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Thuck'alay Tidings

DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY



ASSUMPTION OF BL. VIRGIN MARY

"It was right that they might be witnesses not only to the Ascension of the Saviour, but also to the translation of her who gave Him birth."



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THUCKALAY TIDINGS

August 2026 | Vol. 6 | Issue 8

A Monthly online newsletter of Diocese of Thuckalay

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INSIDE STORY

➔ Message from the Bishop	3
➔ In the Footsteps of St. Thomas: A Pilgrimage of Faith and Mission	4
➔ Sabhadinam Celebration at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad . .	5
➔ TNBC and Pastoral Council Representatives' Annual Meeting	6
➔ Seminar on Pope's New Encyclical <i>Magnifica Humanitas</i> . . .	7
➔ July Priests' Conference: Strengthening Pastoral Coordination and Priestly Welfare	8
➔ A Faithful Servant and Builder of the Eparchy: ➔ Rev. Fr. Dominic Palathingal.	9
➔ Inauguration of the Mathar Jothis Movement	10
➔ Celebrating Faith and Faithful Service: Narcheithi Niyalam Anniversary Programme.	11
➔ Walking in Faith with St. Alphonsa: Diocesan Nadai ➔ Payanam to Nagercoil	12
➔ Grandparents' Day Celebration.	13
➔ 41st Memorial Holy Qurbana fo Rev. Fr. Thomas ➔ Powathuparampil	14
➔ A New Chapter of Service: Mr. Edwinson Elected President ➔ of the Thuckalay Central Council	15
➔ Continuing the Mission of Mary: Mr. Thomas Panner Selvam ➔ Re-elected President	16
➔ A Word on Our Dream: St. Joseph Cathedral	17
➔ In Memoriam Fr. Fr. Mathew Araickal MCBS	18
➔ In Memory of a Life Well-Lived	19



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Message

Greetings from the Diocese of Thuckalay!

On 15 August, we celebrate with great joy the Solemnity of the **Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, one of the four Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church. The word Assumption comes from the Latin *assumptio*, meaning “taking up.” Pope Pius XII solemnly defined this truth in 1950 through his Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*: “We proclaim and define it to be a dogma revealed by God that the immaculate Mother of God, Mary ever virgin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven.”

The Assumption of Mary is not simply a privilege granted to her; it is also a beautiful sign of the destiny God has prepared for all who remain faithful to Him. Mary, who humbly accepted God’s will at the Annunciation, who stood faithfully beside the Cross, and who persevered in prayer with the disciples, now shares fully in the glory of her risen Son. Her Assumption reminds us that our earthly journey has a heavenly destination. Human life, with all its struggles, sacrifices, sufferings and uncertainties, is not meaningless. In Christ, suffering can lead to glory, and faithfulness can lead to eternal life.

Mary’s life also teaches us what true freedom means. Christian freedom is not simply the freedom to do whatever we desire; it is the freedom to choose what is good, true and life-giving. Mary was free because

she gave herself completely to God’s plan. Her “yes” became an instrument of salvation for the world. In a society often tempted by selfishness, division and materialism, may Mary teach us to use our freedom responsibly, to serve others, to protect the dignity of every human person, and to build a culture of compassion and peace.

This year, 15 August also marks the **80th Independence Day of India**. As we proudly hoist our national flag and sing our National Anthem, we gratefully remember the sacrifices of those who struggled for our freedom. We thank God for our nation and for the rich diversity of peoples, languages, cultures and religions that make India unique.

Yet political independence must continually be accompanied by freedom of the heart and freedom of conscience. A truly free nation is one where truth is respected, justice is upheld, the poor and vulnerable are cared for, every citizen is treated with dignity, and people of different faiths and backgrounds can live together in harmony. Our freedom becomes meaningful when it enables us to build a nation marked by fraternity, equality, peace and mutual respect.

On this significant day, let us therefore pray with Rabindranath Tagore:

“Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.”

May India continue to rise—not merely in economic strength and technological progress, but also in moral courage, social justice, compassion and spiritual wisdom. Just as Mary was assumed into the glory of heaven, may our nation rise ever higher in truth, justice and genuine freedom.

I am praying for you and for your family’s intentions.



+ **George Rajendran sdb**
Bishop of Thuckalay

In the Footsteps of St. Thomas: A Pilgrimage of Faith and Mission



On 2 July 2026, thirteen members of the Extended Territory undertook a meaningful pilgrimage to the sacred places associated with St. Thomas the Apostle. The pilgrimage began at Chinnamalai (Little Mount), where Holy Mass was celebrated at the traditional site of the Apostle's martyrdom, followed by a visit to Periyamalai (St. Thomas Mount), where the pilgrims prayed in the ancient cave and venerated the traditional footprints of St. Thomas. The highlight was their prayer at the Apostle's tomb in the crypt of Santhome

Basilica, Mylapore, which renewed their missionary spirit and strengthened their commitment to proclaim the Gospel. They were also blessed to meet Mar Sebastian Pozholicparambil, Bishop of Hosur, and share about the missionary and pastoral activities of the Extended Territory. The participants expressed their gratitude to all the Fathers and Sisters who joined the pilgrimage, especially Rev. Fr. Tobin Alapuraickal, who coordinated the pilgrimage with dedication and care.

Sabhadinam Celebration at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad

On 3 July 2026, Sabhadinam and the Feast of Dukhrana were solemnly celebrated at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad. Representatives from all the dioceses of the Syro-Malabar Church took part in the celebration. The Eparchy of Thuckalay was represented by Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Sr. Ann Grace FCC, Mr. Edwinson (Palapallam), and Mr. Vincent (Munchirai). The solemn Raza Qurbana was followed by the inauguration of the public gathering by Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil and an agape meal. The Eparchy expressed its sincere gratitude to all those who represented it at the Sabhadinam celebration.





TNBC and Pastoral Council Representatives' Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the TNBC and Pastoral Council Representatives was held on 5 July 2026 at the Pillar Campus, Madurai, under the leadership of Most Rev. Archbishop George Antony Samy. The Bishop attended along with Rev. Fr. Ajin Jose and six committee members. Rev. Fr. Jerry SJ addressed the gathering on **"The Church Which Focuses on the Poor."** The discussions emphasized responsible use

of Church resources, allocating 10% of annual income for social welfare, maintaining financial transparency, using donations for their intended purposes, and forming a Finance Committee for financial decisions. The Eparchy of Thuckalay was represented by Mr. John Kumari Thozhan, Mr. Shonic Reegan, Rev. Sr. Emily CMC, Mrs. Chandramathi, Mrs. Raajitha, and Mrs. Latha.

Seminar on—— Pope's New Encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*

On Saturday, 11 July 2026, a seminar on the Holy Father's encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* was conducted by Rev. Dr. Joseph Santhosh from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon. He explained the dignity of every human person as created in the image and likeness of God and highlighted the Christian call to compassion, justice, fraternity, hope, and service, especially towards the poor and vulnerable. The interactive session and question-and-answer discussion helped the participants deepen their understanding of the encyclical and its relevance to personal and pastoral life. The seminar was enriching and spiritually fruitful, with the wholehearted participation of the Fathers, Sisters, and Brothers.



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July Priests' Conference

Strengthening Pastoral Coordination and Priestly Welfare



The monthly Priests' Conference for July was held at Sangamam on 11 July 2026, under the leadership of Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General. The conference discussed the pilgrimage and Nadaipayanam planned for the Feast of St. Alphonsa, with Rev. Fr. Sanil Panthichirackal presenting the celebration programme. Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil was entrusted with coordinating the Nadaipayanam, scheduled

for 25 July under the leadership of SMYM and Mathar Jothis Iyakkam. The conference also considered the new medical insurance scheme for TPWA members, which Rev. Fr. Vinu D. Joseph explained, including its benefits and empaneled hospitals. He distributed the insurance cards to the priests. The meeting concluded with the final blessing of the Vicar General.



A Faithful Servant and Builder of the Eparchy: Rev. Fr. Dominic Palathingal

Rev. Fr. Dominic Palathingal, aged 91, passed away on 12 July 2026 after a life of dedicated service to the Kanyakumari Mission and the Eparchy of Thuckalay. Having served from 1993, he played a significant role in the early development of the Eparchy, serving as Chancellor, Procurator, Treasurer, Archivist and Vicar General, as well as in various pastoral, educational and social ministries. He contributed greatly to the establishment of the present Bishop's House and the acquisition and documentation of diocesan properties. Known for his honesty, dedication, deep prayer life and tireless service, he worked selflessly for the growth of the Diocese. His funeral was held at Vazhapally on 15 July 2026, with the participation of Archbishop Emeritus Mar Joseph Perumthottam and Cardinal Mar George Alencherry. The Eparchy of Thuckalay gratefully remembers his devoted ministry and prays that the Lord may grant him eternal rest.



Inauguration of the Mathar Jothis Movement

The inauguration of the Mathar Jothis lyakkam for 2026–2027 was held on 12 July 2026 at the KKSSS Office Hall, Kalluvilai, under the presidency of Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General. Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil, the new Director, was also present, and around 125 office-bearers from various parishes participated. The Vicar General released the topics for the year's skill development competitions and addressed the gathering. The Bishop appreciated the active participation of the mothers, thanked Rev. Fr. Jimmy Thekkekadumathil for his dedicated service as the former Director, and conveyed his best wishes to Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil. He highlighted the important role of mothers as pillars of families and first teachers of children, praying that the movement would continue to grow and promote faith, values and social responsibility.



Celebrating Faith and Faithful Service:

Narcheithi Niyalam Anniversary Programme

The Narcheithi Niyalam Anniversary Programme was held on 19 July 2026 at the Asser Auditorium, Kalluvilai, with the Bishop presiding along with Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General, and Rev. Fr. Antony Jose, Coordinator of All Departments. The programme honoured catechism teachers for 25 and 40 years of dedicated service and distributed prizes for various competitions, including the Bible Quiz, Scholarship Awards, Webinar Participation and Nooru Meni competitions. The Handbook for the new academic year was released, and awards were presented to the Best Sunday School and Best Sunday School Teachers. The Bishop appreciated Rev. Fr. Toji Kozhuvakandathil for organizing the programme and thanked Rev. Fr. Printo Kurias and Rev. Fr. Shijo Aikkaramattathil for coordinating the Nooru Meni Competition.



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Place:

Intentions:

In detail you wish to express,



: bishopofthuckalay@gmail.com

Walking in Faith with St. Alphonsa: Diocesan Nadai Payanam to Nagercoil



The Diocese organized the Nadai Payanam to the St. Alphonsa Shrine, Nagercoil, on 25 July 2026 as part of the Feast of St. Alphonsa, under the leadership of SMYM and the Mathar Jothis Movement. The pilgrimage began from the Bishop's House, Thuckalay, with the Bishop inaugurating it with prayer and blessing. Around 800 youth and faithful participated in the spiritual journey. At the Shrine, Novena prayers were led by Rev. Fr. Sanjo Thenepackal, followed by Holy Qurbana celebrated by Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General. The Bishop expressed his gratitude to all the priests and organizers, particularly Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil, Rev. Fr. Anil Raj, Rev. Fr. Sanil Panthichirackal and their teams, for their dedicated coordination and arrangements.



Grandparents' Day Celebration

World Grandparents' Day was observed in all the parishes on 26 July 2026, following the guidelines of the TNBC Health Commission, with special liturgical texts prepared for the occasion. At KKSSS, Kalluvilai, the celebration was held on 18 July, with many elderly people, particularly members of the Women's Self-Help Groups, participating actively. Rev. Fr. Antony Jose, Coordinator of All Departments, presided over

the programme and shared an inspiring message. The Bishop expressed his appreciation to Rev. Fr. Antony Mahesh for coordinating the celebration throughout the Diocese and prayed that the Lord would bless all grandparents and elderly faithful with good health, peace, joy and the loving care of their families. He also expressed gratitude for their faith, wisdom, sacrifices and valuable contribution to the Church and society.



41st Memorial Holy Qurbana for Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil



The 41st Memorial Mass of Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil was observed on 5 July 2026 at St. Alphonsa Shrine Church, Nagercoil, with Holy Qurbana celebrated by Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, who prayed for the eternal repose of his soul. The Bishop also participated in the Holy Mass celebrated at Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil's native parish, Kooroppada, on 7 July 2026. The Diocese gratefully remembers his dedicated priestly service and commends his soul to the loving mercy of God.





A New Chapter of Service:

Mr. Edwinson Elected President of the Thuckalay Central Council

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul conducted its election on 6 July 2026 at Padanthalumoodu, with the counting of votes held at the Bishop's House, Thuckalay. Mr. Edwinson of Palapallam Parish was elected as the President of the Thuckalay Central Council. The Bishop expressed his sincere gratitude to Mr. Rabi of Varuthattu Parish for his committed service and congratulated Mr. Edwinson on his election, assuring him of his prayers and wishing him success in his new responsibility.

Mr. Edwinson, a parishioner of Christ the King Parish, Palappalam, and an active member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, has been

elected as the new President of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Thuckalay Diocese. He has served the Diocese faithfully for many years in the Finance Office of the Bishop's House and is known for his good oratory skills. He is also an active member of the Pastoral Council, takes a keen interest in visiting mission stations, and supports seminarians through the SEED organization. A pious, sincere, and dedicated person, he has always shown great commitment to diocesan activities. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Edwinson and wish him God's abundant blessings and success in his new responsibility.

Continuing the Mission of Mary

Mr. Thomas Panner Selvam Re-elected President



The election for the President of the Legion of Mary, Thuckalay Comitium, was held on 12 July 2026 at Padanthalumoodu under the supervision of representatives from the Kottar Regia. Mr. Thomas Panner Selvam of Soosaipuram Parish was re-elected as President of the Thuckalay Comitium. His dedicated service over the past years was appreciated, and prayers and best wishes were expressed as he continues his ministry.

A Word on Our Dream: St. Joseph Cathedral



As construction on the new St. Joseph's Cathedral in Soosaipuram steadily progresses—following the solemn laying of its foundation stone on February 17, 2026, by Bishop Mar George Rajendran SDB of the Eparchy of Thuckalay—devoted parishioners and faithful from communities such as Varuthattu Parish have visited the sacred site. Standing amidst the active construction zone with its rising steel pillars and solid foundations taking shape across the red earth, the community unites in prayer to offer their devotion, support, and contributions toward the successful completion of this cherished house of worship.





In Memoriam **Fr. Mathew Araickal MCBS**

Rev. Fr. Mathew Araickal MCBS (70), who served in the Sengottai Mission as its first Regional Superior, was called to eternal life on 26 July 2026. We gratefully remember his dedicated missionary service and pray that the Lord may grant him eternal rest and comfort all who mourn his passing.

In Memory of a Life Well-Lived



Mrs. Annama Chacko Kuzhimattathil (71)
mother of Sr. Sheena LSDP



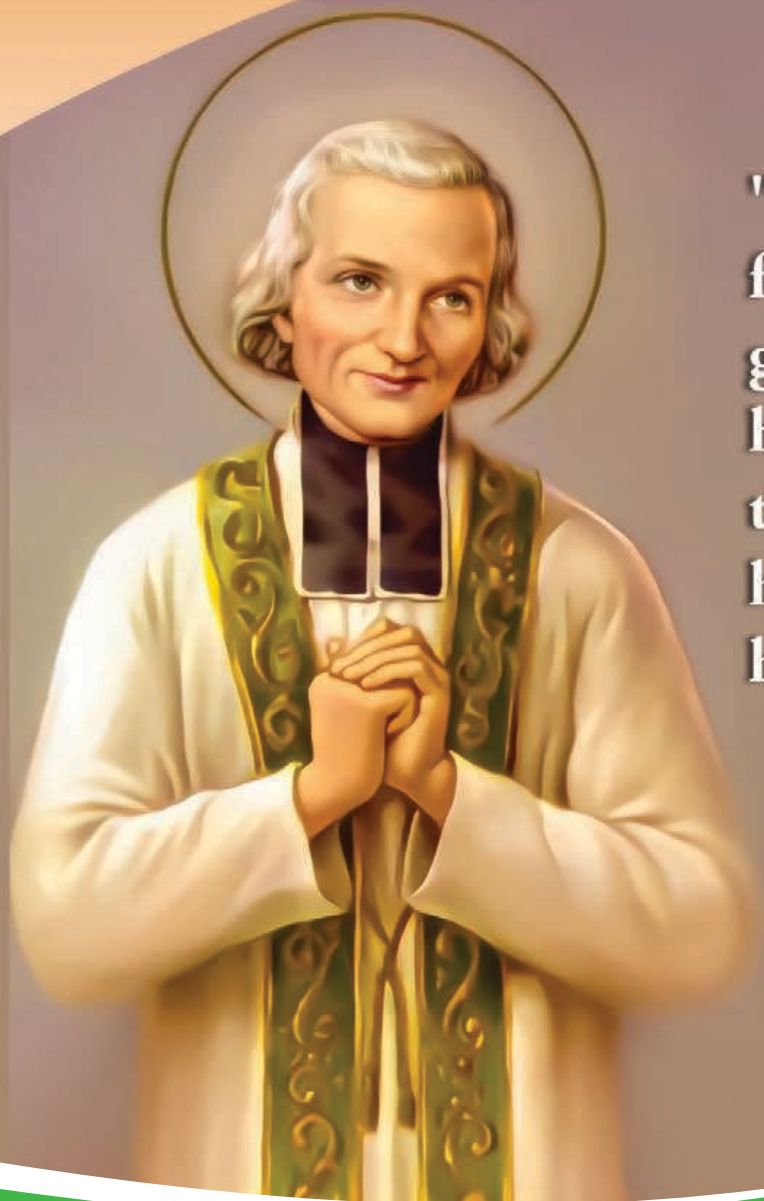
Mr. Chacko Abraham (94)
father of Sr. Anu SH



Mrs. Pholomina Olickal (74),
the mother of Sr. Ancitta SABS



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**"The priest is not a priest
for himself; he does not
give himself absolution;
he does not administer
the Sacraments to
himself. He is not for
himself; he is for you."**

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