and leadership of Fr. Toji Kozhuvakandathil, the Director of KII.



A JOYFUL WELCOME: Mr. & Mrs. Dominique Blétry Honour Our Diocese with a Special Visit

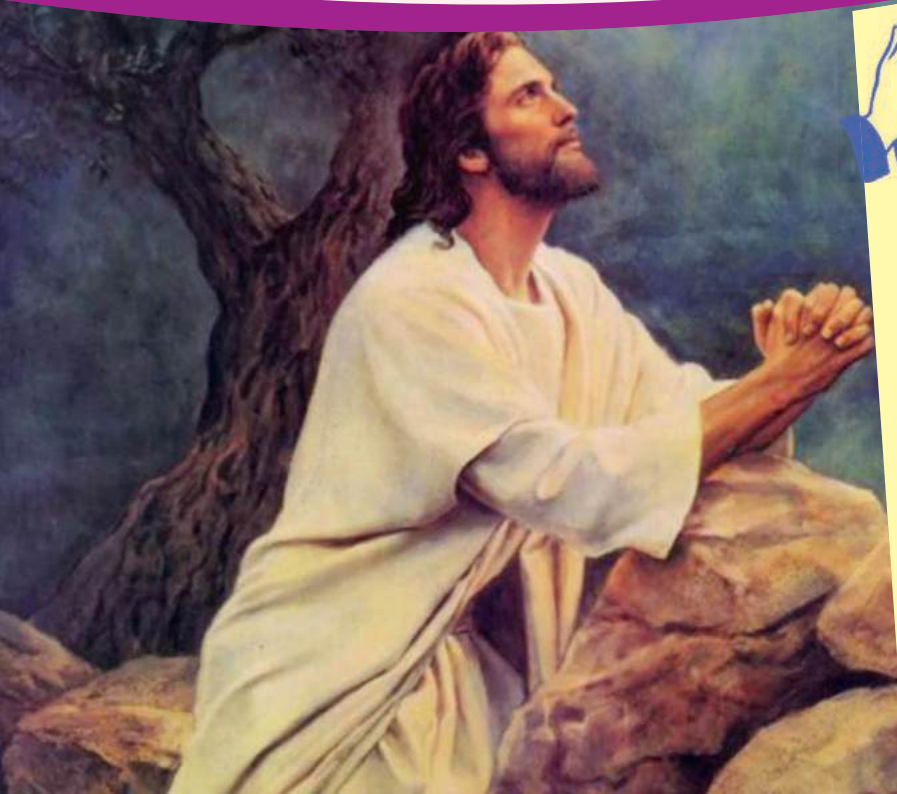
On February 17, 2026, the Diocese of Thuckalay welcomed Mr. Dominique Blétry, Secretary General of L'Œuvred'Orient, and his wife, Mrs. Isabelle Blétry, for a productive two-day official visit. Accompanied by Rev. Fr. George Kalangara SDB, the guests visited various mission sites—including Cheenivilai, Marthandam, and Paraicode—to witness the impact of their agency's vital funding. The visit's highlight was the foundation stone laying of St. Joseph Cathedral in Soosaipuram, where the couple was profoundly moved by the vibrant faith and generosity of the local community. Following a meticulously organized itinerary, the guests concluded their stay with a warm farewell at the Bishop's House of the Diocese of Marthandam.



BUILT ON FAITH. ROOTED IN LOVE.

The Cathedral Dream begins Today.


The Diocese marked a historic milestone on February 17, 2026, with the laying of the foundation stone for St. Joseph's Cathedral in Soosaipuram. The new "Mother Church" is envisioned as a spiritual home and a beacon of hope for future generations. The day was the culmination of weeks of preparation, including a "One Day's Wage" offering that saw the entire community chip in to support the project. The afternoon began with a warm welcome for special guests from France, Mr. Dominic and Mrs. Isabella, followed by a moving hour of adoration. In a beautiful display of unity, the congregation processed to the construction site, where the Bishop blessed the stones for both new Cathedral and a Mission Church in Thirunelveli. The Bishop officially laid the stone—reminding everyone that the real church is built of its people—the celebration wrapped up with an agape meal. It was a day defined by deep gratitude for the hard work of the Vicar General, the organizing committees, and the incredible hospitality of the Soosaipuram parishioners.



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



Grace for the body, peace for the mind

The Diocese observed World Day of the Sick on Sunday, February 22, 2026, honoring the tradition started by Pope St. John Paul II. The day focused on supporting the sick and their caregivers through special liturgical prayers, including the Karosoosa, and family-led prayer at home. Volunteers and priests visited bedridden patients to offer companionship and Holy Communion, while several parishes reached out to the homeless with food donations. This meaningful celebration was made possible by the guidance of Rev. Fr. Antony Mahesh, whose dedicated efforts ensured the day was a true success across all parishes.

புனித வின்சென்ட் தே பவுல் சபை மஞ்சாலுமடு





Foundations of Faith : A Bible Bowl for Moms

Mathru Jyothis organized a forane-level Bible Quiz Competition that drew 256 participants, including 50 from Manjalumoodu, 40 from Nithiravilai, 37 from Kaliyal, 36 from Soosaipuram, 33 from Thuckalay Pilankalai, 30 from Padanthalumoodu, and 20 from Arukani. Participants expressed great enthusiasm, noting that the competitive format inspired a deeper, more prayerful engagement with the scriptures. Organized by Fr. Jimmy Thekkekadumathil, the initiative was widely commended for its meaningful impact on the faith formation of the community's mothers on February 22, 2026.



WALK IN THE SACRED PATH



The Sinai Retreat Centre in Kalluvilai has permanently installed the 14 Stations of the Way of the Cross to provide the faithful with a serene, mountain-like space for reflecting on the Passion of Christ. The new site was dedicated on February 28, 2026, during a day of prayer that included the Rosary, Adoration, and a Holy Qurbana presided over by the Bishop. The Bishop invites all members of the

diocese to utilize this local "Sinai" for their Lenten devotions and Friday prayers as an alternative to traveling to distant shrines. Thanks to the vision of the director, Fr. Vinu D. Joseph. The centre also offers daily spiritual counseling and Confession from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM to support pilgrims in their spiritual journey.



MISSIONARIES UNITED TOGETHER

The Fathers and Sisters of the Tenkasi Mission gathered at St. Mary's Church, Vanchinagar, for a session of prayer, reflection, and planning. Presided over by Vicar General Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, the meeting featured updates on successful retreats in Sundarapandyapuram and Ambur, as well as reports on various mission challenges. Key decisions included organizing a joint Lenten Way of the Cross from Border to Vanchinagar, rotating lay retreats between local parishes, and prioritizing the activation of the Mathru Jyothis in every community. After a concluding talk by Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, on the importance of house visits and prayer, the group enjoyed an agape meal coordinated by Fr. Sumesh. This gathering took place on 28 February 2026.



SOCIAL SERVICE AT A GLANCE

Scooty Training at Malaicode – 13 February 2026

Kanyakumari Social Service Society inaugurated a one-month scooty training at Malaicode with 24 students. Rev. Fr. Mahesh Antony presided, and Rev. Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil felicitated. Mrs. Sujitha serves as trainer. Organized by Mrs. Selvi, the programme promotes women's confidence and independence.



Aari Work Training Conclusion – Muzhucode

The one-month Aari Work Training concluded on 26 February 2026 at Muzhucode, organized by Kanyakumari Social Service Society. Rev. Fr. Mahesh Antony presided the programme. Ms. Rasmitha and two students shared experiences. Certificates and a cultural programme marked the event. Twenty women successfully completed the course.



Tailoring Course Inauguration – Pathukany

The three-month Tailoring Course was inaugurated on 11 February 2026 at Pathukany by Kanyakumari Social Service Society. Sixteen women enrolled to gain vocational skills for self-employment. Rev. Fr. Mahesh Antony presided and encouraged financial independence through tailoring. Mrs. Pushpa Latha outlined the training plan. Organized by Mrs. Reena, Animator, the programme began with prayer and concluded with thanks, marking a hopeful start.



Digitalized Library @Minor Seminary

The Library of St. Mary's Minor Seminary has officially gone digital, thanks to a generous donation of over one lakh rupees from Rev. Fr. Mathew Thekkekkutt. The seminary is incredibly grateful for his support, which will go a long way in helping the seminarians with their studies and intellectual growth. The new online library (OPAC) is now up and running for browsing and checking out books, and all Reverend Fathers are encouraged to jump in and make use of the facility for their own research and pastoral work.





IN MEMORIAM: MR. MUTHAIAH

It is with profound sorrow that the diocese received the sad news of the demise of Mr. Muthaiah (84), a parishioner of Marappady, who was called to his eternal reward on 16 February 2026. A dedicated lay missionary of our Diocese, Mr. Muthaiah played a pivotal role for many years in the Diocesan Department of Education. We remain deeply grateful to God for his decades of selfless service and his commitment to our mission.

In Memory of a Life Well-Lived



Mrs. Thresiamma Joseph (89)
beloved mother of Fr Joshy Thevalakkara CMI



Mrs. Lisamma (67)
beloved mother of Sr. Tessiya Puthenchira SABS

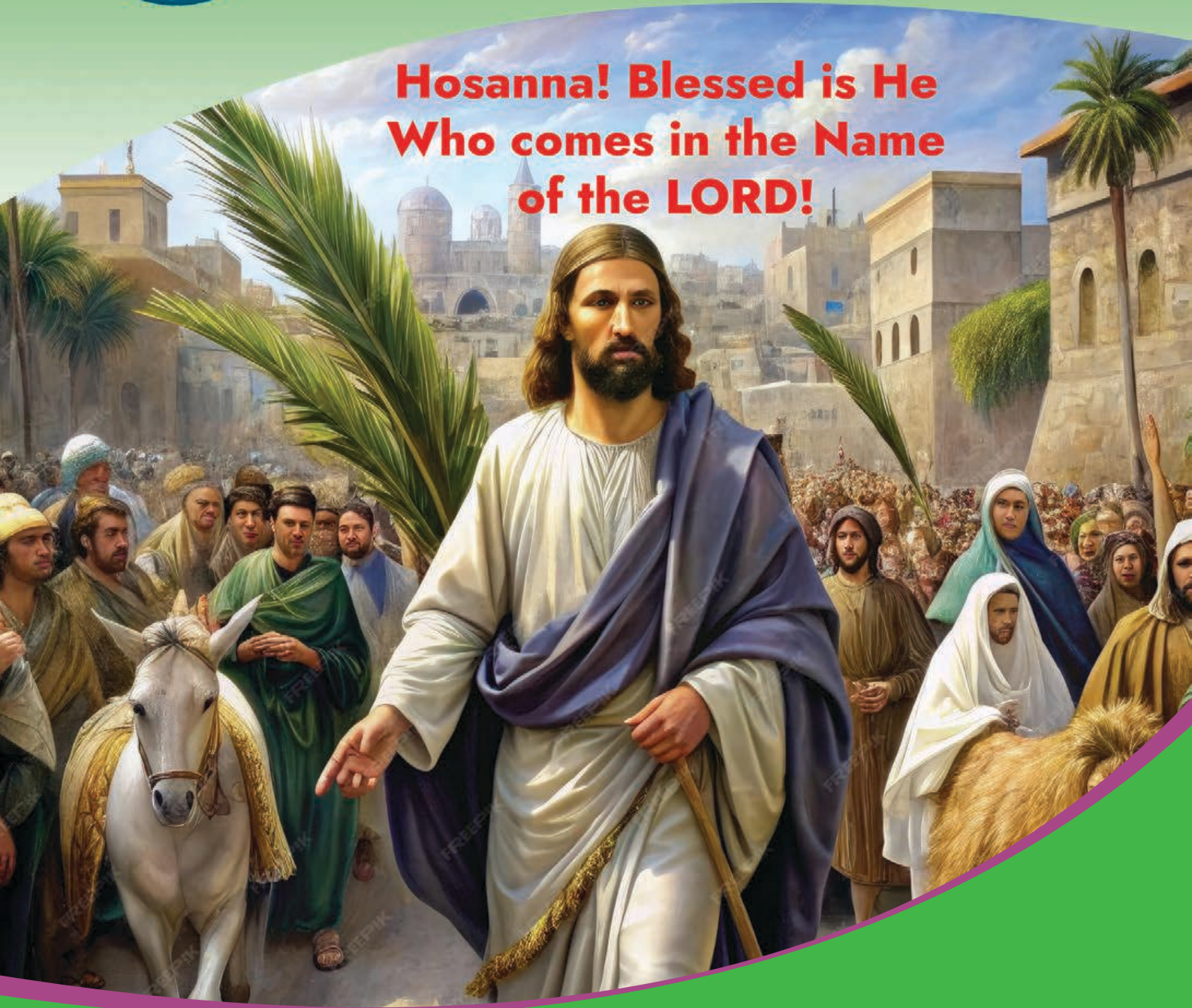


Mrs. Annam (87)
the beloved mother of Sr. Mary Koyikara SJSM



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**Hosanna! Blessed is He
Who comes in the Name
of the LORD!**



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