



St. Thomas NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2017, VOLUME 4, NO.1

Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne of the Syro Malabars

EASTER MESSAGE



Bishop Bosco Puthur

HOLY WEEK AND HOLY QURBANA

IN THIS ISSUE

- EASTER MESSAGE
- FATIMA SAINTS
- CIRCULAR OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP
- SR. RANI MARIA CLEARED FOR BEATIFICATION

We are about to enter into the HOLY WEEK, culminating in Easter celebration, the most solemn and grace-filled week of the liturgical year of the Church. Mother Church is inviting us to celebrate the Pascal Mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ in the most intense and solemn manner. Along with the whole Church I cordially invite each and every one of you celebrate the grace-filled days of the Holy Week with adequate spiritual preparation. The Second Vatican Council invites us to do this in the following words: "Let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, as a way of coming to the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection with uplifted and welcoming hearts" (SC10).



Listening to the retreat preacher, Fr. Jaison Kanjiraparmparayil MCBS, I was made aware of the spiritual preparations and attitudes we have to acquire for a conscious, active and fruitful celebration of the holy Qurbana, which is a sacramental commemoration and celebration of the paschal mysteries of the Holy Week. There is an inner unity between Holy Week and Holy Qurbana. During the holy Qurbana, in the prayer of the preparation of the gifts, the celebrant prays: "May Christ who sacrificed Himself for our salvation, and commanded us to celebrate the memory of His passion, death, burial and resurrection, accept this Qurbana from our hands through His grace and mercy. Amen."

For a worthy and spiritually fruitful celebration of the holy Qurbana, the prayers invite us mainly for the following eight inner dispositions:

They are: 1, with clean hearts

(കഴുകി ശുദ്ധമാക്കപ്പെട്ട ഹൃദയത്തോടും),

2. With pure conscience (വെടിപ്പാക്കപ്പെട്ട മനസ്സാക്ഷിയോടും) (Celebrant's prayer before the Creed), 3. With deep love

(തികഞ്ഞ സ്നേഹത്തോടും), 4. With true faith

(ഉറച്ച വിശ്വാസത്തോടും) (First Anaphora),

5. With hope arising from repentance (അനുതാപത്തിൽ നിന്നുളവാകുന്ന ശരണത്തോടും),

6. Turning away from wrongdoing

(അപരാധങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നു പിന്തിരിഞ്ഞുകൊണ്ടും),

7. Repentant of sins (പാപങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് പശ്ചാത്തപിച്ചുകൊണ്ടും) and 8 Forgiving the

trespasses of our brothers and sisters (സഹോദരങ്ങളുടെ തെറ്റുകൾ ക്ഷമിച്ചുകൊണ്ടും)

(Karoza of Reconciliation).

My dear brothers and sisters, as we are on the threshold of the Holy Week, I once again invite you most cordially to celebrate the Holy Week with due spiritual preparation and take part in the holy Qurbana with due inner disposition. I conclude my Easter message with words taken from the final blessing of the Qurbana of the Easter: "May the Peace of the Risen Lord be always with us. May He lead us to the freedom of God's children. May He bless us to grow in faith... May the entire world obtain new life by the Resurrection of our Lord. May He invite you all, ..., into His eternal glory. Now, Always and forever +. Amen"

POPE FRANCIS TO PROCLAIM FATIMA VISIONARIES SAINTS DURING PORTUGAL TRIP IN MAY 2017



ROME - Pope Francis approved a miracle attributed to two of the visionaries who say they saw apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Fatima in 1917. The pope was already scheduled to visit the Marian shrine to mark the 100th anniversary of the event. Two of the visionaries of the Marian apparitions of Fatima - young shepherds Jacinta and Francisco Marto - will be canonised by Pope Francis when he visits the Portuguese shrine in May.

The Vatican announced the pontiff approved the miracle attributed to their intercession on March 23 Thursday, the final step necessary before they could be made saints. Italian media reports say he will canonise them at the Mass already scheduled for May 13, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima and the 100th anniversary of the date when the two children - along with their cousin Lúcia Santos - said the Virgin Mary first appeared to them.

The children, poor and illiterate like most peasants at the time, said an angel appeared to them three times during 1916. The first apparition of Mary was said to have happened on May 17, 1917, when Lúcia was ten, Francisco nine, and Jacinta seven. She is said to have appeared for the next six months, always on the 13th. On October 13, 1917, tens of thousands of people came to the spot, and the "Miracle of the Sun" - where the sun seemed to dance and spin in the sky - was reported by several witnesses. Sadly, less than two years later, Francisco was dead at ten years of age, with his sister Jacinta dying the next year at the age of nine, both victims of the influenza pandemic which spread across the world after World War I.

<https://cruxnow.com/uncategorized/2017/03/23/pope-francis-proclaim-fatima-visionaries-saints-portugal-trip/>



Prot. No. 0310/2017
CIRCULAR

Circular of the Major Archbishop after the XXV Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Session 1, held from 9 to 14 January 2017 in the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St Thomas, Kakkannad.

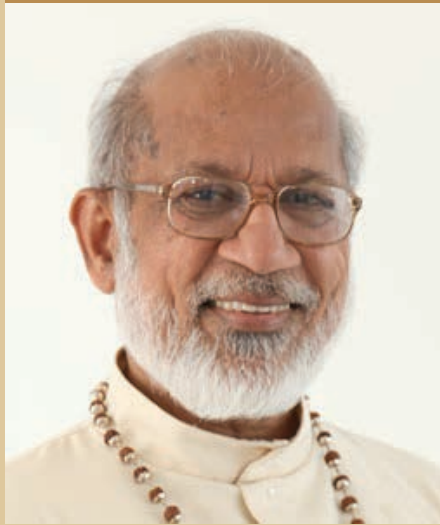
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

The XXV Synod, Session 1 was held from 09 to 14 January 2017 in the backdrop of the Silver Jubilee of the Major Archiepiscopal status of the Syro-Malabar Church. The Synod began with the solemn installation of the relics of St. Thomas in the chapel of Mount St. Thomas.

The Synod paid homage to the deceased Bishop Emeritus of the eparchy of Kanjirappally, Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy. Synod extended an official welcome to Bp. Joseph Srampickal, Bishop of the eparchy of Great Britain and Bp. Stephen Chirappanath, the Apostolic Visitor in Europe, who were participating the synod for the first time officially.

The Synod was conducted during the days following Christmas after the usual time of the Priestly Ordination and First Holy Qurbana of our deacons. Altogether 308 deacons got ordained this year in the Syro-Malabar Church, 165 religious priests and 143 eparchial priests. Let us thank Jesus Christ, the eternal priest for this great gift!

The Synod always takes keen interest in the pastoral care of the migrants outside Kerala. The Synod discussed very seriously about the provisions for pastoral care of the migrants in the Chennai Region and other places in India,



where there are no Syro-Malabar eparchies. The Synod expressed its concern about the challenges in the pastoral care of migrants in the Gulf Countries and other places in India outside Kerala and analyzed what had been done till now for the pastoral care of our faithful. It was decided to create a more organized and fruitful course of action on these matters.

Young People are the focal point of the next Synod of Bishops in Rome. Young People are our strength. Youth Apostolate in the eparchies should prepare plans to be active and available. Topics like our Priestly Formation, Empowerment of the laity, Social Service etc. were also discussed in the Synod. The necessity of improving the programme for priestly formation to make it fruitful according to the need of the hour was discussed. In order to make it more scientific, the concerned commission is entrusted to establish a system of evaluation of the teaching methods of the professors in the Synodal seminaries.

Synod brought out an Ecumenical Directory which aims at strengthening the relationship between other Christian denominations. Considering the importance of lay apostolate, Synod fathers were of the opinion that the way should be prepared for a more active participation of the Laity in the Syro-Malabar Church through appropriate formation. In the light of Mission ad Gentes, several fathers pointed out the need of the mission oriented lay people becoming evangelizers. In the field of lay empowerment our Church still needs

to make much progress. In this context, the activities of the lay missionary organizations are commendable. Synod also discussed about the methods for developing the organizational character of Cherupushpa Mission League.

The Syro-Malabar bishops who participated in the recently concluded FABC plenary assembly in Sri Lanka presented their report. As usual, the discussions of the previous Synod were followed up and the decisions were evaluated. In this regard, the Synod considered a handbook on environmental protection and Civic Culture prepared under the leadership of Bishop Thomas Chakiath, titled "Me and My Earth, Me and My Society" which discusses themes like eco developmental programmes and the partnership of Church in it. The handbook which also elaborates themes like Solar Energy, Water Pollution, Waste Management, Practice of Cleanliness etc., will be useful to everybody, especially to the youth and children. It would be very good if the book is promoted by the various eparchies in their parishes and associations.

The efforts and endeavours made by our eparchies to propagate and implement Amoris laetitia, the post-synodal apostolic exhortation of the Universal Church on family are laudable. Its reports from different eparchies are compiled and sent to Rome. I take this opportunity to exhort you to strive to implement in the parish level all that is envisaged in the apostolic exhortation, since family life is one of the important elements of the life of Church.

Another subject considered in the Synod was the practice of Yoga. Recognizing the important place given to Yoga in Indian Culture, it is to be considered as a physical exercise or postures to concentrate or to meditate. It is not quite right to think that the experience of God and the personal encounter with the Lord is possible through Yoga. The God in whom we believe is a Personal God. God is not someone who can be



reached through a particular posture. Those who hold different opinions other than that of the Church in this regard are not to be encouraged. In this context, each one should take utmost care to avoid getting into those prayer groups and spiritual movements which are against the Catholic faith and do not recognize the official teachings of the Church.

Liturgical matters were also taken up by the Synod. Liturgical Ceremony for Betrothal was approved by the Synod. Even if the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday was widely discussed, it was advised by the Synod to follow the existing tradition. At the same time, the Synod entrusted the Commission for Liturgy to continue its study on the matter.

I am glad to inform you that at Paurastya

Vidyapitham, Vadavathoor, a canon law faulty is being erected. As our Church is in the silver jubilee year of the status of being a Major Archiepiscopal Church, it is an occasion to go ahead in unity and solidarity. Let this jubilee be an occasion to improve on our missionary endeavours! In this jubilee year, let us try to recall the paths we travelled and commemorate the bishops who led the Church in its early days! It has been decided to organize an international seminar on the occasion of the jubilee.

Synod expressed its concern on the abduction of Fr. Tom Uzhunnilil SDB by terrorists in Yemen. Prayers and adoration were offered during one of the days of the Synod at St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica, Ernakulam for his release. Synod decided to seek the help of the government to speed

up the process of the release of Fr. Uzhunnilil.

Wishing you a lent of spiritual renewal, I remain

Yours cordially in Christ,

+George Cardinal Alencherry
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 05 March 2017.

N.B. The contents of this circular shall be made known to the Priests, Religious and Laity of all the Archeparchies/Eparchies of Syro-Malabar Church.

2017

LENTEN

RETREAT

EPARCHY OF

MELBOURNE



Fr George Panackal V C

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Darwin: | 4, 25, 26 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Alice Spring: | 27, 28, 29, (Mon, Tue, Wed) |
| Adelaide: March: | 31, April: 1, 2 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Cairns: | 3, 4, 5 (Mon, Tue, Wed) |
| Townsville: | 7, 8, 9 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Hobart: | 10, 11, 12 (Mon, Tue, Wed) |



Fr Soji Olickal

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| New Castle: March: | 14, 15, 16 (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Sydney: | 17, 18, 19 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Canberra: | 21, 22, 23 (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Melbourne North: | 24, 25, 26 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Wagga Wagga: | 28, 29, 30 (Tue, wed, Thu) |
| Melbourne South: | 31, April 1, 2 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Brisbane: | 4, 5, 6 (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Perth: | 7, 8, 9, 10 (Fri to Mon) |



Fr Jaison Kanjiramparayil MCBS

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wollongong: March: | 7, 8, 9, (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Parramatta: | 10, 11, 12, (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Bendigo: | 14, 15, 16, (Mon, Tue, Wed) |
| Melbourne West: | 17, 18, 19 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Ballarat: | 20, 21, 22 (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Sheperton: | 24, 25, 26 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Penrith: | 27, 28, 29 (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Campbelltown: | 31, April 1, 2 (Fri, Sat, Sun) |
| Orange: | 3, 4, 5 (Tue, Wed, Thu) |
| Hornsby: | 7, 8, 9, (Fri, Sat, Sun) |



Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

5 Clifton Grove

Preston, Victoria 3072, Australia

Phone: +61-(03) 94805379/+61408267777

vicargeneral.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au

February 7, 2017

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I write to you as the final hearing involving the Catholic Church at the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse commenced on February 6, 2017.

For the victims and survivors, for the Catholic community and for many in the wider Australian community, this hearing may be a difficult and even distressing time, as the Royal Commission reviews the evidence it has already received and seeks to understand why and how this tragedy has occurred.

Over the next three weeks, evidence presented during the Royal Commission hearings will be analysed, statistics about the extent of abuse will be made public, and the way forward will be explored.

Pope Francis has urged the whole Church to, 'find the courage needed to take all necessary measures and to protect in every way the lives of our children, so that such crimes may never be repeated'.

Throughout the coming weeks, I want to assure you of my thoughts and prayers. I encourage you to turn in prayer to the one who is always ready to listen: Jesus Christ, who brings healing and hope

Sincerely Yours in Christ

Bishop Bosco Puthur



Vatican City: Sister Rani Maria, Franciscan Clarist nun who was assassinated in central India 22 years ago, has been cleared for beatification by the Vatican on Mar 23. Beatification is the penultimate stage in the four-phased canonization process in the Catholic Church. Rani Maria's cause of canonization began in 2003 and she was declared a Servant of God four years later.

Rani Maria was 41 when Samandar Singh stabbed her inside a bus on February 25, 1995. Singh was hired by some landlords who were upset with the nun's fighting for just wages and other rights of the laborers.

She was attacked while travelling to Indore on her way to her native place in Kerala. The attacker followed her when she ran out of the crowded bus and continued to stab her. She died of 54 stab wounds on the roadside at Nachanbore Hill near Indore.

She was buried at Udaingar in Dewas district where she had worked among poor landless agricultural laborers. As part of



SR. RANI MARIA CLEARED FOR BEATIFICATION

her beatification process, on November 18, 2016 Bishop Chacko Thottumarikal of Indore supervised the opening of the slain nun's tomb and shifted the mortal remains to a church.

Rani Maria was born on January 29, 1954, as the second of seven children of Paily and Eliswa Vattalil at Pulluvazhy, a small village near Kochi. She made her first profession on May 1, 1974, as Franciscan Clarist nun and chose the name Rani Maria. She began her mission in northern India in Bijnore in 1975 and came to Udainagar in 1992.

The slain nun's family made international headlines when it accepted Singh as a member after forgiving him. Rani Maria's younger sister Selmy Paul, also a member of the same congregation, accepted

Singh as her brother by tying "rakhi" on Rakshabandan. Sister Paul's gesture helped Singh to regret his action. He now leads an exemplary life in his village in central India after serving his life term.

A documentary, "The Heart of a Murderer," which depicts the murder and subsequent repentance of Singh, won an award at the World Interfaith Harmony Film Festival in 2013.

The congregation's website says the saintly nun's courageous sacrifice and martyrdom has helped sow "the seed of love and justice and brotherhood in many hearts."

It also says the nun, during her initial years in the mission, showed keen interest in educating children through formal and non-

formal methods. "This slowly gave way to a much wider field of development of the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized," the website says. Her developmental programs among poor tribals went against the vested interests of unscrupulous moneylenders and social exploiters, it explains.

The congregation hails Rani Maria's martyrdom as "the most glorious event in the history of Udainagar as well as of Amala Province."





BISHOP BOSCO'S PROGRAM DIARY

APRIL 2017

9 - PALM SUNDAY
CATHEDRAL PARISH
HOLY WEEK
13 - THU - HOLY THURSDAY
14 - GOOD FRIDAY, BACCHUS MARSH
15 - HOLY SATURDAY
16 - SUNDAY EASTER, CATHEDRAL PARISH
18 - 22, TUE - SAT, NEO CAT MEETING
23 - SUN - DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
24 - MON - SEMINARIANS SUMMER CAMP
25 - TUE - ANZAC DAY

MAY 2017

1 MON - FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER
3 WED - MEETING OF EASTERN BISHOPS
4 THU - ACBC COMMISSION MEETING
5 FRI - 8 MON - ACBC
5-15 - VISIT OF CARDINAL SANDRI TO AUSTRALIA
9 TUE - TRAVEL TO KERALA
11 THU - LEAVING FOR MUNICH
14 SUN - 15 MON, TRAVEL IN EUROPE
17 WED - TRAVEL TO DOHA & VISITS IN DOHA
21 SUN - 31 WED, VISITS IN EUROPE

JUNE 2017

1 THU - 5 MON, TRAVEL IN EUROPE
11 SUN - HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY
18 SUN - FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI
29 THU - FEAST OF ST. PETER & ST. PAUL



"WE MUST RESTORE HOPE TO YOUNG PEOPLE, HELP THE OLD, BE OPEN TO THE FUTURE, SPREAD LOVE. BE POOR AMONG THE POOR. WE NEED TO INCLUDE THE EXCLUDED AND PREACH PEACE."
(POPE FRANCIS)



CARDINAL'S VISIT



Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches Rome, visits the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas, Melbourne on 14 May 2017. He will be accompanied by Archbishop Adolfo Tito, the Apostolic Nuncio to Australia. There will be a concelebrated Holy Qurbana and a public reception at St John's College, 5 Caroline Street Dandenong. All are welcome.



Prayer to Mary, Mother of God

O Mary, Mother of Mercy, watch over all people, that the Cross of Christ may not be emptied of its power, that man may not stray from the path of the good or become blind to sin, but may put his hope ever more fully in God who is "rich in mercy."