



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/184/2026

31 July 2026

Dear Rev. Fathers,

Warm greetings to each one of you from the Bishop's House, Thuckalay!

We have just concluded a month of July rich in grace for our Eparchy and for our Syro-Malabar Church, having celebrated the feasts of two great saints close to our hearts: St Thomas the Apostle, whose faith journey from doubt to the great confession, "My Lord and my God," gave the Gospel to our land, and St Alphonsa, whose hidden life of suffering, humility, and total surrender to God's will continues to inspire the Church in India. Both these saints, in their own way, remind us that holiness is not found in grandeur but in fidelity, littleness, and quiet trust in the Lord — a fitting prelude to the theme I wish to place before you this month.

I write to you this month with a theme close to my heart as a fellow pilgrim on the path of priestly service: Living a Simple and Joyful Priestly Life, inspired by St John Mary Vianney, the beloved patron of parish priests, the Curé of Ars.

A Saint for Our Times

St John Mary Vianney was not a man of learning in the worldly sense, nor a man of means. He even struggled to pass his seminary examinations. Yet God chose this poor, humble priest to become one of the greatest pastors of souls the Church has known. He lived in a small rectory, ate the barest of meals, wore patched cassocks, and spent long hours in the confessional and before the tabernacle. Yet those who met him spoke not of a man weighed down by poverty, but of a man radiant with joy — a joy that flowed not from possessions or comfort, but from his closeness to Christ and his deep love for the people entrusted to him.

I propose him to you this month not as a distant, unreachable figure of the past, but as a living model for us, the priests of Thuckalay, precisely because our own Eparchy shares so much with the village of Ars in his day: we are small and not wealthy, and the vast majority of our people live simple, often difficult lives. In St John Vianney, we do not find a saint who is foreign to our situation — we find a brother who understood it deeply and showed us how to turn apparent poverty into a wellspring of grace.

Witnessing to the Gospel through Humility and Simplicity

Dear Fathers, our first and most eloquent homily is the life we lead. People do not merely listen to what we preach; they watch how we live. A priest who lives simply, without pretension or the need to display comfort or status, preaches the Gospel more powerfully than many words from the pulpit.

St John Vianney used to say that a priest is truly appreciated only by souls who understand the sacrifice a good priest imposes upon himself. Let us ask ourselves honestly: does my way of life — my house, my food, my dress, my mode of travel, my spending — reflect the simplicity of Christ, who "had nowhere to lay his head" (Lk 9:58)? Or has it, without our noticing, drifted towards habits that separate us from the very people we are sent to serve?

I do not say this to burden anyone with guilt, but as a fraternal and pastoral invitation to examine our lives together. Humility is not self-deprecation; it is truth. The truth of our situation is that we are pastors of a

poor Eparchy, called to serve a poor and beloved flock. Our credibility as witnesses to the Gospel depends largely on whether our lives correspond to this truth.

Our Eparchy: Small, Yet Rich in Grace

We must speak honestly among ourselves as a family of faith. The Eparchy of Thuckalay is small — in the number of our faithful and in our institutional and economic resources compared with many other Eparchies of the Syro-Malabar Church. This is not a cause for shame; it is simply our reality, and indeed it can be a grace, for it keeps us close to the Gospel spirit of littleness that Our Lord himself blessed: “I thank you, Father... because you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little ones” (Mt 11:25).

But precisely because we are small and largely poor, we must be all the more vigilant that our institutional life, our celebrations, and our personal lifestyles do not begin to imitate the patterns of wealthier, better-resourced Eparchies. When a poor Eparchy tries to appear rich, something rings false — both to our own people and to those outside who observe us. Let our churches be dignified but not extravagant. Let our feast-day celebrations be joyful and prayerful, but not a financial burden on families who can ill afford them. Let our processions, our jubilees, and our ordination anniversaries be occasions of genuine spiritual joy rather than competitions in display.

Our Lifestyle Should Reflect the Life of Our People

The vast majority of our faithful are poor. Many of our people rise before dawn to work for daily wages, toil in the fields, travel long distances for small earnings, and manage their households with great sacrifice and ingenuity. If this is the daily reality of our people, it must also, in an appropriate and priestly way, be reflected in the lives of their pastors.

I am not suggesting that we should abandon prudent care for our health or the dignity proper to our ministry. But I ask each of you, dear Fathers, to reflect on this: Is a gap growing between the way I live and the way my people live? Do I eat, travel, and spend in a manner that a poor labourer in my parish would recognise as close to his own, or in a way that would seem distant and unfamiliar to him?

St John Vianney’s own parishioners never doubted that their priest belonged to them, because he lived among them and with them, sharing in their simplicity in a real, tangible way. This nearness enabled his words to touch hearts so powerfully. Let us ask the Lord for the grace of this same nearness to our people — not as a strategy, but as a genuine configuration of our hearts to the poor Christ we serve at the altar.

Patience with Simple Faith

Our faithful, for the most part, possess a simple, unlettered yet deeply sincere faith. This simplicity is not a deficiency to be corrected impatiently, nor a matter for condescension. It is fertile soil, and our task as their pastors is to till it patiently so that it may yield the fullness of an encounter with the living God.

St John Vianney did not despise the simple faith of his parishioners in Ars. He met them where they were — in their fields, in their homes, in the confessional — and, with immense patience over years, led them gently but firmly towards a mature and living relationship with Christ. He did not rush them, nor did he water down the truth of the Gospel to make it more comfortable; rather, he combined firm truth with tender patience, and in this combination, transformation occurred.

I ask each of you to renew this same patient pedagogy. Teach in simple language, but teach faithfully. Explain the truths of our faith in the language and images our people understand, drawing on their own experience of the soil, the family, and the struggle for daily bread. Above all, do not merely instruct them

about God — help them to experience God through prayerful liturgies, attentive confession, through visits to the sick and the poor, and a priestly presence that is available and warm rather than distant and hurried.

The Hidden Source of His Joy

We should not mistake the Curé of Ars for a man who found joy merely in having less. Vianney's joy did not come from poverty itself, but from what his poverty freed him to do: hours of silent adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, a life of unceasing prayer, and total trust in Divine Providence. He often said that a soul united to God has found the treasure of treasures. It was this union with Christ, not the absence of possessions, that made his simplicity radiant rather than grim.

Dear Fathers, let us not reduce this circular to a mere call for austerity. A priest can live with very little yet remain restless, anxious, and joyless if his life is not rooted in prayer. Equally, a priest secure in his relationship with the Lord discovers that he needs far less than he once thought to be at peace. I urge each of you, therefore, to guard your Holy Mass, your daily Rosary, your time before the tabernacle, and your annual retreat jealously. These are not devotions added on top of a busy ministry; they are the very source from which a joyful simplicity flows. Without this interior life, our external simplicity risks becoming mere hardship rather than the freedom and joy that marked Vianney's life.

Standing Together as Brother Priests

Living simply is not always easy, and no priest should feel he must bear this call alone. I wish to remind each of you that you belong to a presbyterate — a family of brother priests bound together in service to this small Eparchy. Where one Father is struggling, whether with loneliness, discouragement, health, or the weight of a difficult assignment, I ask his brothers to reach out to him with genuine fraternal care. I also ask every priest not to hesitate to lean on his brothers and on me, his Bishop, in turn.

Let us also be watchful that we do not, even unconsciously, create comparisons or rivalries among ourselves over parishes, appointments, or possessions. Such comparisons wound our fraternity and contradict the very simplicity we are called to witness. Vianney himself, though he became known far beyond Ars, never sought advancement or recognition; he remained content in the small parish entrusted to him until the end of his life. May each of us find similar contentment in the portion of the vineyard the Lord and his Church, through me, have asked us to tend, whatever its size or visibility.

Dear Fathers, as we reflect this month on simple and joyful priestly living, let us turn to St John Mary Vianney and ask for his intercession. May he obtain for us priests the grace to embrace joyfully the poverty and simplicity that our situation as a small Eparchy already demands of us — not as a hardship to be endured, but as a well-trodden path towards true joy and fruitful ministry.

Let our simplicity be a preaching in itself. Let our nearness to the poor be the truest sign of our closeness to Christ. And let our patience with the simple faith of our people, in God's own time, bear a rich harvest of holiness within our beloved Eparchy of Thuckalay.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Extended Territory Pilgrimage to the Tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle: On **2 July 2026**, thirteen members from the Extended Territory undertook a pilgrimage to the sacred places associated with **St. Thomas the Apostle**. It was a deeply meaningful spiritual journey that renewed our missionary spirit and strengthened our commitment to proclaim the Gospel with greater zeal. Our pilgrimage began at Chinnamalai (Little Mount), where I celebrated the Holy Mass at the traditional site of the martyrdom of St. Thomas. We then visited Periyamalai (St. Thomas Mount), a place of prayer and silence, where we prayed

in the ancient cave and venerated the traditional knee prints and footprints of the Apostle. These sacred places inspired us to imitate his faith, perseverance, and complete trust in God. The highlight of our pilgrimage was our time of prayer at the tomb of St. Thomas in the crypt of Santhome Basilica, Mylapore. Spending time in silent prayer before the resting place of the Apostle of India was a profound spiritual experience that renewed our missionary calling. We were also blessed to meet Mar Sebastian Pozholicparambil, Bishop of Hosur, who showed great interest in the mission of our Extended Territory. Our conversation about our evangelization efforts and pastoral ministry was both encouraging and enriching. I sincerely thank all the Fathers and Sisters who participated in this pilgrimage and made it a prayerful and memorable experience. I am especially grateful to Rev. Fr. Tobin Alapuraickal for coordinating the entire pilgrimage with great dedication and care. His thoughtful planning and attention to every detail ensured that everything proceeded smoothly, allowing us to focus on prayer, fellowship, and spiritual renewal.

Sabhadinam Celebration at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad: 3 July is observed as Sabhadinam in our Church. In keeping with tradition, the Feast of Dukhrana was solemnly celebrated at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 3 July 2026. Representatives from each diocese of the Syro-Malabar Church participated in the celebration. The members representing our Diocese were Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Sr. Ann Grace FCC, Mr. Edwinson (Palapallam) and Mr. Vincent (Munchirai). Following the solemn **Raza Qurbana**, our Major Archbishop, **Mar Raphael Thattil**, inaugurated the public gathering, which was followed by an agape meal. I extend my sincere gratitude to all those who represented our Eparchy at the Sabhadinam celebration.

TNBC and Pastoral Council Representatives' Annual Meeting: The TNBC and Pastoral Council Representatives' Annual Meeting was held on 5 July 2026 at the Pillar Campus, Madurai, under the leadership of Most Rev. Archbishop George Antony Samy. I attended the meeting along with Rev. Fr. Ajin Jose and six committee members. During the meeting, Rev. Fr. Jerry SJ delivered an insightful session on the theme, "The Church Which Focuses on the Poor." Fruitful discussions followed, and the following resolutions were adopted: Ten percent (10%) of the annual income received through donations, contributions, and other offerings should be allocated for social welfare activities. Annual income received from the public should not be used for personal luxury or unnecessary expenses but should be utilized for welfare programmes and charitable works. Donations should always be used only for the purposes for which they were intended. Proper financial accounts should be maintained, and all financial matters should be handled with complete transparency. A Finance Committee consisting of 8–10 members should be formed, and all financial decisions should be taken only after consultation with the committee. The following members represented our Diocese: Mr. John Kumari Thozhan (Vayalinkarai), Mr. Shonic Reagan (Thakkalivilai), Rev. Sr. Emily CMC, Mrs. Chandramathi (Nagercoil), Mrs. Raajitha (Kaliyal), Mrs. Latha (Kazhuvanthittai).

Seminar on Pope's New Encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*: On Saturday, 11 July 2026, we were blessed to participate in a meaningful seminar on the Holy Father's new encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*. The seminar was led by Rev. Dr. Joseph Santhosh, who conducted an inspiring session from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon. Rev. Dr. Joseph presented the central message of the encyclical in a simple and practical manner. He explained that every human person possesses an inalienable dignity because each one is created in the image and likeness of God. The encyclical calls us to become witnesses of compassion, justice, fraternity, and hope, encouraging us to build a society in which the poor, the marginalized, and the vulnerable are respected and loved. It also reminds us that authentic Christian discipleship is expressed not only through prayer but also through our service to humanity. The seminar concluded with an interactive question-and-answer session, giving participants an opportunity to clarify their doubts and deepen their understanding of the encyclical. The discussions were lively and enriching, making the programme both fruitful and spiritually

rewarding. I sincerely thank Rev. Dr. Joseph Santhosh for his enlightening presentation and for helping us appreciate the relevance of the Holy Father's teaching in our personal lives and pastoral ministry. I am equally grateful to all the Fathers, Sisters, and Brothers who participated wholeheartedly. Your presence, active involvement, and cooperation contributed greatly to the success of the seminar. May the teachings of *Magnifica Humanitas* inspire us to uphold the dignity of every human person and to serve others with greater love, humility, and commitment.

Priests' Conference: The monthly Priests' Conference for July was held at Sangamam on 11 July 2026, immediately after the seminar. The conference was presided over by Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General. The first agenda item concerned the pilgrimage and Nadaipayanam in connection with the Feast of St. Alphonsa. The discussion was introduced by the Protosyncellus, Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, and was followed by a detailed presentation of the celebration programme by Rev. Fr. Sanil Panthichirackal, Parish Priest of St. Alphonsa Shrine. As the Youth Director was engaged in another pastoral programme, the responsibility for coordinating the Nadaipayanam was entrusted to Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil, Director of Mathar Jothis Iyakkam. The pilgrimage was scheduled for 25 July 2026 under the leadership of SMYM and Mathar Jothis Iyakkam. The second agenda focused on the medical insurance policy for TPWA members. Rev. Fr. Vinu D. Joseph explained the new insurance scheme for priests, outlining its benefits and the hospitals where the insurance could be availed. He also distributed the insurance cards to all the members of TPWA. The meeting concluded with the final blessing imparted by the Vicar General.

Funeral Ceremony of Rev. Fr. Dominic Palathingal: Rev. Fr. Dominic Palathingal (91) was called to his eternal reward on 12 July 2026. Rev. Fr. Dominic served the Kanyakumari Mission and later the Eparchy of Thuckalay from 1993 onwards. At the time of the establishment of the Eparchy, he was serving as the Parish Priest of Varuthattu Parish. From the very beginning of the Diocese, he was appointed as its Chancellor and Procurator (Treasurer). During the early years, when the Bishop's House was located at Munchirai, he travelled daily from Varuthattu to assist in the diocesan administration. Shortly afterwards, he began residing at the Bishop's House and devoted himself full-time to the service of the Diocese. He played a leading role in establishing the present Bishop's House at its current location. He also made significant efforts to acquire many of the diocesan properties. With the assistance of Mr. Barnabas, a teacher from Vellicode, all the legal documents relating to diocesan properties were carefully verified and properly completed. Throughout his years of service, he faithfully served the Diocese as Treasurer, Archivist, and Vicar General. He also served as the Director of Religious Men and Women, Coordinator of Educational Institutions, President of the Kanyakumari Social Service Society (KSSS), and Spiritual Director of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. After the completion of Sangamam, he resided there and continued his dedicated ministry. Rev. Fr. Dominic was known for his deep concern for the welfare of everyone with whom he worked. During the formative years of the Diocese, he single-handedly managed all the diocesan accounts with remarkable clarity, honesty, and transparency. He was deeply committed to his spiritual life. He never failed to pray the Divine Office and faithfully participated in all the liturgical prayers of the Church, including Ramsa and Lelya. He was always the first to arrive at the chapel and was well known for his beautiful singing and thorough knowledge of the liturgical chants. He worked tirelessly, day and night, for the growth of the Diocese, often without concern for his own comfort, food, or rest. His selfless dedication greatly eased the work of many others. The diocese of Thuckalay gratefully remembers his wonderful ministry in the mission and diocese. After serving in our Diocese he was staying in the clergy home of Archdiocese of Changanassery and in the final days he was admitted in the Chethipuzha Hospital, where he died of his old age. His mortal remains were brought to the residence of Mr. Chacko Chacko Palathingal at Vazhapally on 14 July 2026, where the faithful paid their final respects. The funeral ceremony took place on 15 July 2026. I presided over the first part of the funeral prayers. The Holy Qurbana and the second part of the service were celebrated by Archbishop Emeritus Mar Joseph Perumthottam, while the final rites were

conducted by Cardinal Mar George Alencherry. I thank Almighty God for the many blessings bestowed upon our Diocese through the devoted life and faithful ministry of Rev. Fr. Dominic Palathingal. May the Lord grant him eternal rest and reward him for his years of generous service.

Inauguration of the Mathar Jothis Movement: The inauguration ceremony of the Mathar Jothis Iyakkam for the year 2026–2027 was held on 12 July 2026 at the KKSSS Office Hall, Kalluvilai. The programme was attended by Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General of the Diocese, and Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil, Director of the Mathar Jothis Movement. The Vicar General presided over the function, released the topics for this year's skill development competitions, and delivered an inspiring presidential address. Around 125 key office-bearers, including animators, presidents, secretaries, and treasurers from various parishes, participated in the programme. I am delighted to see the enthusiastic and active participation of mothers in this movement. I offer my heartfelt prayers and warm greetings that the Mathar Jothis Movement may continue to grow and remain a channel of God's blessings and social welfare for many families. I also express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Rev. Fr. Jimmy Thekkekadumathil, the former Director, for his dedicated leadership and valuable contribution to the growth of the movement. My heartfelt wishes and prayers are extended to Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil, who has assumed responsibility as the Director this year. May the Almighty bless him abundantly, and may the movement reach even greater heights under his leadership. Dear mothers, you are the strong pillars of your families, the first teachers of your children, and living models of faith. I pray that, under your loving guidance, future generations may grow in faith, human values, and social responsibility.

Catechism Anniversary Celebration: The Narcheithi Niyalam Anniversary Programme was held on 19 July 2026 at the Asser Auditorium, Kalluvilai. I presided over the function together with Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General, and Rev. Fr. Antony Jose, Coordinator of All Departments. The programme honoured catechism teachers who have faithfully served for 25 years and 40 years. Rev. Fr. Toji Kozhuvakandathil welcomed the gathering. The Vicar General and the Chancellor felicitated the participants, while Mr. Shonic Regan introduced and honoured the jubilarians. They were presented with shawls and mementoes in recognition of their dedicated service. During the celebration, prizes were distributed to the winners of the Bible Quiz, Scholarship Awards, and Webinar Participation Competitions. The Handbook for the New Academic Year was also released, and awards were presented for the Best Sunday School and Best Sunday School Teachers. In addition, prizes for the Nooru Meni Competition, organized by the Cheru Pushpa Mission League, were distributed during the programme. The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Edwinson, the Promoter. I sincerely thank Rev. Fr. Toji Kozhuvakandathil, Director of Catechism, for organizing the entire programme in such a systematic and efficient manner. I also gratefully acknowledge Rev. Fr. Printo Kurias and Rev. Fr. Shijo Aikkaramattathil for successfully coordinating the Nooru Meni Competition.

St. Alphonsa Nadaipayanam: As part of the annual celebration of the Feast of St. Alphonsa, the Diocese organized the Nadai Payanam (Pilgrimage on Foot) to the St. Alphonsa Shrine, Nagercoil, under the leadership of the SMYM and the Mathar Jothis Movement. This year's pilgrimage was held on 25 July 2026, beginning at 6.30 a.m. from the Bishop's House, Thuckalay. Pilgrims were served breakfast at the Bishop's House before the journey commenced. Rev. Fr. Antony Jose gave the initial instructions, and I inaugurated the pilgrimage with a prayer and blessing. Another group of youth and faithful travelled along the Colachel route to Nagercoil, where breakfast was arranged for them at Manavalakurichi. Upon reaching the Shrine, Rev. Fr. Sanjo Thenepackal led the Novena Prayers, followed by the celebration of the Holy Qurbana by Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General. Lunch was then served to all the participants. Approximately 800 youth and faithful took part in this meaningful spiritual journey. I sincerely thank all the priests who encouraged and accompanied the faithful in this pilgrimage. My special appreciation goes

to Rev. Fr. Robin Koorumullil and Rev. Fr. Anil Raj for their dedicated coordination of the entire programme. I also express my heartfelt thanks to Rev. Fr. Sanil Panthichirackal and his team for making excellent and systematic arrangements for this spiritual pilgrimage.

Grandparents' Day Celebration: World Grandparents' Day was observed in all our parishes on Sunday, 26 July 2026, following the guidelines issued by the TNBC Health Commission. Special liturgical texts, including the introduction to the Holy Qurbana and the Karozutha Prayers, were prepared and used for the occasion. At KKSSS, Kalluvilai, the celebration was held in advance on 18 July 2026. A large number of elderly people, especially members of the Women's Self-Help Groups, actively participated in the programme. Rev. Fr. Antony Jose, Coordinator of All Departments, presided over the function and delivered an inspiring message to the elderly. I extend my heartfelt appreciation and sincere thanks to Rev. Fr. Antony Mahesh for his dedicated efforts in coordinating and promoting the celebration of this meaningful occasion throughout the Diocese. May the Lord continue to bless all our grandparents and elderly faithful with good health, peace, joy, and the loving care of their families. We remain grateful for their faith, wisdom, sacrifices, and invaluable contribution to both the Church and society.

INFORMATION AND UPDATES

41st Memorial Mass of 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. The Holy Mass was celebrated by Very Rev. Fr. Jose Muttathupadam, who offered prayers for the eternal repose of his soul. I also participated in the Holy Mass celebrated for Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil at his native parish, Kooropad, on 7 July 2026. We gratefully remember his dedicated priestly service and commend his soul to the loving mercy of God.

Appointment of Rev. Dr. Joshy Kulathumkal: Congratulations to Rev. Dr. Joshy Kulathumkal, who has been appointed as the Defender of the Bond of the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal for a period of five years. At present, he serves as a Professor at the Institute of Eastern Canon Law, Pontifical Oriental Institute of Religious Studies, Vadavathoor, Kottayam. We congratulate him on this important appointment and assure him of our prayers.

A Joyful gathering in Mylapore, Chennai: On 11 July 2026 we gathered to celebrate the feast of St. Thomas - Dukrana - at the historical Basilica of St. Thomas in Mylapore. It was led by the beloved shepherd Mar Stephen Pazhayoliparampil. The Priests, Religious and faithful of the Diocese of Hosur came together in spirit and prayer. I had the privilege and honour of being invited to officiate the celebration and deliver homily, where I shared reflections on the missionary mandate of St. Thomas and its meaningful context for the diocese of Hosur today.

Meeting of Heads and Directors of Diocesan Charitable Institutions: A special meeting of the Heads and Directors of the Diocesan Charitable Institutions was held on 16 July 2026 at Sangamam. The meeting was attended by the Heads and Directors of Nambikkai Aalayam, Kazhuvanthittai, Karunalayam, Kalluvilai, Karunai Illam, Nithravilai, Aseer Vidyalaya, Thettiyode, Santhi Nilayam, Paruthivilai, Assisi Vidyalaya, Chenamcode, Jothi Nilayam, Palapallam, Providence Home, Perumchilampu, Rani Maria Sadan, Thadikarakonam, DNN, Karode. The meeting was also attended by Rev. Fr. Antony Mahesh, Director of AIDACT.

Vocation Promoters' Meeting: The Vocation Promoters' Meeting was held on 16 July 2026 at the Bishop's House. The meeting was attended by the Diocesan Vocation Promoter, all the Forane Directors, and Rev. Fr. Thomas Sathianesan, Director of all the Seminarians. Fruitful discussions were held regarding the promotion of priestly and religious vocations both within and outside the Diocese.

Education Commission Meeting: The Education Commission Meeting was held on 18 July 2026 at the Bishop's House to finalize the Education Policy of our Diocese. All the Correspondents, together with the Manager of Educational Institutions, participated in the meeting and contributed to the discussions.

Election of the President of the St. Vincent de Paul Society: The Society of St. Vincent de Paul conducted its election on 6 July 2026 at Padanthalumoodu, while the counting of votes took place at the Bishop's House, Thuckalay. Mr. Edwinson of Palapallam Parish was elected as the President of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Thuckalay Central Council. I sincerely thank Mr. Robi of Varuthattu Parish for his committed and dedicated service over the years. I also extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Edwinson, assuring him of my prayers and wishing him every success in his new responsibility.

Election of the President of the Legion of Mary, Thuckalay Comitium: The election for the President of the Legion of Mary, Thuckalay Comitium, was held on 12 July 2026 at Padanthalumoodu. Representatives from the Kottar Regia supervised the election process. Mr. Thomas Panner Selvam of Soosaipuram Parish was re-elected as the President of the Thuckalay Comitium. I thank him for his dedicated service over the past years and assure him of my prayers and best wishes as he continues his ministry.

Condolence – Mrs. Annama Chacko Kuzhimattathil: Mrs. Annama Chacko Kuzhimattathil (71), the beloved mother of Sr. Sheena LSDP, serving at the LSDP Convent, Perumchilampu, entered into eternal rest on 11 July 2026. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Sr. Sheena and her family. May the Lord grant the departed soul eternal rest and comfort all her loved ones.

Condolence – Mr. Chacko Abraham: Mr. Chacko Abraham (94), the beloved father of Sr. Anu SH, serving at the SH Convent, Malaicode, entered into eternal rest on 18 July 2026. We offer our sincere condolences to Sr. Anu and her family. May the Lord grant him eternal rest and strengthen and comfort the bereaved family.

Condolence – Mrs. Pholomina Olickal: Mrs. Pholomina Olickal (74), the beloved mother of Sr. Ancitta SABS, a member of St. Chantal Province, Thuckalay, entered into eternal rest on 19 July 2026. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Sr. Ancitta and her family. May the Lord receive the departed soul into His eternal kingdom and grant consolation to her loved ones.

Condolence – Rev. 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.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Date	Programme
2 August 2026	- Pilgrimage to St. Alphonsa Shrine Church, Nagercoil
4 August 2026	- Vianney Day Celebration at Mukkoottukal
11–12 August 2026	- Junior Priests' Ongoing Formation at Sangamam
17–28 August 2026	- Syro-Malabar Bishops' Synod

Vianny Day Celebration

Venue: Mukkoottukal

Date: 04 August 2026

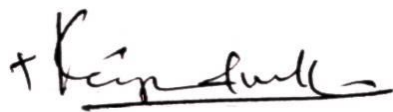
Time: 09.00 am – 01.30 pm

CONCLUSION

On 15 August, we celebrate the Assumption of Mary. As you know, it is one of the four Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church. The word ‘assumption’ derives from the Latin *assumptio*, meaning ‘taking up.’ Pope Pius XII defined it in 1950 in 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 day also marks the 79th Independence Day of our country. As we celebrate our country’s Independence Day and sing the national anthem proudly, let us pray with Tagore, saying, “Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.” Just as Mary was assumed into the glory of heaven, may our nation too rise ever higher in truth, justice, and spiritual freedom. Let this day renew in us both love for our motherland and hope in the promise of eternal glory that Mary’s Assumption holds out to each of us. May the Virgin Mary, assumed into heaven, intercede for all of us!

With my prayers and blessings,

Yours in Christ Jesus,



† **George Rajendran SDB**
Bishop of Thuckalay



DIocese of Thuckalay

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