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**Dear and Rev. Fathers,**

Greetings from Bishop's House, Thuckalay!

We are entering the month of May - a month dedicated to our Blessed Mother. May is considered the season of the beginning of new life. Already in Greek culture, May was dedicated to Artemis, the goddess of fecundity. In Roman culture, May was dedicated to Flora, the goddess of bloom, of blossoms. The Romans celebrated *ludi florales* (literally: floral games) at the end of April, asking the intercession of Flora for all that blooms. This is also related to the medieval practice of expelling winter. 1 May was considered the beginning of growth.

Three Marian liturgical celebrations are commemorated in the month of May. When Ascension falls in May, the Saturday after the Ascension of Our Lord is traditionally celebrated as the *Feast of Our Lady, Queen of the Apostles*. The liturgy commemorates the period of time after the Ascension when the apostles were gathered in prayer with Mary and the women in the Upper Room. On 24 May, we celebrate the feast of Mary Help of Christians. Pope Pius VII instituted the feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians in gratitude to the victory that Mother Mary gave to the Church after the persecutions that Emperor Napoleon unleashed against the Church. We celebrate the Commemoration of the Visitation on 31 May. When Mary heard that her elderly relative, Elizabeth, was expecting a child, she hurried to help her. Mary's service brought Christ to the home of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

There are many ways to celebrate this month of Mary. Many churches have a daily recitation of the rosary, although we have this practice in the month of October. Other practices include the crowning of Our Lady's statue or setting up small altars in homes in honour of Mary and daily recite the rosary. The important thing is that Mary be honoured in a special way during this month. I invite, dear Fathers, to inculcate some forms of devotions to Our Blessed Mother among our people during this important month of May.

### **Transfers**

May is also the month of transfers and placements. These are important moments, which highlight our supernatural vision of life and the meaning of our life of obedience. Let us remember that the service of authority and the willingness to obey are the path to holiness, the source of energy for his work, of joy and peace.

I must admit that I was deeply touched by the humble and generous spirit of availability, sense of responsibility and rich in initiative that you manifested when I approached you with

the transfer proposals. Thank you, my dear Fathers. May God bless you all for your docility and availability! Attached with this circular, kindly find the consolidated transfer list.

## **NEWS AND EVENTS**

### **Home Mission**

The Home Mission that the Sisters carried out in our Diocese has come to a successful completion. We congratulate and thank Sr. Lysa FCC, Sr. Lincy FCC, Sr. Ann Grace FCC, Sr. Leema Rose FCC, Sr. Jothis FCC, Sr. Dorethy SH, Sr. Anni Jameson SH, Sr. Christy CMC, Sr. Blessy CMC, Sr. Marriet CMC, Sr. Alphy ASMI and Sr. Elsit SABS on my behalf and on behalf of our Diocese. Each of the Sisters has put in their best for the animation of the basic unit of the Catholic Church, namely, the Catholic family. The Sisters have spent time with the members of the family listening to them, encouraging them, exhorting them, guiding them, and praying with them while also collecting some family statistics. They have in brief made the families more vibrant and have inspired them to be active participants in the life of the Church. Kudos to you dear Sisters! We are also grateful SABS, CMC, FCC, ASMI, SH and CHF congregations and their Superiors for making available these Sisters for the Home Mission.

### **Syro-Malabar Assembly**

We are already through the discussions and collecting the observations and suggestions on the themes of the forthcoming Syro-Malabar Assembly. Three phases of discussions at the leadership level envisaged in our plan out of which two have been completed: (i) discussion at the Presbyterium level was done during Priests Conference held on 14 April; (ii) discussions in the Pastoral Council were completed on 22 April. Discussions by the Religious Sisters will be held in the month of May itself. We will now discuss these themes at the Uraviyam level. I request the Parish Priests to animate the Uraviyams so that they can discuss these themes in a serious manner. We need to listen our people, as they are important for the success of the Assembly. Please complete the animation in the Uraviyams by end of May. Discussion at the *uraviyam* level is only for information and learning, you need not draw up any report or suggestions.

### **Priestly Ordinations**

We thank the Lord for the gift of four new priests to our Diocese: we congratulate Rev. Fr. Anil, Rev. Fr. Samuel, Rev. Fr. Justin, and Rev. Fr. Ajin. Rev. Fr. Anil and Rev. Fr. Samuel were ordained on 1 April at Killiyoor Parish. Rev. Fr. Justin and Rev. Fr. Ajin Jose were ordained on 2 April at Mukkootukal Parish. I thank the parents and dear ones of our newly ordained Priests for having gifted their sons to God's ministry.

I also take this opportunity to once again thank Rev. Fr. Geo Choozhikunnel of Killiyoor Parish, and Rev. Fr. Jacob Aiyammathra of Mukkootukal Parish and the faithful of the Parishes who put in their best to organize the ordination ceremonies. I thank all those who took pains to come over and participate in the events.

### **Bible Magic Show**

A Bible Magic Show was held at the Sacred Heart Auditorium, Padanthalumoodu on 24 April in the evening. Rev. Fr. Michael Ousepachan of Pala Diocese along with the Pala

Communications team entertained the audience with Bible-themes-based magic show. It was really an enthralling evening and made us wonder how Bible themes can be so well integrated into entertaining magic. It was educative as well. We thank the team for performing for us. We especially congratulate Rev. Fr. Augustine Thalodil for organizing the event. Fr. Augustine organized the event for collecting funds for the renovation of the church building at Manjalamoodu.

### **Bishop's Birthday and Feast Day**

On the 14 April the presbyterium joined together to wish me for my Birthday and Feast Day during the Priests' Conference. I appreciate your kind gesture, dear Fathers, for felicitating me and for praying for me.

### **VBS Seminar**

A seminar cum training session for the VBS teachers will be held at Kalluvilai on 29- 30 April. I thank the catechetical team headed by Rev. Fr. Justin Cheruvilil for training the teachers towards a fruitful conduct of the VBS programme in the Parishes. The teachers will be taught the methods to be employed in using the VBS books. CDs also will be provided along with them. I thank the Changanassery Archdiocese for sharing with us the content and layout of the VBS books. By this we were able to minimize the cost of the books for the children of our Diocese. Once again, I congratulate and thank Rev. Fr. Justin and Mariadas Sir for getting ready the books and for providing the books on time. I thank in advance the Parish Priests for sending your teachers for the training and I am sure that the VBS programmes will be effective and fruitful. Kindly conduct the VBS classes in parishes between 1 May and 15 May.

### **Vocation Camp**

Once again, let me remind you, dear Fathers, about the Vocation camp to be held in Mukkootukal. For the boys who have completed their X & XII exams, the camp will be held from 4.00 pm on 1 May to 4.00 pm on 4 May. For the boys who have completed their 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> standard exams, it will be held as a one day camp from 4.00 pm on 1 May to 4.00 pm on 2 May. Kindly encourage as many suitable boys as possible to attend these camps.

### **Bishop to Visit Europe and Qatar**

I will be visiting Europe and Qatar from 27 April to 21 May to meet our benefactors. Kindly say a prayer for our friends living abroad who are very generous and willing to help our Diocese financially.

### **Retreat Centre**

The Lord is making his plans clear to us constantly. We were able to bless the foundation stone for the SEENAI Retreat Centre at KKSSS on 26 April. It was a historic event for the Diocese. Some Fathers, Sisters and staff from KKSSS were present for the function. As I have informed you earlier, Rev. Fr. Mijo is appointed the Director of the Retreat Centre. The construction works have already begun. The first phase of the building work consists of constructing a big hall and in the second phase, other conveniences will be added.

## **Bible Convention**

We shall hold the first Bible Convention in the new retreat centre of the Diocese on 25 June. Bro Mario Joseph belonging to the Potta team will be the chief animator. Fr. Mijo will convene meetings Forane-wise to discuss about this programme. I request every one to give maximum support to our new venture for the spiritual wellbeing of our people.

## **Condolences**

We offer our deep condolences to:

- Rev. Sr. Mercy ASMI of the Nithravilai parish who lost her mother on 23 April. We pray for the repose of the soul of her mother.
- Rev. Sr. Anija CMC who lost her father on 16 April. Sr. Anija works in the US but belongs to CMC Thuckalay province. We pray for the repose of the soul of her Father.

## **INFORMATION**

- Fr. Sajan has completed his B.Ed studies and secured distinction. We offer our hearty congratulations to Fr. Sajan and wish him all the best in his new mission.
- Fr. Josy Puthenpurakal has come to the Diocese for Holidays. As we welcome him we wish him a happy stay.
- Fr. Dency has completed his MBA studies in Guwahati and has gone to Kuwait for a short holiday with his dear ones. He will be returning to the Diocese on 13 May. We welcome Fr. Dency and wish God's blessings for his new assignments.
- On 24 April the Second Semester Catechism Examinations for Classes 10, 11 and 12 were held.

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

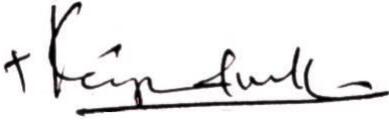
29-30 April	-	VBS training for Teachers
08 May	-	Vocation Sunday (special remembrance at Parish level)
10 May	-	Priests' Conference
15 May	-	Feast of Pentecost, New catechetical year begins
16 May	-	Retreat for Teachers of Tamil medium schools
19 May	-	TCYM Inauguration
26 May	-	Seminar for English medium Principal, Vice principal and Correspondents

## **CONCLUSION**

As I conclude my circular letter for the month of May, let me once more remind of the importance of this month. Let us meaningfully spend the month in honouring our heavenly Mother. Let us cultivate among our faithful devotion of Mary. May she intercede for each one of us!

With my prayers and blessings,

Yours in the Christ,



**+George Rajendran SDB**  
Bishop of Thuckalay



