



Bishop's *Circular*

For Priests / Sisters

Bishop George Rajendran sdb
Diocese of Thuckalay

Bishop's House, P B No: 12, Thuckalay PO,
Kanya kumari Dt- 629 175, Tamil Nadu, India

Ref. No. Priests/GR/98/2019

31 August 2019

Dear and Rev. Fathers,

Greetings from Bishop's House, Thuckalay!

Pope Francis on 2 April 2019 published a document dedicated to the youth, bringing full-circle a process of consultation that began last year when the Vatican reached out to young people around the world on how to involve them in the activities of the Church.

Named *Christus Vivit*, the document is 180 pages long and it takes into consideration not only what was said during the Synod of Bishops but also what the youth said during a pre-synod gathering that took place in Rome several months earlier. Though some 200 people were in attendance, thousands more participated through Facebook. TNBC has translated this document into Tamil.

A brief summary of the document is in order although we have spent much time studying it in different groups. The exhortation is divided into nine chapters and is addressed in a particular way to young Catholics.

Chapter One: What does the Word of God have to say about young people? The Holy Father begins by recalling well known youthful characters in the Old Testament like Joseph who, even though being the youngest from among the sons of Jacob, becomes favoured by God. Gideon is presented as a young person who speaks frankly to God. In this way, he expresses his youthfulness. Other important characters in the Old Testament are Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Ruth and the Jewish servant in the house of Namaan the Syrian. All these characters received their mission from God whilst in their youthful stage of life. In them, we see a God who takes a particular interest in issues of young people.

The New Testament continues the theme of youthfulness in a number of narratives. Among these can be recalled the famous parable of the younger son in Luke 15. He risks his life and when he realizes that he has done wrong is not afraid to change course and go back home. This character is contrasted with the older son who remains at home with a cold heart, unwilling to forgive and rejoice with the Father and his household. In his preaching, Jesus continually exalts being young. He speaks of the greatest among his disciples becoming like the youngest. Paul continues this thread when he exhorts Timothy that his youth be despised by no one (1 Tim 4:12).

The fact that young people are mentioned positively in the exhortation does not mean that elders should be disrespected. On the contrary, an exhortation to respect them is firmly upheld. "In the same way, younger people, be subject to the elders" (1 Pet 5:5). To be young is to be willing to change and at the same time to be wise like the young women who awaited the arrival of the bridegroom. Every young person should thus be ready to hear the words of Jesus as were uttered to the young man: "Young man, I say to you arise" (Luke 7:14).

Chapter two: Jesus, ever young The Holy Father speaks of a Jesus who is young and in this way sanctifying being young. As a child, he appears as a refugee in Egypt and later on is repatriated to Nazareth. He is seen

among the crowds in the Jordan to be baptized and hears the words, “You are my beloved child”. Such words should ring in the ears of all young people today.

We also see Jesus being obedient to his parents after the episode of having remained behind in the Temple. Luke emphasizes that Jesus grew in wisdom, age and grace before God and man. As a sign of his obedience, we learn that he learned his father’s trade as a carpenter (Mk. 6:3). He was not a self-absorbed youth. The episode of him having been lost gives us an indication that he freely related to the crowds and his own relations. It was for this reason that his parents started off by looking for him from among their relations thinking that he was journeying with them. The use of the word *synodia* is thus important in observing the young Jesus.

Jesus’ youthful days teach us, especially young people, that it is important to have a correct relationship with the father and the importance of family. This requires openness to the Holy Spirit which in turn allows a young person to recognize his mission and personal vocation. Like Jesus, young people need to show compassion for the poor and the sick.

The message of a youthful Church is not only for young people but for the whole Church. The Church must always be open to renewal. She is young when she is open to God’s word, the Eucharist, constantly returning to her source which is Christ himself and being attentive to the signs of the times.

In this endeavour, the Church has in the first place Mary as a model of being young. Just like a young person she was not afraid to ask probing questions when she received the angel (Luke 1:34) and finally embracing her mission (Luke 1:38). Young people can learn from Mary who was not fearful. She embraced her mission totally without being overwhelmed by the sufferings of her son. She became an influencer through thick and thin.

The Church is littered with many models of sanctity who were young. Among these, we may recall Blessed Isidore Bakanja of Congo who was tortured for proposing Christianity to other young people and prior to his death forgave his executioner.

Chapter three: You are the ‘now’ of God. The Holy Father emphasizes that young people are not simply the future of the Church. On the contrary, they are the present and should thus assume responsibilities proper to them in the Church and society in general. Being the ‘now’ of God therefore also requires that adults listen to young people and avoid giving pre-packaged answers to them. Adults need to be aware that young people themselves are bearing seeds of divine life within them.

The ‘now’ of young people shows that many young people are exposed to suffering and manipulation by various ideologies. These ideologies encourage young people to ridicule others on the basis of sexuality, race and otherwise. At times young people live in constant marginalization due to their religious affiliation, economic standing and or even ethnicity. The Church cannot remain indifferent to the problems of young people. As a mother, she must weep in the face of all these problems. Her weeping is a sign of her mercy and compassion.

The Holy Father goes on to emphasize three important matters currently affecting young people:

- The digital environment, which has both bright and dark spots. On the positive side, the digital environment allows young people to engage politically and thus engage actively in public affairs. Negatively though, the digital environment may lead to loneliness, manipulation, fake news and violence with the accompanying addictions and loss of contact with concrete reality.
- Migration, which remains the Church’s main concern especially on those fleeing war, violence, persecution, hunger, natural disasters and poverty. It may lead to a fragmentation of families. For many migrants the Church remains a point of reference. On the positive side, migration can be about the encounter and the meeting of cultures which should be appreciated. In this way, it becomes a source of enrichment for both migrants and the receiving societies.

- Abuse, especially sexual abuse, which has even been perpetrated by some leaders in the Church. The Holy Father condemns this evil and in the same breath applauds the courage of all those who have come out and spoken out openly against it.

As he concludes this chapter, the Holy Father invites young people to renew themselves with the hope that only Jesus gives. At the same time, he invites young people to stick together so that they can face their challenges as a united force.

Chapter four: A great message for all young people. The Holy Father speaks of the demands of faith that young people need to know:

- God loves you: This explains the worth, significance and importance of young people before God.
- Christ saves you: He saves all young people out of love and no one is for sale. No ideology may save a young person.
- Christ is alive: He is not a distant figure of two thousand years ago but remains an influential and active presence today in the lives of young people.
- The Spirit gives life: All young people have to open themselves up to the Holy Spirit who is the only one that is able to keep alive the hope of salvation.

Chapter five: Path of Youth. The Holy Father embarks on an analysis of what it means to live the years of youth in the light of the gospel. Youth is a time of dreams and decisions whence the young are called to move forward without cutting themselves off from their roots. Of course, temptations like complaining, giving up and anxiety are sure to come. For this reason, young people should be able to exercise patience and not expect instant results. They should not be afraid to try something new even not be afraid to make mistakes.

In living out their youth, young people are encouraged to enjoy the small everyday blessings and having a constant friend in Jesus. The key to maintaining this friendship is prayer. This friendship allows for growth in maturity as the young person remains cemented in the Lord, “being online” “being connected.”

Growing older requires cherishing and preserving the most precious things about youth but also having to purify those things that are not good and receiving new gifts from God so that one can develop the things that really matter. This requires that the young person grow up to be truly himself. A strong warning is stated here. “Do not be a photocopy of somebody else”. Be more of yourself, becoming what the Lord wished to dream and create.

The Holy Father then proceeds to give three ways as to how this growth to maturity may be achieved:

- Paths of fraternity, which find expression in the hidden beauty in others, their dignity as creatures of God and children of the Father. This fraternity is expressed beautifully in the African proverb which says “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together”.
- To be young and committed allows one to go beyond small groups. This may find expression in assisting the elderly, the sick, poor neighbourhoods, the homeless and the needy. It is important that young people see themselves as protagonists for change.
- To be courageous missionaries who are called to be witnesses of the gospel wherever they find themselves and be aware that there are no borders to missionary work. The Lord seeks all and all should participate in missionary work.

Chapter six: Young people in the roots. This chapter seeks to encourage young people not to allow themselves to be uprooted from their culture and origins. Such an uprooting unfortunately, lends a young person to the danger of ideologies which encourage the young person to ignore history, rejecting the experience of his elders and look down on the past. The Holy Father calls these ideologies masters of manipulation who despise all that is not young. It finds expression in the so called so-called cult of youth which sees growing old as a problem. On occasion this cult also tends to homogenize young people, blurring out what is distinctive about their origins. The Holy Father makes a clear call that the young should reject this cult of youth as it promises a shallow life.

Having condemned the cult of youth, the Holy Father proceeds to emphasize the importance of a relationship with the elderly. “Helping young people to discover the living richness of the past, to treasure its memory and make use of it for their choices and opportunities is a genuine act of love towards them”. Even Scripture emphasizes this harmonious relationship as seen in the fourth commandment and wisdom literature. Elders, therefore, can assist or teach the young in the following ways:

- A life without love is an arid life.
- Anxiety about the future can be overcome.
- There is more joy in giving than receiving.
- Love is not only shown in words, but also in action.

As a parting shot in this chapter, the Holy Father exhorts young people as follows: “Steer clear of young people who think that adults represent a meaningless past and those adults who always think that they know how young people should act. Together let us seek a better world, assisted by the Holy Spirit.”

Chapter seven: Youth Ministry. In advocating for an improved youth ministry the Holy Father encourages a synodal approach. Of course, it is important to make use of methods that have worked in the past be they labelled conservative or liberal, traditional or progressive. The important thing is to promote effective communication of the joy of the gospel. Such a synodal approach thus encourages a form of co-responsibility in such a way that no one is excluded. The unity of the Church should not be seen as monolithic as such but a network of varied gifts.

Two important approaches need to stand out in youth ministry. The first is outreach and the second is growth. Outreach refers to reaching out to those who are outside the Church through various means like social media, songs, video, songs and other means which are able to touch the hearts of young people. Growth refers to those already inside the Church who should experience all the more the love in the Christian life as they deepen too on Christian doctrine and morality. Christian doctrine should focus on the development of the kerygma with morality focusing on the importance of fraternal love.

Institutions play an important role in Youth Ministry. These should be welcoming and be like a real home and family for young people. They should be placed where young people can come and go. The preservation and or establishment of oratories and youth centres should thus be promoted. Also, educational institutions like schools and universities should be maintained and these should not only give academic formation but also cultivate the kerygma and be engaged in cultural formation. Whilst these institutions should engage in various activities like sports and art, nevertheless, the Word of the Lord, the Eucharist, Reconciliation and the importance of the lives of the saints should never be forgotten.

Youth Ministry should not be limited to what we are familiar with but should also go to the popular spaces where young people already are. This forms part of the outreach posture and it is in such spaces that the Church can be seen as keeping open doors. These popular spaces will allow for the welcoming of those with a different vision of life and those belonging to other religions or even out of religion. The important thing to keep before our eyes is that all young people are in God’s heart and thus in the heart of the Church.

Participation in popular piety like pilgrimages forms part of youth ministry. In all this, the importance of accompaniment by adults can never be overstated. Among the qualities of such adults, the following deserve special mention: A faithful Christian, seeking holiness, confident, not judging, listener, self-aware, recognizing own limits, acknowledging own humanity, makes mistakes and believing in young people.

Chapter eight: Vocation. In this chapter, the Holy Father underlines the fact that God has a wonderful plan for us all and the importance of the call to holiness. God has called us to a friendship and Jesus wants to be a friend of every young person. Every vocation requires one to be there for others and engaging in missionary service. Being there for others may take two forms namely love/family and work.

Many young people feel intensely the call to love with the view of forming a family. The sacrament of matrimony envelops this love in the grace of God. God has created us as sexual beings and sex is a beautiful gift from the Lord. Its purpose is to love and generate life. Indeed, for many young people, the family continues to be a point of reference in spite of problems of divorce and the disintegration of families. When such happens it has been observed that on occasion grandparents have played a decisive and positive role. They should be treasured and appreciated as they have done a lot in holding families together, being helpful and crucial in affection and religious education.

Work allows young adults to meet their practical needs, to seek meaning and fulfilment of their dreams and visions. Yet, it is also in the area of work that some young people can experience exclusion and marginalization. This is certainly true of youth employment affecting many countries today. In spite of the pervasive unemployment, the Holy Father exhorts young people not to give up on their dreams and never to accept defeat.

Beyond family and work, the Holy Father goes on to indicate that some people might feel called to the priesthood and consecrated life. It is important that those who feel called to these states of life do so with confidence in the Lord.

Chapter nine: Discernment. Discernment is fundamental in discovering one's vocation in life without which we can easily become prey to passing trends. It has to do with seeking a glimpse of that unique and mysterious plan that God has for each of us, the meaning of one's life before God who knows and loves every human being. Young people should make use of the many priests, religious, lay professionals and other qualified young people in the process of discernment.

In conclusion, the Holy Father invites the young peoples of the world to keep running, attracted by the face of Christ who loves us so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters.

Our Eparchy had the opportunity to study this document at three levels: the presbyterium studied it in March 2019, the leaders of religious communities discussed it in July 2019 and the young people of the Eparchy went through the document during the youth convention. Basing on the questions that were given to these groups for their study and discussion, some points have emerged for further discussion and action. I give below these points for our reflection and implementation in our Eparchy.

Question 1: What are the challenges faced by the youth of today in our Eparchy?

- There are no motivated leaders to guide the youth
- We force our own ideas on the youth rather than trying to know their interest and views
- Influence of media on young people are immense
- Family background is not helping the youth to grow in Christian faith
- The parish council does not give enough encouragement and it does not recognise their abilities and talents
- Parents do not allow the young girls to engage in church activities because they are afraid they might go astray
- The youth is dispersed for study and work. Hence, unable to come together
- There is nobody at home to hear their problem
- Do not get any good formation from their homes
- High ambitions and goals set by the parents
- Comparison with other young people have negative influence
- Lack of good example
- There is no prayer in families, no interest in liturgical celebrations
- Lack of interest in spiritual activities
- Face only criticism by the parents and society.

- Not accepted/recognised by others
- Prior judgment on youth activities
- Generation gap in the parish
- Youth have inferiority complex
- Identity crisis, uncertainty about life, etc.
- Unemployment: their dreams are not fulfilled, unable to fulfil their parents' dream, looking for socially accepted jobs and lack particular aim in life
- Attention seeking
- Addiction to: Social media, Phonography, drugs and alcohol, computer games, Extra ordinary and dirty fashion, nasty hairstyle and gadgets.
- They face abuse from family, friends and relatives. Young people have unpleasant childhood experiences.
- Negative orientation towards sex
- Lack a sense of sin

Question 2: What are the challenges that the priests and the religious face in youth ministry?

- Youth are Indifference towards spiritual activities
- Generation gap (Old and new generation)
- We are unable to understand the situation of youth
- Influence of social media, addiction and drug abuse
- Administration vs pastoral ministry
- Difficulty in gathering all the youth
- They are more sensitive
- Over burdened with duties and responsibilities given by the diocese/Congregation
- Not equipped with sufficient skills to face the youth
- Bias attitude towards them
- Waiting for them to come to us rather than we go to them
- Take them as problems

Question 3: As priests and religious, how are we going to help the youth to face these challenges?

- Correct the youth with love and affection
- Pray for them
- Being a good friend to them and cultivate good relationships
- Trusting them and giving them the responsibility
- Living an exemplary life rather keep giving advise to them
- Encourage the youth even when they do small good things
- Continuous and patient following up
- We need to make them understand that we are really interested in their problems
- As spiritual leaders we need to approach them lovingly and respectfully.
- We do not look at them as problem makers
- We give an integral accompaniment: internal and external, spiritual and worldly
- Mould them to make active participants in church activities: Example: Catechism teachers, organising liturgical programmes, etc.
- We need to organise youth empowerment programme, skill develop, sexual education in parish level, etc.
- Train them in leadership like making at least one youth as Kaikaran in the parish
- Spending time with them to guide, interact and counsel them
- Implementing parish level youth programmes, convention and youth catechism etc.
- Priest needs to be more a pastor than an administrator

- Humble enough to go to the level of youth and interact with them
- In the parish, meet them together, pray with them, have meals together and organise festivals together
- Priests should make special prayers for the youth during the Holy Qurbana.

I am sure we will have ample opportunities in the coming days to deliberate upon these points and to take appropriate decisions for their implementation in our various settings. Kindly ruminate over these points yourselves before such meetings can take place. Please keep in mind that young people are the future of our Church. Unless and until we care for them, our future will be very bleak in every respects.

NEWS AND EVENTS

English Medium Schools' Correspondents Meet: A meeting was organized for the correspondents of the English Medium Schools on 1 August 2019. All the Fathers in-charge of the English medium schools were present. During the meeting, the new manager of English medium schools, Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparambil, was introduced. His responsibilities were made known. The new Manager of schools will make occasional visits to the schools to ensure smooth functioning of our institutions. All the schools are urged to implement the Catholic Education Policy especially in the area of spiritual formation of students and staff.

Vianney Day Celebrations: Feast of the St John Maria Vianney is celebrated in our Eparchy as Priests Day. This year the celebrations took place on 3 August 2019 at our Minor Seminary. Most of the Fathers joined the celebrations thanking God for their priesthood. I thank all those who participated in the programme. My sincere thanks goes to the staff and students of the Minor Seminary for taking the initiative in organising the entire programme with great precision.

Department Heads' Meeting: Along with Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil, I met all the heads and animators of some of the departments in the Bishop's House. The meeting was meant to share the various activities of the departments and to plan for the future activities. During the meeting the appointment of Forane Directors for Catechism and Youth were announced. Forane Directors of Catechism are: Rev. Fr Antony Madapurackal (Arukani), Rev. Fr Jose Vayalil (Manjalumoodu), Rev. Fr Jomon Mangalamadam (Nithravilai), Rev. Fr Ajin Jose (Thuckalay-Pilankalai), Rev. Fr Anil Raj (Padanthalumoodu) and Rev. Fr Antony Jose (Soosaipuram). The following Fathers were appointed as Forane Directors of Youth Apostolate (TCYM): Rev. Fr Thomas Thekkethala CMI (Thuckalay-Pilankalai), Rev. Fr Subin Puthenpurackal (Soosaipuram), Rev. Fr Robins Kuzhikodil (Nitharaviali), Rev. Fr Thomas Jebanesh (Padanthalumoodu), Rev. Fr James (Vinod) Kanakalil (Manjalumoodu) and Rev. Fr Tobin Alapurackal (Arukani).

New Mission at Theni: The FCC Sisters of Idukki Province started a community at Chinnamanur of Theni district on 12 August 2019 to begin missionary work. In the presence of Mar Jose Pulickal, Auxiliary Bishop of Kanjirapally, I blessed the rented house. The Vicars General of Thuckalay and Kanjirapally, FCC Idukki Provincial, priests, religious sisters of our Eparchy, and a number of Sisters from the Idukki province were present on the occasion. As you are aware, the Theni district is given to the Eparchy of Kanjirapally for developing the mission work. The Eparchy has appointed Rev. Fr Benny Thattamparambil as the mission in-charge. I thank Rev. Fr Peter Kizhakkeyil and Rev. Fr Benny Thattamparambil for finding a suitable house for the Sisters and for arranging the inaugural function.

Requiem Holy Qurbana: In the last month we lost four of our pioneer missionaries, namely, Rev. Fr Cyriac Kootummel, Rev. Fr Zacharias Kanjooparampil CSSR, Rev. Fr Gaston Kanjooparampil CMI and Rev. Sr Sophy Rose SH. Even though representatives from our Eparchy participated in the funeral services of these missionaries, the Eparchy arranged a Requiem Holy Qurbana at Holy Cross Church Malaicode on 15 August 2019 at 2.30 pm. Many priests, religious and Christian faithful, especially from the Manjalumoodu and Arukani

Forane, took part in the Holy Qurbana. The arrangements were done by Rev. Fr Geo Choozhikunnel and the parishioners of the Malaicode church.

Blessing of Foundation Stone for St Alphonsa Community Centre and Tailoring Centre in Madurai: It is more than a year now that we are in Madurai mission and we did not have any permanent structure there. Our Sisters are residing in a rented house. The idea of opening a tailoring centre was put on hold due to lack of a permanent structure. Finally, we have decided to build a centre on the land donated by Mr Jomichan, Madurai. Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil blessed the foundation stone on 18 August 2019 for St Alphonsa Community Centre and Tailoring Centre. Rev. Fr Anish CMI, our two Sisters and some faithful from Chavara Mission were present for the occasion.

Forane Level Priests' Conference: In the month of August, Forane level Priest's conferences were arranged at different days: on 26 August at Soosaipuram for Soosaipuram and Thuckalay-Pilankalai Foranes; on 27 August at Manjalumoodu for Manjalumoodu-Arukani Foranes; and, on 29 August at Padanthalumoodu for Padanthalumoodu and Nithravilai Foranes. The priests from two Foranes gathered together for the priests' conference. Rev. Fr Thomas Powathuparampil presided over the meetings. Almost all the Fathers were present in the meetings.

Priests & Religious Sangamam: Every year the priests and the religious of our Eparchy used to come together to honour the Jubilarians who have completed their 50 or 25 years of Priestly or Religious Life. This year we celebrated it on 31 August 2019 at Kalluvilai. We had this year fourteen Jubilarians. Rev. Sr Maria FCC, Rev. Sr Clarelet CMC, Rev. Sr Elizabeth SABS, Rev. Sr Maria SABS, Rev. Sr Annie SABS, Rev. Sr Celin SABS and Rev. Sr Tessy SDS are celebrating their 50th anniversary of their first religious profession. Rev. Fr Peter Kizhakkal, Rev. Fr Joshy Thadiyananickal CMI and Rev. Fr Thomas Moolachalil are celebrating their silver jubilee of their ordination. Rev. Sr Johnsy FCC, Rev. Sr Leema FCC, Rev. Sr Lincitta CMC, Rev. Sr Roselet CMC, Rev. Sr Soona CMC, Rev. Sr Litty SABS, and Rev. Sr Simi SJSM are celebrating their 25th anniversary of first religious profession. I sincerely congratulate and thank all of them for their dedicated services to our Eparchy. On this occasion I thank Sr Annie Arickathil SABS and the Arickathil family for financially supporting the Priests and Religious Sangamam. With much gratitude, I remember all those who worked hard behind for the success of the Sangamam 2019.

Synodal News: XXVII Synod (2019) session II commenced on August 19 with recollection preached by Bishop Prince Panangadan. There were 57 Bishops who took part in synod. The first session began with the invoking of the Holy Spirit. The only agenda for this synod was the burning issue of Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese. I could see a sense of belonging and love for the church in all the bishops. All the members were given ample opportunities to share their views on the issue. It was a graceful and blessed moment for all of us to experience the feeling of every group who are involved in the issue. I am grateful to every of you dear Fathers and Sisters for praying for the success of the synod. I believe the decisions that the synod finally arrived at was the one very much needed for the Church today.

INFORMATION

- ❖ I will be leaving for Rome on 25 September and will return on 20 October. On my return, I will be visiting Qatar to meet some of our benefactors. I request your valuable prayers.
- ❖ On 13 October 2019, there will be the canonisation of St Mariam Theresia, Foundress of Holy Family Sisters. There are three Holy Family Sisters serving in our Eparchy. We congratulate them for this unique grace. I will take part in the Canonisation in Rome. In our Eparchy, we shall have a thanksgiving mass in honour of the newly canonised saint on 23 November 2019 at Padanthalumoodu.
- ❖ **Rev. Br Georgekutty** has left for Rome on 14 August 2019 for his theological studies at Mater Ecclesiae Seminary. The contact number of Br Georgekutty is 0039 3272576104.

- ❖ The residence of Rev. Sr Roslin SABS and Rev. Sr Misy Maria SJSM at Madurai was shifted to another house nearby the new mission centre on 27 August 2019.
- ❖ Rev. Fr Josy Puthenpurayil working in Germany comes to India on 30 August 2019 for a month of vacation. Most welcome dear Fr Josy!
- ❖ Rev. Fr Abin Poovathumootil, Assistant Director of KKSSS is appointed Director of Diocesan Health Unit (DHU) and Secretary to the Health commission of our diocese. This is to facilitate our diocese participation in the TNBC Health Commission.
- ❖ RIP: Father of Rev. Sr Pavana CMC passed away on August 14, 2019, heart felt condolences to the bereaved family.

UPCOMING EVENTS

09 September 2019	- Forane Vicars Meeting at Pilankalai
11 September 2019	- Priests' Conference
16 September 2019	- Blessing of Mother Theresa Hospice, Thittanganavilai
25 September 2019	- To <i>Ad Limina</i> Visit at Rome

NB.: Annual Retreat for Priests will be held from 20 to 25 October 2019 at Sangamam.

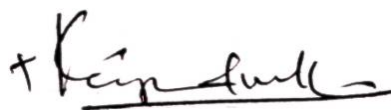
Dear Fathers, kindly block these dates and let us spiritually prepare ourselves for the Retreat. Let me remind you that even though some of you have attended other retreats during the year, it is important to take part in the retreat that the Eparchy is organising.

CONCLUSION

During the month of August, we had come together as fellow workers of the Eparchy to celebrate the feast of St John Maria Vianney. This celebration gave us an opportunity to recall our own priesthood and to resolve to live it like St John Maria Vianney by administering the sacraments especially the sacrament of reconciliation as he did. Let us make use of occasions such as Feasts of patron Saints of our parishes to boost the faith of our people. In the coming month, we shall celebrate one of the important feasts of Blessed Virgin Mary, namely, the Nativity of Mother Mary. The celebration of this feast is a wonderful opportunity for us to grow in Marian piety. Kindly solemnise the **eight days fast** (*Ettu Nonbu*) in all our parishes. Let us prepare our people and celebrate it meaningfully. Kindly keep the mission of the Church and the needs of our Eparchy in your daily prayers.

With my prayers and blessings,

Yours in Christ Jesus,



+ George Rajendran SDB
Bishop of Thuckalay

