

31 March, 2013

**My Dear Fathers,**

I extend my sincere and personal good wishes to each of you for the wonderful season that is ahead of us, the season of Easter. A Happy Easter to all of you. I pray that the peace and joy of the Risen Lord be showered on every one of you in full measure. May each one of you be the harbingers of the Easter joy and peace to everyone you encounter as you go about carrying out the various aspects and demands of our Thuckalaymission to the faithful.

**Hope - the certainty of the Blessings and Joys to come**

As we go about accomplishing our tasks in the apostolate on a day to day basis, we would naturally be confronted by a myriad obstacles; at such times when everything seems to be depressing and the demon of discouragement seems to overpower us, we just need to look up and look beyond at the Resurrection of Jesus, the one great reality that has overcome death. We look up to Jesus the Risen Lord and affirm our faith in Him; we commit ourselves to walk the way He leads us, in the way He has shown us, with the power of the Resurrection energizing us. We walk in **HOPE** with Him, knowing that our hope is very real and not an illusion. Hope becomes for us the resurrection come alive today and every day.

**Signs of hope around us**

Everything around us today urges us to live in hope; we can learn from the weather; there is a spring season after the cold realities of winter: everyone lives through winter knowing that there is spring ahead of them; we lived in hope of spring. We have recently concluded the pastoral council wherein we have set for ourselves goals and targets; finally the formulation of these action plans will help us achieve our objectives, in the firm hope that we are on the right track and we shall achieve our goals. We go about our apostolate in hope.

We are blessed with our new Pope Francis, who will lead us in firm faith and sure hope in the footsteps of our Lord and supreme Shepherd. The election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio as Pope Francis is the surest beacon of hope for the Church world-wide, that the power of the Holy Spirit is alive and acting very tangibly in the governance of the Church. The simplicity of the saint of Assisi that our Holy Father has chosen as his personal paradigm, is for us priest, to be lived for the faithful in simplicity and hope.

Above all, we have celebrated the Paschal Mysteries that culminated in the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus. It is this eternal reality of the Resurrection that gives the firm foundation to our life of hope on a daily basis. To live in true hope, we need to live the Resurrection.

**Healing of wounds and light in darkness**

Our lived hope in the resurrection of Jesus completes the circle of our Christian experiences; because we hope, we are never left abandoned in all the pain and sufferings that make us so much aware of the cross and its shadow in our lives. Our faith in the resurrection tells us that suffering is not the end of things; by that faith we are enabled to see into our future, bridging the moments of pain and suffering with hope, as well as giving a sense of meaning to our sacrifices and a sense of direction to our lives. It is this hope that will sustain us on our mission along the highways and

byways of the world where the Lord sends us to proclaim the Gospel (cf. Mt. 28:19) by being mystics in the spirit, prophets of communion and servants of the faithful.

But our lived experiences tell us that a life lived for others and with others empties us and gives us numerous scars as well. However, the ever present reality of the resurrection in our daily human experiences revives us, fills us up again with hope and heals us of our wounds and scars. Our faith in the resurrection sees to it that we are not left in despair when things go wrong for us, when darkness has fallen around us. We need not live as though all is lost and life has no more meaning, to be bereft of hope BECAUSE, the resurrection is not just an intellectual promise nor a historical reality that took place centuries ago, but a daily ever-present experience for the Christian, more so for us professed religious, who know that our faith lies not in remembering a past, however sublime and exalted it be, but in living here and now, to live in HOPE!

### **The Resurrection is our hope that has come alive**

As we confront the constant challenges in the exercise of our apostolate among the people, the first casualty to fall along the wayside could be our hope; we could be the unwitting prey to the demon of despair and despondency as we seem to be drowned in the deluge of the social upheavals around us, making us question the validity and usefulness of our struggles in the apostolate. If we succumb to the temptation to give up the struggle and be carried away by the currents of the popular fashionable philosophies of relativism, materialism and hedonism that see nothing beyond the tangible, the reality of the Resurrection will hold no meaning for us. On the contrary, the answer to the human drama of suffering and pain is to be found in the fulfillment of the redemptive mysteries that we hold dear, the Incarnation, sufferings, death and Resurrection of Jesus. For those with no faith, the death of Jesus was the death of hope but for those with faith it brought new life and a new kind of hope, new life in Christ. This is the faith that gives substance to our hopes and makes us certain of the realities we do not see.

Our hope will not then be some sort of a wishful longing for an ephemeral reality, but will be the certitude and guarantee with which we look to the future, as we ***“keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end” (Heb. 12: 2)*** in whom all the anguish and longings of the human heart find fulfillment. Only in Him can we have the firmness of resolve to look with hope at the world where our commitments are to be realised as ***“we wait for what God has promised: new heavens and a new earth.” (2 Pet. 3:13)*** The Risen Christ present among us in our parishes becomes for us the firm foundation of our hope; His power becomes active in us to overcome the evil one (cf. Lk. 11:20). ***“You love him, although you have not seen him, and you believe in him, although you do not now see him. So you rejoice with a great and glorious joy which words cannot express, because you are receiving the salvation of your souls, which is the purpose of your faith in him.” (1 Pet. 1: 8-9)***

My dear fathers, in a world that seems to be bereft of hope, let the words of the apostle Peter give us fresh enthusiasm and hope to continue our journey of apostolate for the people of our region. May our Blessed Mother be there alongside us on our way, giving us hope and encouragement for the future, as she gave to the world Hope Incarnate, Jesus her son. Let our father St. Thomas be our constant hope paradigm; may his help be there for us to view the challenges in our apostolate as he did: opportunities to be utilized as we grow in our faith and hope through the power of the Risen Lord working in and through each of us.

My prayerful good wishes to each of you for the wonderful season ahead of us.

+ George Rajendran sdb

## **ORDINATIONS AND FIRST HOLY QURBANA - 2013**

As I had mentioned to you, our diocese has been blessed with five new priests this year and they are: **Dn. Mathew Thekkel**- Kozhuvanal, Kottayam, **Dn. Joseph Velikkakathu** – Illackal, Idukki, **Dn. Alex Puthettu** – Kailasam, Idukki, **Dn. Antony Madappurackal** – Edathua, Kerala, **Dn. Joseph Nettiaponghu** – Dalummugam, Kerala. Their ordinations will be held on 6 April 2013 at 9.30 am in the Parish Church at Padanthalumoodu. I request all the fathers, sisters and faithful (from big parish 10 members and small parish five members along with altar boys) to attend the ordination ceremony. Also I request some fathers to volunteer to be present for the first mass of the New Priests. For this you may contact Fr. Mathew Thekkekkutt.

## **TRANSFERS – 2013**

There will be some transfers in the diocese this year, I shall try to give the letters by the second week of April. The transferred fathers are expected to move to new place on or before May 24, 2013. In view of this transfer I request every one to make the presbytery, church and other establishments in the parish presentable and clean; you may paint the buildings or if this is not possible now at least give a thorough cleaning in order to welcome the new person. Keep all the records up-to-date. On the day of handing over the accounts and parish documents the following members are to be present: the out-going priest, the in-coming priest, the kaikars and a Curia member. You may contact Fr. Mathew Thekkekkutt to get to know the convenient date for the Curia members to be present for the handing over. A copy of the same is to be given to the bishop's House. Kindly do not undertake any fresh developmental work in the parish now.

## **VBS CLASSES**

Summer vacation is a good occasion for us to have all the Catechism students in our parishes. This young people are our God given gift and we feel happy to serve them and to help them grow in their Christian Faith. Therefore, the VBS classes are to be organized well, in view of this from every parish 4 catechism teachers are asked to be send for the training program on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April and the VBS classes begins from 29<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> May. I request all of you to be actively present on these days in the parish. Some parishes will get brothers for VBS classes, kindly take care of them well.

## **VOCATION SUNDAY**

The Diocese is working hard to promote vocations to Priesthood and Religious Life among our young boys and girls from the diocese and also from Kerala. The Church keeps 21 April 2013 as the Vocation Sunday. To celebrate this day in a meaningful manner, I request all the Parish Priests to invite all the Priests and Religious to their home parish for a special Eucharistic celebration on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2013 or any other convenient day. A brief felicitation gathering could also be held soon after the Mass, in order to thank them and to encourage the young people to follow their example.

The Diocese is organizing a 'Come and See Overnight Programme for classes 10, 11 and 12 boys and girls of the diocese on the following days. The program will be organized forane wise, kindly inform all the boys and girls of your parish to attend this program, may I request you also to be there for some time with your children during the program. The schedule is given below:

**MONTH:** April  
**TIME:** 4.00pm to 4.00 pm on the next day for boys  
9.30 am to 4.00 pm on the same day for girls

BOYS			GIRLS		
DATES	FORANE	VENUE	DATE	FORANE	VENUE
16-17	Manjalumoodu	Manjalumoodu	16	Thuckalay	Kattathurai
18-19	Arukany	Arukany	19	Padanthalumoodu	Padanthalumoodu
22-23	Thuckalay	Kattathurai	23	Arukany	Arukany
24-25	Soosaipuram	Killiyoor	25	Nithiravilai	Varuthattu
26-27	Nithravilai	Nithravilai	27	Manjalumoodu	Manjalumoodu
29-30	Padanthalumoodu	Padanthalumoodu	30	Soosaipuram	Soosaipuram

Fr. Dency is in charge of the camp, you may contact him for further details.

### VOCATION CAMP

The Annual Vocation Camp for boys will be held from 15 May to 20 May 2013. I request all the parish priests to personally motivate at least one candidate from your parish for the camp, so that our invitation for Vocation camp will not be too general and we will be sure of some candidates. It will be nice if you could visit family of those candidates prior to the Vocation Camp. Fr. Dency is in charge of the vocation camp.

### ONE-DAY SEMINAR FOR KAIKARS

Effectiveness of our mission depends largely on the effectiveness of our collaborators; therefore we decided to organize a daylong training program for all the Karkars and accountants of all the parishes on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2013 at Sangamam. The seminar will help them to understand their duties and responsibilities as officebearers of the parish. **Rev. Fr. Mathew Thekkekkutt and Fr. Christudas** will be the resource persons for the seminar. Kindly inform your Karkars in advance to make use of this chance.

### NEW PRIEST DAY

We have set aside the priest conference of **May 14<sup>th</sup>** to congratulate and felicitate our five newly ordained priests of the diocese. The programme will be as follows:

9.45 am	-	Arrival
10.00 am	-	Holy Qurbana, officiated by new priests
11.30 am	-	Coffee break
12.00 noon	-	Felicitation meeting and a brief priests conference (to finalize the action plan of Pastoral council)
1.30 pm	-	Lunch
2.30 pm	-	Departure

### R.I.P

Mrs. Aleyamma Mathew, mother of Sr. Silvy FCC passed away on March 23, 2013. We express our heart-felt condolence to Sr. Silvy and her bereaved family. May God grant her eternal rest.

### TRAINING ON SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Keeping in mind the present needs in the educational field, we are going to organize an animation programme for all the Principals, would-be Principals, and Correspondents of our English Medium Schools.

Rev. Fr Joe Arimboorsdb, Director of DB ARK, New Delhi, involved in training the priests and religious in education ministry, will be the resource person. He will deal with the following topics:

- Challenges in Education Today
- Moving from Punishments and Rewards to Reason, Love and God
- Educate by Evangelizing and Evangelize by Educating in a Multi-religious Context
- Principles of Leadership and Managerial Skills in School Administration

Dates: - 25, 26 and 27 April 2013

Venue: - Sangamam

Time: - 9.00 am to 4.00 pm

I request all those who are working in the schools, both fathers and sisters and those interested in this ministry, to take part in the training programme, all the Junior priests are also expected to attend the training program.

## **ORDINATION TO DIACONATE, MINOR ORDERS AND VESTITIONS**

We congratulate the following brothers for receiving the sacred orders:

### **Diaconate (March 27, 2013)**

Bro. Kuriakose Mangalath (Linslal)

Bro. Sebastian Manimalakandathil (Sebi)

### **Sub – Diaconate (March 26, 2013)**

Bro. Thomas Attiyil (Ajeesh)

Bro. Justin Sudeesh

Bro. Thomas Poovathmoottil (Ebin)

Bro. Abraham Puthenpurackal (Shoji)

Bro. George Valliamthadathil (Sumesh)

Bro. James Kanakalil (Vinodh)

Bro. Jinu Thekkethalackal

### **Karoya (March 26, 2013)**

Bro. Anil Raj

Bro. Ajin Jose

Bro. Samuel

### **Vestition (March 23, 2013)**

Bro. Vinu Joseph D

Bro. Shijo Jose Aikkarakunnel

These above mentioned brothers along with all the students of Philosophy will take part in the Work Camp at Kozhiporvilai from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

## **VISIT OF REV. FR. MARIA AROKIAM SDB**

Rev. Fr. Maria Arokiam Kanagasdb, Regional councilor for South – East Asia, Rome will be in our diocese on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. We welcome him and wish him a happy stay. I will take him to some of our parishes and institutions for a short visit, I will inform the persons concerned in advance regarding his visit to the parish.

Thank you

+ **George Rajendran sdb**