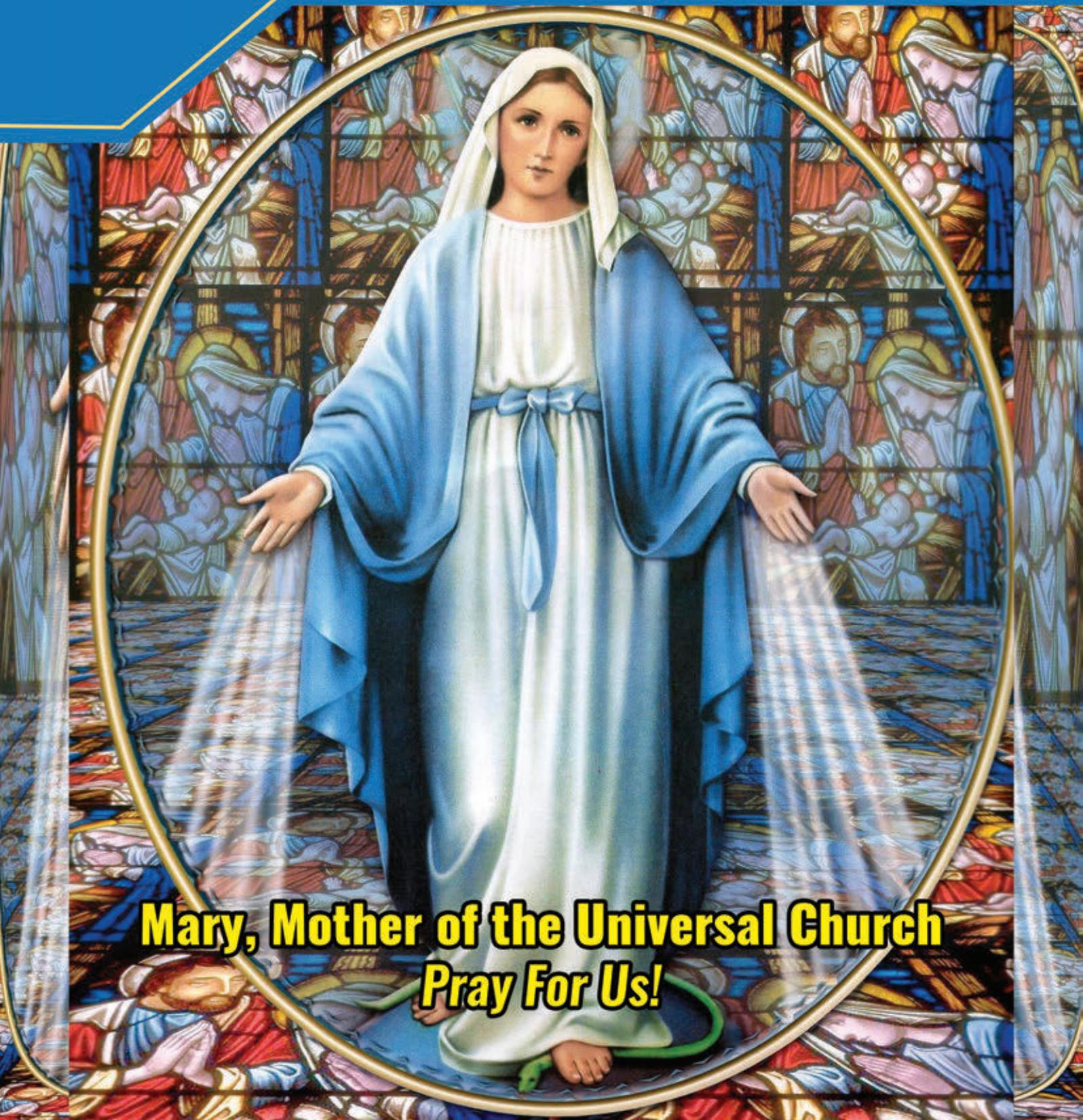


THUCKALAY TIDINGS

OCTOBER 2022 | VOL. 2 | ISSUE 10
DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY



**Mary, Mother of the Universal Church
Pray For Us!**



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THUCKALAY TIDINGS

October 2022 | Vol. 2 | Issue 10

A Monthly online newsletter of Diocese of Thuckalay

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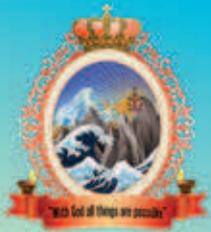
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DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY
BISHOP'S HOUSE
P. B. No. 12, Thuckalay P.O.
Kanyakumari District, Tamilnadu – 629 175



Message

Dear and Loving Friends in Jesus Christ,

Dear Friends in Jesus Christ,

Greetings and prayerful wishes from Diocese of Thuckalay.

The month of October has always been characterized by Marian spirituality and solemn recitation of the Holy Rosary. Holy Rosary has been a prayer that brings families, communities and people together. This is a month when Rosaries are multiplied, pilgrimages to shrines are frequent, need for prayers to the Virgin is felt stronger. We are all called upon to intensify our prayers and recitation of the Rosary, seeking the intervention of the Divine as we experience the atrocities of the natural calamities and for the peaceful and immediate conclusion of the war in Ukraine.

Many Catholics have shared with me on the miraculous effect of the Rosary in their personal and family lives; I have often wondered at the ardent faith of the simple Catholics in this practice of prayer and piety.

The apparitions of Mother Mary at different periods of world history and the related miracles have always boosted our Faith and have drawn us towards God and spirituality. Rosary has been a powerful tool to seek the intercession of Our Blessed Mother. Every time we recite the Rosary, we are blessed with the opportunity to reflect and admire the life of Our Lord; it is a humbling act for ourselves and surrender ourselves to the will of God, as Our Blessed Mother did in the Joyful Mysteries, at the wedding at Cana, in the crucifixion and death of our Lord, when the Holy Spirit descended upon Her and the Apostles, and at Her Assumption and Coronation.

St. John Paul II, who prayed the Rosary often, desired that families give ample importance to Rosary as it would bring the desired peace and consolation with the family and in the community. Pope John Paul II, in his Rosarium Virginis Mariae, conveyed, “To return to the recitation of the family Rosary means filling daily life with very different images, images of the mystery of salvation: the image of the Redeemer, the image of his most Blessed Mother.”

Dear friends, I urge upon every one of you to recite daily the Rosary individually and with the family and experience the abundant blessings of God. I also request you to offer the missionary intentions of the Diocese of Thuckalay in one decade of the Rosary, at least once a week; we are sure, we will continue to experience the inspiration and strength for our missionary activities.

Let me conclude with the words of Pope Pius XI, “If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, and in your country, assemble each evening to recite the Rosary. Let not even one day pass without saying it, no matter how burdened you may be with many cares and labors.”

May God bless each one of you and keep you in peace and joy through the constant intercession of Our Blessed Mother in and through the recitation of the Rosary.



+ **George Rajendran sdb**
Bishop of Thuckalay

Priests and Religious Sangamam



The gathering of priests and religious of the Diocese was held on 24 September 2022 at Padanthalumoodu. This is an annual event to improve the interaction between priests and religious working in the Diocese. It is also an occasion to wish all the priests and religious who celebrate their Jubilees of their ordination or profession during the year. The Silver Jubilarians for this year are Rev. Fr Mathew Thekkekkuttu, Rev. Fr Thomas

Thekkethalackal CMI, Rev. Fr Jogi Marangattu CMI, Rev. Sr Lisa Plathara SH, Rev. Sr Mareena Thakadiyal SH, Rev. Sr Sherin Maria CMC, Rev. Sr Mary Elsitta LSDP, Rev. Sr Jessin FDSHJ, Rev. Sr Helency Francis DSHS, Rev. Sr Mini Thomas DSHS, and Rev. Sr Elseena ASMI. Besides the other programmes related to the gathering, all the Jubilarians were honored and thanked for their selfless service to the Church and its people through the Diocese of Thuckalay.



Blessing of Multi- Purpose Hall at Mankarai School

A new multi-purpose hall was blessed by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb at St. James High School, Mankarai on 07 September 2022. Rev. Fr John Paul, the Correspondent of Tamil Medium Schools of the Diocese Thuckalay, teachers and staff of the school were present for the blessing ceremony. The blessing was followed by a staff meeting, which discussed at length the current status and plan for the future development of the School.



Consecration of the New Church and Blessing of *Kalkurisu* at Kalluvilai

The community of St. Mother Teresa was formed in 2004 by Rev. Fr Joseph Muthuplackal MST with four families. For the last seventeen years, the community nourished and deepened their spiritual life in a chapel room of the Catechetical Centre of the Diocese. The Diocese allotted a plot of land to the community that belongs to the Kanyakumari Social Service Society (KKSSS), the social arm of the Diocese. Rev. Fr Saji Ezhampaserril sdb, former Parish Priest, began the construction of the new Church in 2018.

Due to financial constraints and the COVID-19 pandemic, the progress of the construction was slow. Rev. Fr Aby Poovathumootil, the present Parish Priest, completed the work. On 4 September 2022, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb consecrated the new Church, Blessed the *Kalkurisu* (Cross made of Stone) and presided over the concelebrated Holy Eucharist in the presence of Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General, Fathers and Sisters of the Diocese and the parishioners.



Home Mission and Retreat in Tenkasi Mission

The Congregation of the Mother of Carmel (CMC) Sisters of Chavara Province, Thuckalay conducted the Home Mission in the mission centers of the Tenkasi Mission during 13-23 September 2022. They conducted their home missions at Mekkarai, Pudur, Tenkasi, Sundarapandiapuram, Ambur and Puliyarai. The Franciscan Clarist Congregation (FCC) Sisters of San Joe Province, Thuckalay conducted Home Mission at Vanchinagar on 7 & 8 August 2022 and it concluded with a one-day retreat for the people.

The entire community of the Tenkasi Mission gathered at Puliyarai on 25 September 2022 and spent a day in prayer. The retreat was animated by the *Irakkathin Oottu* (Springs of Mercy) Retreat Centre headed by Rev. Bro James. We were happy that about 150 people participated in the Retreat, Holy Eucharist, Adoration and Sacrament of Reconciliation. The priests and religious of the Tenkasi Mission participated in the programme and led the faithful in prayer and reflection.



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

Kambam SH Convent Blessing

The Sacred Heart (SH) Sisters of Kanjrapally Province started a community in a rented house at Cumbum in Theni District of Tamil Nadu on 14 September 2022 to begin their missionary activities. Very Rev. Fr Jose Vellamattam, Vicar General of the Diocese of Kanjrapally blessed the Convent and Rev. Fr Joshy Kulathumkal, Chancellor of our Diocese presided over the concelebrated Holy Eucharist. Rev. Sr Mary Philip SH, the Provincial Superior of Kanjrapally Province, Rev. Fr Johnsilal Arackalaparampil, Financial Officer of the Diocese, Reverend Sisters from Theni Mission and Curia Members of Kanjrapally Diocese were present for the ceremony, which was followed by an agape meal. We wish God's blessings to the Sisters who are staying there and take part actively in the Ad Gentes Mission and Evangelization of the Church.





Blessing of St. Alphonsa Multipurpose Community Centre at Ariyur

The newly constructed St. Alphonsa Multipurpose Community Centre at Ariyur near Madurai was blessed by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb on 18 September 2022 in the presence of Curia Members, SABS Provincial Superior of Thuckalay Province, Fathers and Sisters from Thuckalay and the extended mission territories and a good number of children and people from the village. The land had been donated by Mr. Jomichan, one of the Syro-Malabar migrant community members from Madurai for the mission work. We had established the St. Alphonsa Vocational Training Centre. The SABS sisters provide tuition facilities for children besides training women and young girls in

tailoring and embroidery. The blessing was followed by a meeting and cultural programmes presented by the villagers. The presence of the local political leaders was encouraging. During the address, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb emphasized the need to have a hall for the spiritual, social, intellectual and economic development of the society by providing skill-developed and value-based programmes to the poor and needy. The Diocese of Thuckalay is grateful to the Italian Bishops Conference for their support in the construction of the Vocational Training cum Community Centre.



Curia Members Visit from Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad



The Major Archiepiscopal Curia of Kakkanad including 8 Fathers and one regent brother came to visit our Diocese, the Pilgrim Centers and Shrines in the Kanyakumari District during 23-25 September 2022. The team consisted of the Vice-chancellor of the Curia, President of the Tribunal, Secretaries of the Syro Malabar Mission, Internet Mission, Commission for Catechesis, Liturgy, Media and Clergy. In three

days, they visited major institutions and mission stations of the Diocese. On 25 September 2022, they celebrated the Sunday Holy Eucharist at Anayadi Parish, imploring the blessings of God on the Diocese. The visit and exploring the Missions in the Diocese of Thuckalay was a new and enriching experience for the Syro-Malabar Curia.



Free Medical and Blood Donation Camp at Manjalumoodu

On 25 September 2022, World Heart Day was celebrated in the Diocese. As a part of the celebration, an awareness programme on heart diseases, an exhibition, a blood donation camp and a free medical camp was conducted at Little Flower Forane Church campus, Manjalumoodu. The programme was inaugurated by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb, who is also the Chairman of the Health Care Commission of the Tamil Nadu Bishops Council (TNBC). The sessions on heart diseases and their remedies were animated by Dr. Christin and Rev. Sr Josephine, Secretary, TNBC Health Care

Commission. We are happy that about 600 people participated in all the events. The medical camp was conducted by the united effort of Karakonam Medical College and Holy Cross Hospital Nagercoil. The Medical camp was led by Dr. Sabu, Assistant Principal, Karakonam Medical College with the collaboration of 5 doctors, 22 nurses, 15 volunteers, and 4 pharmacists. Around 300 people had benefited from the medical camp. Blood tests and ECG were done and free medicines were distributed. The people expressed their joy for the organisation of effective programmes and medical camp.





Graduation Day at St. Alphonsa College

The Fifth Graduation Ceremony of St. Alphonsa College of Arts and Science, Soosaipuram, Karungal was held on 26 September 2022. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb presided over the Graduation Ceremony. The Chief Guest, Dr. G. Annadurai, Registrar, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli presented the UG and PG Degrees to candidates and delivered the graduation day address. In the presidential address, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb congratulated all the Graduates and Post Graduates and motivated them to focus on the right direction and values in their lives for their personal and social development. Rev. Fr Antony Jose, Secretary and Correspondent of the College, Rev. Dr. Michael Arockiasamy, Director and Co-correspondent and Dr. S. Isias, Principal also witnessed the event.

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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Kalluvilai, Mulagumoodu P.O

Kanyakumari District

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Palliative Care Meet

Kanyakumari Social Service Society (KKSSS), the social arm of the Diocese Thuckalay, organized a one-day animation programme for the stakeholders of Mother Teresa Palliative Care on 27 September 2022 at Sangamam. A team of experts from Pallium India, Trivandrum animated the programme on the topic "New ways of caring for the needy". Reverend Fathers and Sisters from various palliative care units such as Tenkasi, Thirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts attended the programme. His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb addressed the gathering and shared views and expectations of the Diocese in our Palliative Care Ministry.



NEW MISSION at Virudhunagar

The Archdiocese of Changanacherry purchased a plot of land at Inam Rattiapatti, in Virudhunagar District on 19 September 2022, which is about five kilometers from O. Kovilpatti. The first Church in Virudhunagar District was consecrated by Mar Joseph Perunthottam on 03 April 2022. The new mission began on 28 September 2022, with the rosary procession and Rev. Fr Peter Kizhakeyil celebrating the Holy Eucharist in a small shed already existing in the newly bought land. More than 50 people, including children and adults, participated in the celebration. We congratulate and thank Rev. Fr Peter Kizhakeyil for his ardent mission zeal to begin new ventures in mission areas. We also appreciate Rev. Fr Akash Keeranchira and Rev. Srs Ruby, Jansalet and Vimal for their committed service in the mission of the Diocese of Thuckalay.



You can support the missionary activities by sponsoring a Seminararian 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:

Bishop's House, P.B. 12, Thuckalay,
 Kanyakumari District,
 Tamilnadu – 629 175, INDIA

Contact Mission Procure:

Rev. Fr Robin Jose
 +91 4651 250633; +91 94871 65903;
 Email: bishopofthuckalay@gmail.com



Blessing of Multipurpose Hall and Stage at Thettivilai

We were unable to modify or build any structure at Thettivilai due to the constant disturbances of fundamentalist groups or court cases. However, through constant prayers and legal assistance, Rev. Fr Augustine Thalodil, Parish Priest, along with Rev. Fr Robin Jose, Assistant Parish Priest and with the full support of the parishioners could achieve this

herculean task. On 25 September 2022, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb celebrated the Holy Mass at St. Michael's Church, Thettivilai and released a handwritten Bible made by the parishioners. His Excellency blessed the newly constructed stage in front of the presbytery and the multipurpose hall on the terrace of the priest's residence.



New Presbytery Blessing and Mission Sangamam at Mekkarai

The newly constructed presbytery at St. George Church, Mekkarai was blessed on 17 September 2022 by Rev. Fr Joshy Kulathumkal, Chancellor of the Diocese. The Fathers, Sisters of Tenkasi Mission and the parishioners of Mekkarai Parish were present for the blessing ceremony, which was followed by one-hour Eucharistic Adoration at Holy Cross Convent, Mekkarai. The mission gathering was held soon after the adoration; all the Fathers and Sisters participated and shared their mission experiences. Rev. Fr Thomas Thuckalay welcomed the Fathers and Sisters who landed on the mission for a new evangelization, especially Rev. Fr James Karimankal, the new mission superior of the MCBS congregation. The action plan prepared for the Jubilee celebration of the Tenkasi mission was discussed in the meeting and the programmes were planned.





Priests' Conference

The Diocesan Priests' Conference was held at Sangamam on 13 September 2022. It began with the Eucharistic Adoration and Sacrament of Confession. The first part of the meeting was presided over by Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General of the Diocese. Rev. Fr Joshy Kulathumkal, Chancellor presented the rights and duties of Forane Vicars by explaining the canon law. Rev. Fr Jinoy Thottiyil presented the new old age home project at Moolamattam. The updated

website of the Diocese was introduced at the conference. Different departments presented their programmes during the meeting. The committees were formed to organize the Diocesan Convention and diocesan day. His Excellency, Mar George Rajendran sdb sincerely thanked all the Fathers for wishing him in advance on the 10th anniversary of his Episcopal ordination. The meeting ended with an Onam meal.



Blessing of Renovated Church *and* New Kurishadi at Varuthattu

St. Xavier's community at Varuthattu was formed in 1963 by Rev. Fr Zacharias Kaithara, one of the pioneer missionaries of the Diocese of Thuckalay. Gradually the mission developed and now it has become an established Parish consisting of 130 families. The new Altar was consecrated on 27 December 2013 in the Golden Jubilee year of the Parish. Now, with the new roof, the renovated Church was blessed on 10 September 2022. On the same

day, the newly built Kurisadi (Grotto) was also blessed by His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb. The Holy Eucharist was presided over by the Bishop and Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil, Vicar General, Fr. Johnsilal Arackaparampil, Finance Officer, Rev. Fr Jose Muttathupadam, Forane Vicar and Rev. Fr. Printo Kurias, Parish Priest concelebrated the Holy Eucharist.



Blessing of Renovated Grotto at Kaliyal

On the feast of St. Mary's Church, Kaliyal, His Excellency Mar George Rajendran sdb blessed the renovated grotto of the Parish on 07 September 2022 in the presence of the Parish Priest, Sisters and parishioners. The blessing ceremony was followed by the solemn celebration of the Holy Eucharist and an agape meal.

FROM A BITTER CHILDHOOD TO A BETTER FUTURE

Sharing and Caring Life of Sisters



Name : C. Makesh Kumar
 Disability : Down syndrome
 Percentage of Disability : 80 %
 Date of Birth : 05-04-1995
 Father's Name : Mr. A. Chandran
 Mother's Name : Mrs. C. Saratha

The life of Makesh is another miracle that took place through the loving care of our sisters in one of the special schools in the Diocese of Thuckalay run by the SABS congregation. He was only eight years when he enrolled at Shanthi Nilayam. He stood out from others in terms of appearance and behavior. As a result of his weird behavior, he had an unhappy childhood. As he had the habit of throwing stones at people whenever he saw them; he was isolated from society. Making no effort to understand the reason for his peculiar behavior, the society avoided him. While the

children of his age were having fun at play, Makesh remained alone with no friends or games or leisure. The only friend that he had was his mother. When the society looked down upon her, she took a bold step to send him to Santhi Nilayam School for Intellectually Disabled when she heard about it, and she was certain that it would be the right place for him. She fought the good fight. She challenged, and pushed aside and tackled the societal bias. Where expectations were low, she personally worked to elevate them. She was the right mother chosen by God for Makesh.

Mrs. C. Saratha just wanted to see her dear son enjoy childhood like other children. This special mom sacrificed her life for her special son. She accompanied him every day to school and stayed until the class was over. His daily activities, such as brushing, eating, and bathing, began after 6 years of training. Besides being able to communicate with people around him, he started also answering telephone calls. Our school recognized his talent in dance and volleyball during his school days, and he is one of the best





performers in our vocational training program. In the 2018-2019 academic year, he was employed under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

Makesh is now 26 years old. Makesh says with a smile, "My future goal is to have a permanent job so that I will always have money in my pocket and I shall help my parents who sacrificed their life for me". The entire family is delighted to see his improvement. It makes his mom very happy to see how well he's doing. He was once shunned by everyone, but now he is everyone's favorite. She used to tell; "Now we can say that we were right to have decided that we would have our own happiness. Although there are still many more things to do for him, we feel that we are very happy to have hope and things that we can do for our child. We did not have to cry or be depressed about Makesh because we had things that we could do in front of us. We just appreciate that we found the right place for his formation. We will continue doing whatever we can do so that our son Makesh will be an independent person who can help society". Today Shanthi Nilayam School is proud of Makesh and his parents are thankful to the institution for the loving care provided by sisters and other staff members.



KNOWING THE MISSION

Shanthi Nilayam A House of Serenity

Shanthi Nilayam School for Differently Abled Children was established in 1993 in Paruthivilai, Kanyakumari District with 3 children in a small hut by the Congregation of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (SABS), St. Chanthal's Province Tamilnadu, under the Diocese of Thuckalay, inspired by the vision of their Heavenly Patron Venerable Bishop Thomas Kurialacherry. It was later registered in 1998 as Shanthi Nilayam Society under the Tamilnadu Societies Registration Act 1975. Our focus is the upliftment of the poor and the needy, especially women and children with disabilities. Our aim is to provide holistic care and support for PwDs to physically and mentally enable them to be independent. The highly trained and dedicated staff keep evaluating the child's progress with their advance intervention and rehabilitation techniques. Through our school, early intervention centre, and autism centre, we foster a safe and inclusive environment for children and nurture their skills for peer cognitive perception. The early intervention centre identifies the children and provides the necessary multimodal therapy, physiotherapy,



speech therapy to develop their functional skills. Adolescents with mild mental stability are given job-oriented training to make them independent and self-reliant. Our community-based programme reaches out to children living in remote villages and generates awareness on disability care. Shanthi Nilayam's dedicated service has promoted the lives of many through identification, intervention, and regular monitoring. By adopting a holistic and integrated approach Shanti Nilayam is working towards creating an inclusive society for children with special needs by making meaningful changes in their lives thus ensuring a dignified life for all. We started with 3 children and now we reached to around 1000 beneficiaries. Among them 45 children got placed in various jobs / run by business and some have managed to identify something on their own merit. Diocese of Thuckalay is proud of these selfless services of Rev. Sisters to the neglected and needy in the society.



VOCATION AND MISSION

SR. CARMEL MANNAMPARAMPIL SABS

Labourer for the Plentiful Harvest



We often hear about the crisis in the vocation to women religious life all over the world. The pioneering generation is aging, and women religious feel the oncoming dark night. Without many new members, many women religious are disappointed and even embarrassed. What is wrong with the vocation to women religious? What is the future of our religious life? Many say that the religious vocation is dying because there are very few new members. If we go just by numbers, then perhaps those critics are right. However, this argument can be disagreed. Vocation should not be judged merely by quantity. The Bible clearly reflects God's dislike of statistics and census. King David experienced God's anger when he counted soldiers. Why was the census such a sin against God? It reflected Israel's desire to control, quantify and measure the work of God. The vast work of God cannot be quantified, increased nor decreased.

One of the blessings of the Diocese of Thuckalay is the presence of many women religious and their missionary services together with the Bishop and the priests. Diocese shares the joy for the new vocations to different religious congregations. In this issue, Tidings team shares the vocation and life of a young sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Sr. Carmel Mannampampil SABS. She was born on 29 August 1991 as the third child of George Thomas and Alice George in Manimala. She has two elder sisters, Shalini and Malu. She had her primary education at Little Flower Lower Primary School, Manimala and then completed her Secondary education at CCM Higher Secondary School, Karikattoor.

Tidings Team: Thank you very much sister for accepting our invitation for sharing your vocation and life with our readers. We congratulate you for responding the call of Jesus amidst many hindrances caused by the consumeristic and egocentric life of the world today. Can you share about your vocation?

Sr. Carmel: Thank you very much for including me in your list to be interviewed for the readers of Tidings. I am extremely happy





to share my life with others especially with the youth. I am sure that even these sharing are the plan of God in order to use me as His instrument. My childhood was very simple and normal. Though I was inspired by the teachers and sisters during my school days, I had never thought about becoming a religious. I tried always my level best to be the first in the class and always it was realized. Teachers were very happy about me and they encouraged me a lot to expose my talents especially in academics. I was also an active student in the catechism classes and participated in all the activities of every association like, mission league, KCSL, etc. But what infused in me the seed of vocation was membership in Jesus Youth group. It opened my eyes and gave me a new horizon to be achieved which was not understandable to

the human intelligence, “the call of God”. It was my elder sister who helped me a lot to know Jesus closer through this Jesus youth group. When I completed my SSLC studies with distinction, I wanted to become an engineer. However, my active participation in the Jesus Youth prayer meetings and retreat began to change my own desires. Once I participated in a 5-day residential retreat and it imparted in me new inspirations to follow Jesus and to be a disciple of Him through my life. I began my higher secondary studies and during these two years I suffered a lot of physical ailments. I was not preoccupied about my illness, rather I was stronger than ever before. I had the feeling that I was always accompanied by Jesus. I started thinking more about heaven than earth. The last months of +2 studies were important for me to take a decision of my future. During this time, there was a strong inspiration in my mind to leave everything to serve Jesus as His nun. To be very frank, I was totally dependent on my parents and sisters for everything including selecting dresses for myself. When I presented my desire to join in a convent to my family members, they immediately responded negatively thinking that it was my immature feelings. I was also not able to take a decision of my own. Then another turning point of my life was my hostel life at Amalagiri B K College. I kept a cordial relation with my friends and teachers. Among the teachers, there were also sisters, who were leading a saintly life, both in words and deeds. They had always invited me to take part in their prayer moments and I found an extra ordinary happiness to participate in these pious activities, especially the time of night vigil. My own sister was also

with me in the hostel and I could not express fully what I desired for my life. After the course, I talked to my parents about my vocation, which God kept for me all these long years. Surprisingly they were extremely happy to accept my words and allowed me to respond to the call of God. Naturally, my sisters were not able to understand what I was thinking but God had changed their mind too. Now they support me a lot. So the day came on 1 June 2012, when I joined the SABS congregation as an aspirant.

Tidings: Thank you sister. We also thank God for this precious gift. After joining in the convent, did you find any difficulty during the formation?

Sr. Carmel: Formation of a religious is not a difficult task in itself. But it is a transformation, means a transformation from myself to His self, a life of sacrifice. I found a great joy to live this life as a chosen one. After my aspirancy at Vadavathoor Loreto Bhavan, I did my postulancy at Little Flower convent, Vazhappally. Then I was transferred to Mammood novitiate house for the novitiate course. On 16 April 2016, I took my first profession at Koothrapally provincial house. During these years, I was aware of my limitations and drawbacks, which are to be rectified through various formation activities. There were two activities which I practised always to find myself; personal prayer and colloquium with my superiors. Though it had demanded a big sacrifice from my part, today I find a great joy and relief to live my vocation.

Tidings: Thank you very much. You were in Changanacherry, right? Then, how were you inspired for the mission?

Sr. Carmel: The Catholic Church is missionary in nature. This statement had always inspired me a lot to form my simple life as a missionary, one not doing extraordinary things rather by doing ordinary things extraordinarily. My life as a Jesus Youth volunteer helped me much in this regard. In the beginning, my family members were a little scared of my desire to become a missionary so that I joined at Changanacherry province. But after the novitiate, again this missionary desire was raised up in my heart; no doubt it was God Himself. The missionary land of Tamilnadu was the one, which God had kept for me to fulfil my aspiration to become a missionary. I opted for the Thuckalay mission on 16 May 2016. Tiruvannamalai, in Vellore Diocese was my first mission in Tamilnadu. The missionary experiences in these places were multifaceted, school, home missions, community programmes, village visits, palliative care, etc. It helped me also to learn the Tamil language. Through all these activities, I could have experienced the merciful nearness of God to many people.

Tidings: Thank you very much. We heard about your professional qualification in Mathematics. Can you tell us something?

Sr. Carmel: After my service at Tiruvannamalai, I was asked my superiors to continue my master's degree in Mathematics. I joined at St. Alphonsa College of Arts and Science Karinkal, to complete my PG in Mathematics. Though it was an academic centre, as a sister, it was also my mission. Here I found the need for peer group communication for the moral and spiritual needs of students. I started talking to my

friends and they had a high respect towards me. Besides my academic progress, these experiences helped me much to form my own character as a religious of Christ. During these years of PG studies, I was also helping at Fathimapuram Church. Then I was asked to complete my B. Ed course from Christ University, Bangalore.

Tidings: Thank you for sharing your academic experiences. At present what services are you doing?

Sr. Carmel: Now I am working as the project officer and a member of Shanthi Nilayam special school, Paruthivilai Nagercoil and helping at Alphonsa Shrine Church Nagercoil. I am extremely happy to work for these special children, who are physically and mentally disabled. I can experience the wonders of God through these children every day. I thank God for this vocation to share His joy with these children, who are specially chosen by God.

Tidings: Thank you very much sister for your sharing. The smile on your face is magical. How can you keep this happiness in your life especially in this modern world characterized by conflicts and preoccupations?

Sr. Carmel: Smile on my face is not an artificial one but natural. What is natural is created by God. This smile has helped many people to get relief in their life. Conflicts and preoccupations are human but the faith in God resolves every single issue in our life. I always keep the word of St. Paul, 'by the grace of God I am what I am'. I don't own anything in my life, but I receive everything as gift from God. "If



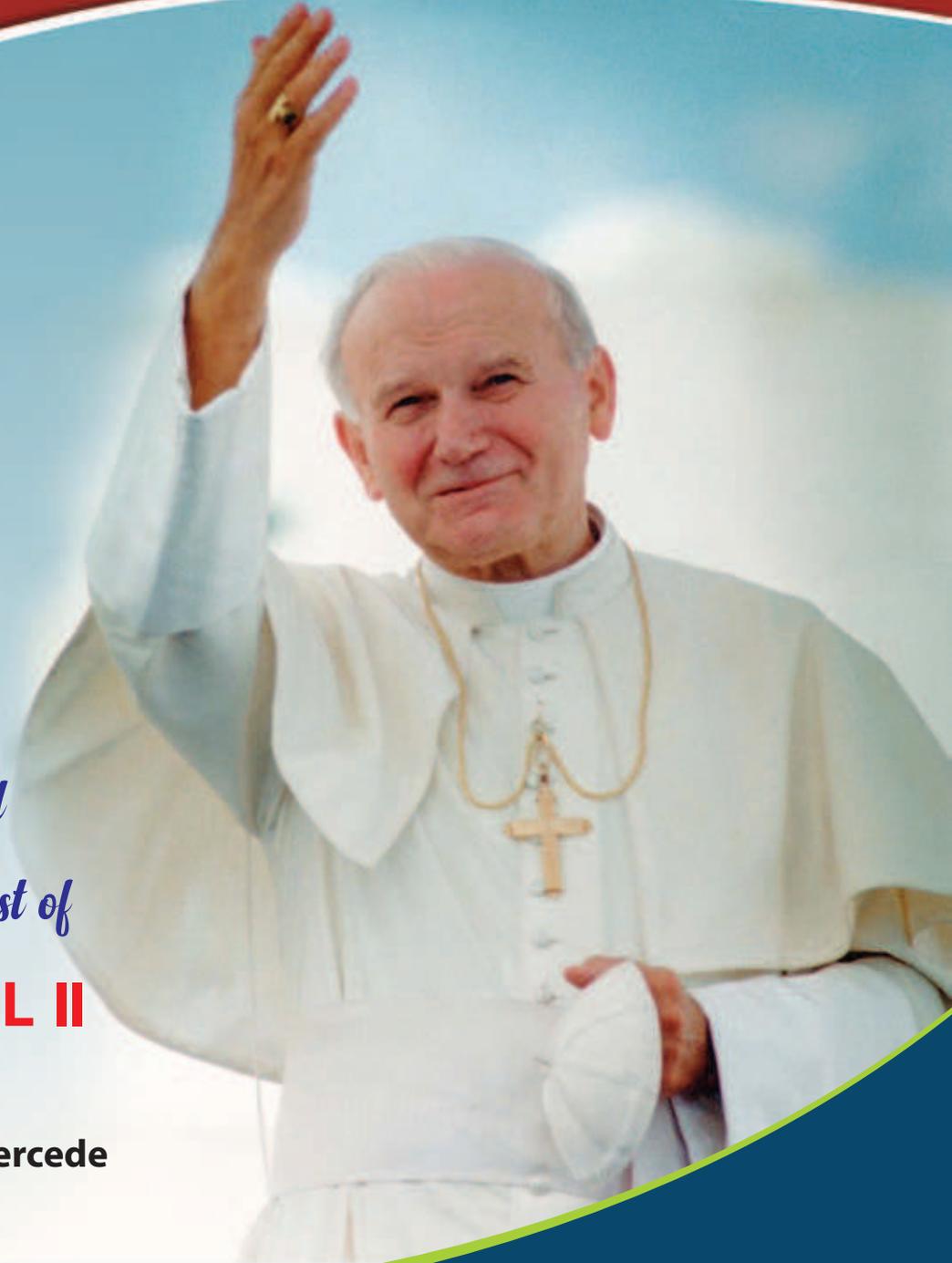
they had enough intelligence to speculate about the nature of the universe, why did they never find the Lord of all things?" (Wisdom 13,9). The transformation of my life is the transition from intelligence to the heart. Today, I consider my life as an instrument in the hands of God, which He uses for his kingdom.

Tidings: May God bless you abundantly to live a holy religious life. Once again thank you very much.

Sr. Carmel: May God bless all the readers of Tidings. Please pray for me and let us try hard to cooperate with Jesus to find labourers for the plentiful harvest.



Thuckalay
MISSION
BISHOP OF THUCKALAY



We wish you all
A Very Happy Feast of
ST. JOHN PAUL II

**May St. John Paul II intercede
for all of us!**

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