



# St. Thomas NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2015, VOLUME 2, NO. 2

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



## Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne **FIRST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

Celebrations to mark the first anniversary of the establishment of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne took place at La Trobe University, Melbourne on 10, 11, 12 July 2015. A Bible Convention preached by Fr Dominic Valanmanal, Director of Marian Retreat Centre Anakkara, and a public meeting marked the occasion. More than 2500 faithful participated in the functions.

The public meeting commenced with a prayer song by the cathedral junior choir,

in attendance were various dignitaries from religio-socio-political fronts. Bishop Bosco Puthur welcomed everyone to the public meeting. The St Thomas Eparchy is the second Syro-Malabar eparchy to be established outside India, for the second largest Eastern Catholic Church in the world. Bishop Bosco explained the purpose of establishing the St. Thomas Eparchy in Australia, was to preserve and assist in the growth of the faith, traditions, and patrimony of Syro-Malabar faithful who have migrated to Australia and also



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to encourage future generations to grow in gospel centred spirituality and to empower them to witness Christ in the Australian landscape.

Bishop Bosco expressed his hope that through the establishment of the Eparchy families would get better pastoral care to become places where love and affection are fostered and from the migrant Syro-Malabar communities there would soon emerge vocations to priestly and religious life.

“The great enthusiasm to keep the faith by Syro-Malabar faithful is an example to other Catholic communities”, remarked Bishop Most Rev. Peter Stasiuk CSSR bishop of the Ukrainian Eparchy of Saints Peter and Paul of Melbourne. He also observed that the Eparchy had achieved much progress within the short span of a year.

The Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, Most Rev. Terry Curtin, acknowledged it as a good sign that the Eparchy has been able to form a number of Eucharist centred communities and to organize regular faith formation classes across Australia.

Hon Jenny Mikakos, Minister for Families, Children and Youth Affairs of Victoria, Mrs. Inga Peulich, M.P. and Shadow Minister for

Multicultural Affairs and for Scrutiny of Government and Mr. Mathew Cassin CEO, Catholic Development Fund, Melbourne felicitated the activities of the Eparchy. The other dignitaries present in the meeting were Mr. Antony McCarthy, Manager, Catholic Super, Mr. Peter Doherty, Manager, Catholic Church Insurance and Mr. Chandra Daya Bamunusinghe, Hume City Councillor. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Mr. Gene Thalappillil, the secretary of the pastoral council. An updated website of the Eparchy was inaugurated during the function.





The public meeting was followed by a solemn thanksgiving Holy Qurbana presided over by Bishop Bosco Puthur. Fr. Francis Kolencherry, Vicar General, Fr. Mathew Kochupurackal, Chancellor, Rev. Dr. George Madathiparampil, Secretary of the Syro-Malabar Church for Higher Education, Fr. Peter Kavupuram MST, Episcopal Vicar Queensland Region, Fr. Thomas Alukka, Episcopal Vicar New South Wales Region, Fr. Abraham Kunnatholy CMI, Chaplain of Melbourne South East,



Fr. Fredy Eluvathinkal, Eparchial Director of Bible Apostolate and Chaplain of the Adelaide community, Fr. Varghese Vavolil, Eparchial Director of Catechesis and Chaplain of the Canberra Community,

Fr. Stephen Kandarappallil, Eparchial Consultor and Chaplain of the Melbourne Knanaya Mission, Fr. Binesh Narimattathil CST, Eparchial Consultor and Chaplain of the Darwin Community and Fr. Jossy Kizhakkethalackal were the concelebrants.

## WEBSITE OF THE EPARCHY

Website of the eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne was launched during the first anniversary celebrations of the eparchy on 11 July 2015. The address is: [www.syromalabar.org.au](http://www.syromalabar.org.au)

### New Email ids

#### Bishop Bosco:

[bishop.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:bishop.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au)  
OR [bishop@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:bishop@syromalabar.org.au)

#### Fr Francis Kolencherry:

[vicargeneral.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:vicargeneral.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au)  
OR [vg@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:vg@syromalabar.org.au)

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[chancellor.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:chancellor.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au)  
OR [chancellor@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:chancellor@syromalabar.org.au)

#### Finance Department:

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#### Office:

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#### Enquiry:

[enquiry.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au](mailto:enquiry.melbourne@syromalabar.org.au)



“Saint Therese of Lisieux invites us to practise the little way of love, not to miss out on a kind word, a smile or any small gesture which sows peace and friendship. An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness.” (Pope Francis - Laudato Si)



## CARDINAL'S MESSAGE

George Cardinal Alencherry

I am deeply delighted to offer my greetings and congratulations on the occasion of the celebration of the first anniversary of the establishment of St. Thomas Syro-Malabar diocese of Melbourne. I am very pleased to know that more than 2000 people were present at the Latrobe University Auditorium for the celebration of the anniversary as well as for the Retreat. It gives me great joy to know that our community scattered over the various cities of Australia have been brought into a great cohesive union under the umbrella of the diocese within a short time. To know that more than forty centers and mission stations have been established for Eucharistic celebrations and for the Catechetical formation of our children is really very inspiring. I know that this has become possible because of the concerted effort of dedicated persons of the laity, the clergy and the capable leadership of Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur. This is a period of growth and formation in the life of the diocese as you are very deeply

engaged at present in organizing new plans for evangelization, catechetical formation and for the involvement of the people of God in the development of the Diocese and for the preservation our Catholic faith. As the values of the secular world are constantly battling the Gospel values, it is extremely important to remain united and to work in total cohesion and understanding. Our faith in the Lord has to remain evermore strong and powerful. Our young should feel happy in the knowledge that the Lord is always with them whatever may be the nature of forces that are arraigned against them. The faithful should have the opportunity to practice their faith in a very lively and dynamic way in their own ecclesial traditions. Hence, the tasks of the diocese are immense and the paths are arduous. But the Lord is there to guide our endeavors. I am immensely happy to wish beloved Bishop, Mar Bosco Puthur, under whose experienced, mature and capable leadership the diocese is attaining such a speedy development, the priests who toil with him in this new vineyard and all of the faithful who cooperate with them to make this diocese a caring



and compassionate mother for all people concerned. May God bless you all!

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

# Laudato Si

## POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL – ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

### General Summary

Laudato Si is Pope Francis' Encyclical on the environment or more formally – On Care for Our Common Home. Laudato Si means "Praise be to you" which is the first line of a canticle by St. Francis that praises God with all of his creation.

From the outset, Pope Francis states the goal of the document: "In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home" (#3). Normally, papal documents are addressed to the bishops of the Church or the lay faithful. But,



similar to Pope Saint John XXIII's Pacem in Terris, Pope Francis address his message to all people. The goal of the dialogue: "I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation that includes everyone, since the environment challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all" (#14). The above is at the heart of the document, but Pope Francis also has a very striking call to conversion for those in the Church as well.

"The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must

be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is an 'ecological conversion,' whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience" (#217) (bold mine).

No matter who you are or where you find yourself in relation to protecting the environment, Pope Francis has this message for you: "I invite all to embrace with open hearts this Encyclical which is in line with the Church's social doctrine" (General Audience, June 17, 2015).

Courtesy: [www.focus.org](http://www.focus.org)



## BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Bishop Bosco Puthur

Dear Friends in Christ,

Here in your hands is the new issue of the Newsletter of our Eparchy.

First of all I wish you the blessings of the Feast of Assumption of our Blessed Mother on 15 August, on which day India, our homeland, celebrates her independence day. I invite you to pray for Australia and for India, so that through the motherly patronage of Mary, both countries enjoy justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

In this issue of the Newsletter we can read about the celebrations of the first anniversary of the Eparchy. It was a blessed occasion for all of us, to thank God for all the graces showered upon us during the last one year, to beg pardon for sins of commission and omission and to ask for His grace so that we can go ahead with one mind and heart according to the will of God.

As your Bishop, I take this occasion, along with you, to praise God for his great love and care and to thank each and every one of you who has been, in one way or other, instrumental for our achievements. I would like to thank our priests who impart pastoral care in our communities throughout Australia. I acknowledge with gratitude the great service our kaikarans, sacristans, committee members, catechists and other lay leaders render to our communities.

I invite you to pray for our Holy Father, Pope Francis who has convoked the Synod on Family in the month of October. We are going through a critical moment in the Church and in the world regarding the understanding of Family and Marriage. We have a great responsibility to pray with intensity so that God's holy design on Marriage and Family be respected, protected and fostered by all concerned.

I write down this Message just before I leave for Kerala to take part in the Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church. Let us pray for the Major Archbishop and the bishops of our Church, so that they, as good pastors, can take right decisions for the greater glory of God and for the spiritual benefit of our people all over the world.

Your Bishop in Christ,

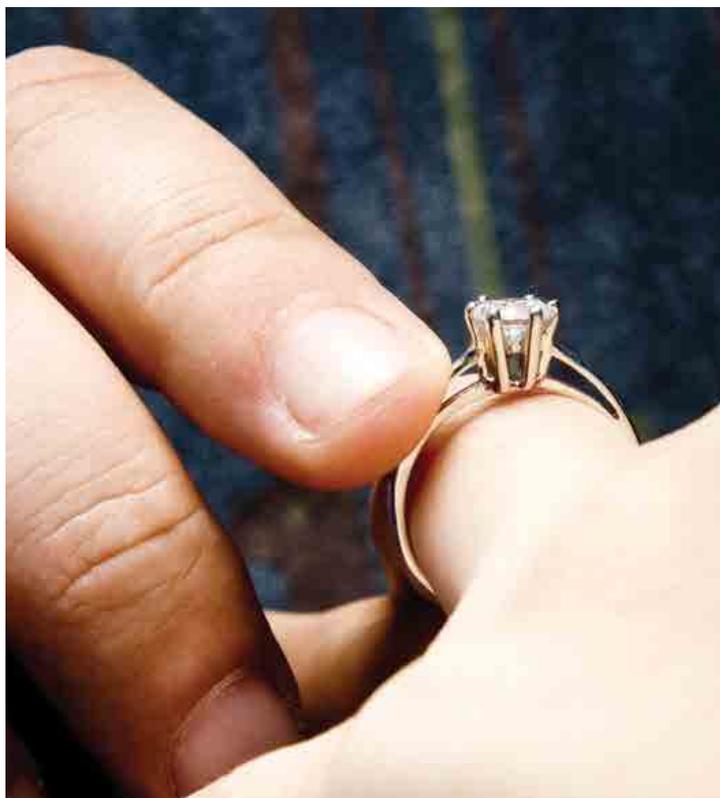


**+Bosco Puthur**

8 August 2015, the Feast of Saint Mary Mckillop

FRIDAY 28 MAY 2015

### AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE BISHOPS COMMISSION FOR FAMILY, YOUTH AND LIFE



# 'Don't mess with Marriage'

As the debate about 'same-sex marriage' gains momentum nationally, the Australian Catholic Bishops believe it is important to highlight the meaning of marriage.

Given the implications of redefining marriage, today we are issuing a pastoral letter to the Catholic community. You will be aware this week, in the context of the Irish referendum, both the Labor Party and the Greens have announced they will introduce draft legislation to allow two people of the same sex to marry.



Marriage is both a personal relationship between a man and a woman, and the protective institution for their children. Marriage includes an emotional union, but it goes further than that. It involves a comprehensive bodily and spiritual union of a man and a woman. This union of a man and woman is the natural reproductive and protective environment for raising children. Marriage is the foundation of the family unit, which is in turn the first cell of society. If the union of a man and a woman is different – not the same – as other unions, then justice demands that we treat that union accordingly. If marriage is an institution designed to support people of the opposite sex to be faithful to each



other and to the children of their union it is not discrimination to reserve it to them.

The Christian tradition teaches that every human being is a unique and irreplaceable person, created in the image of God and loved by Him. Because of this, every man, woman

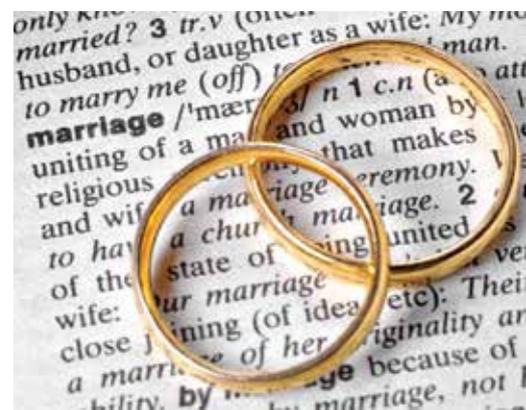
and child has great dignity and worth which can never be taken away. This includes those who experience same-sex attraction. They must be treated with respect, sensitivity and love.

Redefining marriage in the way now proposed would see marriage reduced to a committed, affectionate sexual relationship between any two people. All marriages would come to be defined by intensity of emotion rather than a union founded on sexual complementarity and potential fertility. Husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, will be seen to be wholly interchangeable social constructs, as gender would no longer matter.

Chair of the Bishops Commission for Family, Youth and Life, Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP said, "It is unjust, gravely unjust, to legitimise the false assertion that there is nothing distinctive about a man and a woman, a father or a mother; to ignore the particular values that real marriage serves; to ignore the importance for children of having a mum and a dad, committed to them and to each other for the long haul.

Children have a right to grow up with their natural mother and father, where possible. We should not be redefining marriage so as deliberately to exclude a child growing up with either their mother, their father, or both their parents. 'If the civil law ceases to define marriage as traditionally understood, it will be a serious injustice and undermine that common good for which the civil law exists. 'Surely there are other ways of honouring the friendships of same-sex attracted and other people without further deconstructing marriage and the family,' Archbishop Fisher said.

Read The Archbishops' Pastoral Letter on the Melbourne Archdiocesan website here.





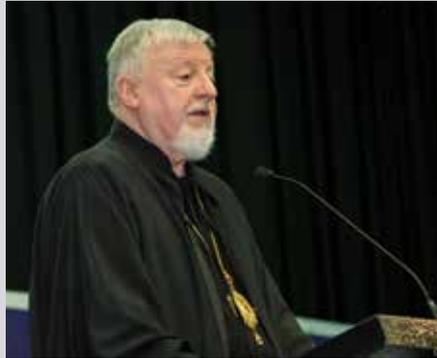
# LET'S SHARE OUR EXPERIENCES, LET'S LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER

## MOST REV. PETER STASIUK CSSR, BISHOP OF THE UKRAINIAN EPARCHY OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL OF MELBOURNE

Let me teach you how Ukrainians greet each other. In Ukraine, when we meet a person, we say, "Slava Isusu Christu", which means, 'Praise be Jesus Christ'. We do this on the street, in church, probably in the bar; anyplace where Ukrainians meet and the answer is, 'Now and forever'. "Slava Na V'iki."

But let's do it in English. Praise be Jesus Christ. Very good. I am standing before you with great emotion, a lot of thoughts come to my mind and I will explain that to you. First for all, I would like to tell you that there are five Eastern Catholic eparchies in Australia. Four of these eparchies have people that come from war zones today in 2015. The only one country that's not at war is your country. All the rest of us Eastern Catholic Churches are experiencing war at this present time. There are 23 different Eastern Catholic Churches. We are all very ancient. Our tradition comes from the Apostle Andrew, yours comes from the Apostle Thomas. We should be very proud of the fact that we are Eastern Catholics. Lot of people don't know enough about us and one of the reasons that you're here, and that I am here and that the rest of us are here is to witness to the faith that we have.

Why should we be proud? Well, did you know that the year 325 was the Council of Nicaea. And I am not even sure where Nicaea is but it's in Asia Minor, I believe. The bishops, and I think there was about 28 in the world at that time were at a meeting and they created the Apostles' Creed. Every last one of the bishops there was an Eastern Catholic, wasn't a Roman Catholic. In the 4th century, St Jerome, one of the councils gave him the job of creating the Bible. The Bible was created at another synod or meeting and it was the Eastern Catholic bishops that put the Bible together and gave it to the world. We come from a very deep and I'd say spiritual tradition.



When I walked into the hall today, I was so very very happy to see that you are full of the Holy Spirit, that you are excited about your faith. I said I come here with a little bit of emotion, because I came from Canada. My grandfather emigrated to Canada in 1906. Way over a 100 years ago. I wasn't born in Ukraine but there were hardly any Ukrainians in Australia until 1949. At that time Australia had a white Australia policy. Only white people could come here and after the Second World War, there were prisoner war camps in Europe. And there were almost half a million Ukrainians in these prisoner war camps. People were forced by the Nazis to go to work in the German war machines that keep the economy going or keep the factories going when their men were at war. So our people, men and women, were stuck in camps after the war. The Australian government, thank God, took 18000 Ukrainians. In 1949, 3000 went to New Zealand. Probably the oldest person that came in 1949 was around 24 years old.

Now looking at you, and I am thinking about my predecessor, bishop Ivan Prasko, and thinking about him in the early 50's when he was the bishop here and I am saying to myself, this is the kind of young crowd that we had to start to work with to build the Church, build the eparchy some 65 years ago. A lot of things have happened and of those 18000, we probably have only about 500 people alive today though they immigrated 65 years ago. But they have built churches, they have built halls, they

have built schools, they have built institutions and they have integrated fully into Australian society. In a sense, you can hardly tell the difference between a Ukrainian Catholic and an Australian Catholic or Australian person nowadays because their mentality, their thinking is the same.

But I look at you but I am so very happy to be able to sort of see how our emigration probably started and I was thinking to myself I have a lot to learn from you. Our whole Church does. You have faith, you have the burning desire for God, for Jesus Christ to praise him, to glorify him, to be united with him, to pray to him. In 1949, our people were put to work for two years. They had to work off their tickets to come to Australia so they were put into a lot of projects like the snowy river project and all these kind of things.

Bishop Ivan and his priests, as we only had about 4 or 5 priests, and here look at them all. What a difference. They had to gather the people into the bigger cities and slowly we started building the church and the community. They worked hard and you have got to admire the pioneers but in the sense, in this church you are the pioneers. And what you are going to do with your Church, with the Syro-Malabar Church, is going to be very interesting and I don't know what your future is but I know it's going to be bright. You've got a better start than we had, you certainly have got a faith, our faiths probably were equal because our people came with a suitcase in their hands and that's all they had. They had their God, they had their families and that was it. The only difference was a lot of our people in 1949 wanted to go back to Ukraine after the war or after the Soviets got out of there. They never got out until 1990 so everybody stayed.

I think the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Syro-Malabar Church have a lot in common and I am so happy to hear from you and your bishop, from your priests, 'Let's start, let's share our experiences, let's learn from one another.' You have a lot to teach us. I could never, as they say, in a month of Sundays gather this many people for a prayer meeting if I paid them and I don't think bishop Bosco would pay you at all. So you've got that to teach us and we could help you and I am glad to see that the rest of the community is helping you with you in your first year. You are in very good grounds. I am very happy for you and excited about your future. May God bless you and may you continue to be filled with the Spirit and may your Church grow. Praise be Jesus Christ.



# WE NEED THE VIBRANCY OF YOUR FAITH AND THE WITNESS OF YOUR LIVES

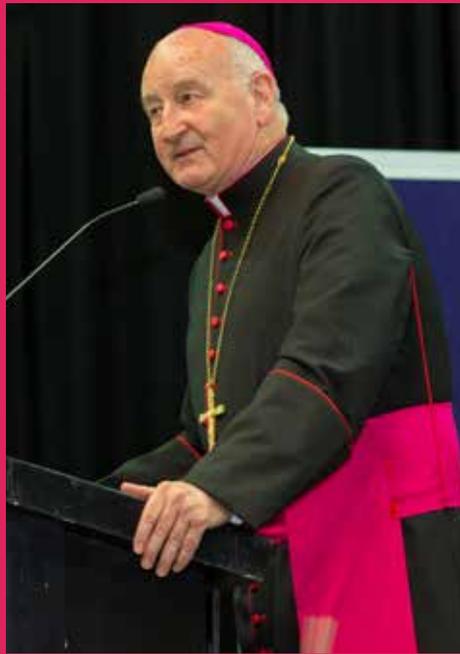
**MOST REV. TERRY CURTIN, THE AUXILIARY BISHOP OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE**

Greetings to the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle on the completion of the first year of the diocese.

I am delighted to convey the greetings and best wishes of Archbishop Denis Hart, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, and indeed those of all the other bishops of Australia, on the completion of this first milestone.

Anniversaries are good for they give us a moment to pause, to come together and be renewed in the sight of God’s many graces, to reflect on the journey travelled thus far, and to recommit ourselves to the mission that is ours. A first anniversary is very special, because it means you are pioneers and builders, and in time the makers of history. Future generations will look back to see all you have done, will pour over the photos (“don’t they all look so young ... so slim, and no grey hair!”), will read the letters and documents, and be moved by the sacrifices made as they seek to make their own. May you be true to all that has been entrusted to you!

You have an ancient and very wonderful mission first brought to you by St Thomas the Apostle. My mind goes back to last year on the 25th March, the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, when Bishop Bosco was installed in St Patrick’s Cathedral, as your chief pastor, teacher and guide. The cathedral was full and the beauty of your community, your faith and your culture was evident to those of us present. As the whole congregation joined in singing the responses to the Mass we were raised up in praise and drawn ever closer to Christ, our Lord and Saviour. It brought home to me



**A FIRST ANNIVERSARY IS VERY SPECIAL, BECAUSE IT MEANS YOU ARE PIONEERS AND BUILDERS, AND IN TIME THE MAKERS OF HISTORY... MAY YOU BE TRUE TO ALL THAT HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO YOU!**

your own nobility as a baptized, priestly people of God, called to carry on the work of Christ in the world today, deepened all the more as you gathered round your new bishop.

To look at the Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia is to see what has been accomplished over the last twelve months. If my counting is correct I found some forty Mass centres spread through sixteen Latin rite dioceses. I can only guess at all the careful work and negotiation that went into this.

But I am not surprised at what has been achieved. Bishop Bosco and I were classmates in Rome during our seminary days. Three years ago thirty-two of us gathered in Rome for a class reunion after forty-one years. The work in bringing us together was largely your bishop’s, chasing us up, finding long lost addresses and contacts, and then on arriving in Rome presenting each of us with a special top to mark the occasion with our own name on the back – genuinecare and encouragement that made our gathering all the more special. I have no doubt that it’s those same qualities he brings to his ministry among you.

I give thanks to God for the creation of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostlein Australia and for your first year of life and mission among us. Australia is a tough, very secular country in some ways. We need the vibrancy of your faith and the witness of your lives. May you all be blessed in what you are called to be and to do!



# BE THE DIFFERENCE AND CONTINUE MAKING OUR COMMUNITY EVEN STRONGER IN DIVERSITY AND UNITY

## MRS. INGA PEULICH, M.P. AND SHADOW MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS AND FOR SCRUTINY OF GOVERNMENT

Thank you very much for the opportunity of joining you on such a special celebration as the first anniversary of the formation of this congregation and the leadership of bishop Bosco. I did take the opportunity for pointing out that I was a person from a Slavic background. I was born in former Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, under communism where there was no freedom of speech and no freedom of religion. In fact, I was baptised into the Catholic Church in secret. The Slavic version of the name Bosco is 'Boshko'. He suggested that perhaps I may have a little bit of Italian in me because I spoke with my hands but after having a look at bishop Bosco speak, I think he has well and truly got the Italian genes in him. Must have been all of those years that he and bishop Terry and bishop Peter have spent, should I say, hopefully not disrespectfully, fraternising and leading the rejuvenation of faith of Catholicism in their respective congregations. Do you get a sense of the three musketeers really being at the forefront of this revitalisation, this revival of our religious communities?

So congratulations to each and every one of you for the roles you play in your congregation. I would also like to acknowledge the other dignitaries, my parliamentary colleague Jenny Mikakos and as well as Matthew Cassin from the Catholic Development Fund. I was having a conversation with him over a lovely lunch about this congregation. A particular thank you to the ladies who helped to serve. Give them a big round of applause. The reasons why I was able to



**MOST OF US HAVE COME HERE TO AUSTRALIA BECAUSE OUR OWN COUNTRY OF BIRTH WAS NOT THE PARADISE IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN. ALSO BRINGS TOGETHER THAT STRONG SENSE OF FAMILY AND VALUES THAT OBVIOUSLY WE CAN SEE HERE TODAY.**

migrate when I was 10 years of age with my mother and father and my brother and with four suitcases, no money and no English. All we wanted was freedom, democracy, a better way of life and an opportunity of practicing our religion as well. Being religious in a communist country is not something that is encouraged because your

parents didn't get the jobs, promotions and if you spoke against the system your parents were likely to be imprisoned. The whole system worked on a certain system so your neighbours and family members could be a part of the institutionalised suppression.

Dare I say, what brought us here was that Australia just represented absolutely all of our dreams and that's why when I received this invitation from your community to come along, even though I have a number of events today it was one that I didn't want to miss because it brings us together. The concept of freedom for religion and in particular to support communities that may be persecuted or suppressed in their own countries of birth. Most of us have come here to Australia because our own country of birth was not the paradise it should have been. Also brings together that strong sense of family and values that obviously we can see here today. All the boys and girls here today, as was mentioned by the minister for families, I can't believe how well-behaved the boys and girls are. So congratulations to all of you parents who are doing an outstanding job. As a former school teacher of English and psychology, I give you full marks. So when we migrated we couldn't have done so without the support of the Catholic Church. My father is a Catholic, my mother is of the orthodox Serbian religion. My husband and I are also in a mixed marriage, he is also Serbian orthodox and I am a Catholic.

It was only as a result of some low cost loans that were given to families that my parents and my family were able to locate here. We would never have been able to pay for the journey so when we migrated in 1967, we



did so indebted to the Catholic Church in so many ways. We did repay that debt because it was only as a result of that, that other families could relocate and start new lives, to build new lives. For me, the Catholic Church played a pivotal role, I think, in leading the charge for freedom in Eastern Europe under the veil and curtain of communism but also in opening the doors to new life. We are indeed with 'all live together harmoniously'. Yes, it's not a perfect world but it's up to each and every one of us to be the difference. To indeed be true to our values, to make sure that this wonderful country that has given us the opportunity of building our lives remains the wonderful country for other generations and other nations.

This country is a country for all, no matter what the colour of our skin, no matter what our religion, no matter where we were born and it should remain so because it is only as a result of such freedom and such acceptance that a person like me having come here with nothing never ever imagined the opportunity of living a different life let alone being elected to public office. But I have had the great honour of serving in the Victorian parliament for 19 years. And I say that not to put myself on a pedestal but to put our community, our values and our country on the pedestal. Hopefully a pedestal that each and every one of you subscribed because you know that's where our future is. We must make sure that this country remains fair, egalitarian, that we denounce any forms of extremism and that we strive and support the diversity and the unity that perhaps we didn't experience in our own country of birth because our future rests on it.

I would also like to acknowledge other guests here and I haven't even got past the acknowledgments. I am sure you are not going to follow the entire that has been prepared for me. I would like to acknowledge Anthony McCarthy, manager of Catholic Super, councillor of Hume city council, Peter Doherty, manager of Catholic Church Insurance and of course, all of you ladies and gentlemen. Let me get down to the business. I am here of course to congratulate the Syro-Malabar

**THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN PEOPLE HAVE NOT ONLY SURVIVED BUT IT THRIVES IN COMMUNITIES THROUGH RELIGION. I DO CONDEMN THE ATROCITIES THAT HAVE BEEN COMMITTED AGAINST PARTICULAR RELIGIONS WORLDWIDE AND NO PERSON SHOULD BE PERSECUTED FOR THEIR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS.**

community in marking the celebration of its first anniversary of this congregation. The opposition leader, the Hon Matthew Guy, Ukrainian by origin, sends his best wishes and warmest regards to all of those attending here. In Victoria, in Australia, multi-cultural polices are supported by all parties. We do not try and make politics and create division in the area of multicultural affairs because it is too dangerous to do so. So we must make sure that no matter what one's religious background is, that they do feel included, and accepted and that our communities open its arms to it. I would like to also acknowledge the outstanding work of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church within this community and congratulate them and bishop Bosco on reaching a milestone.

The spirit of Christian people have not only survived but it thrives in communities through religion. I do condemn the atrocities that have been committed against particular religions worldwide and no person should be persecuted for their religious beliefs. Daily, violent acts are becoming more prevalent across the world with the help of extremists and unfortunately, in a digital world the lure of extremists can become a reality. I was recently celebrating a number of things with our Muslim communities. Can I say that the Muslim community and the parents are equally concerned about the future of their children and the capacity of some of

these extremists luring them with evil intent. They likened it to the rest of us being petrified about the future of our children being lured into crime or drugs. So let's also make sure that we offer them our assistance in coming to terms with real challenges that threaten each and every one of us in our society. Today gives us an opportunity to come together and thank for the many blessings in our lives and the religious freedom we share to practice our beliefs in a harmonious fashion. As a hallmark of that, it was my very great privilege and honour to two weeks ago lead the establishment of the very first parliamentary friendship group being formed and on that we have a Christian, a Muslim and a Jew occupying the key office bearing positions.

What I look forward to is, the guidance of our religious leaders can be used to interface with our religious communities and perhaps provide some leadership on some of those difficult questions but also to celebrate the wonderful things our multicultural communities and faith communities are achieving. One of the greatest honours of my job and I represent the south eastern metropolitan region so all of the city of Kingston, Casey, Frankston, most of the city of Monash, city of greater Dandenong as a constituency but in my broader roles as shadow minister for multicultural affairs in the entire state, one of my greatest honours is to go along to our multicultural communities and celebrate their achievements, their achievements in this new country.

Those achievements can be modest, an 83 year old learning how to drive a car a little earlier and having the freedom of being able to get around to visit family and friends. To me, that was the ambition of one woman who never thought that she would actually be able to drive cars. She is now 84 years of age and it's this prized achievement that she is able to with her own autonomy to visit her family and friends in her car. Now it may seem like a modest ambition for many of us but as I said, one of the greatest pleasures is to see people reach their ambitions in this country. So on behalf of the Victorian coalition, the Hon. Matthew Guy, on behalf of myself as well as other members of parliament of Victoria, could I congratulate you, could I encourage you to continue doing what you do and could I encourage you to be the difference and continue making our community even stronger in diversity and unity. Thank you so much. Congratulations.



# YOU ARE ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

**HON JENNY MIKAKOS, MINISTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH AFFAIRS OF VICTORIA,**

I'd like to begin by paying acknowledgments to our first Australians, our indigenous Australians and paying my respects to the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations and their elders past and present. Can I also acknowledge Bishop Bosco Puthur from the St Thomas Syro-Malabar church of Melbourne, your graces, your reverend fathers, Inga Peulich, the shadow minister for multicultural affairs and other faith and community leaders who are here with us today. Ladies and gentlemen and boys and girls, can I say as the minister for families and children, who has a particular responsibility for early childhood education that are in this state, I am just so pleased to be looking in this room and seeing so many young children present here today because this is a very strong family celebration today.

It is a great honour to be here representing the premier of Victoria, the Hon Daniel Andrews and to convey his congratulations to all of you on the occasion of your first anniversary as a congregation. This is a significant milestone, not only for the congregation, but for the guests who have travelled across Victoria and interstate to be here with you as well. I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank Bishop Bosco Puthur and the Syro-Malabar Catholic diocese of Melbourne for organising today's event. It's been one year since the St Thomas church was founded as a place for worship for families who have come from different parts of India and particularly from Kerala to start a new life here in Melbourne in our state of Victoria. You have created a fantastic support network for many Indian families living in this area and I am particularly pleased that you have founded your church in my own electorate here as I represent northern suburbs and to recognise the fact



**YOU HAVE CREATED A FANTASTIC SUPPORT NETWORK FOR MANY INDIAN FAMILIES LIVING IN THIS AREA AND I AM PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT YOU HAVE FOUNDED YOUR CHURCH IN MY OWN ELECTORATE HERE AS I REPRESENT NORTHERN SUBURBS AND TO RECOGNISE THE FACT THAT YOU ARE ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN OUR CITY.**

that you are one of the fastest growing Christian churches in our city.

Over the last year, you have become a strong centre of faith for the Syro-Malabar community honouring the legacy of your patron Saint Thomas the Apostle. By

creating such a welcoming and inclusive Church, you have encouraged the entire community to get involved. The Victorian government recognises the incredible contribution that our various communities make in shaping our state's successful multi-faith society including those who follow the Syro-Malabar Catholic faith. Community run events like these help to bring Victorians together from different backgrounds in friendship and mutual understanding. They promote multi-faith and multicultural harmony, celebrate shared values and build understanding and respect for differences. This is why our government is investing 74 million dollars in community initiatives to strengthen multiculturalism, social cohesion and to support our state's cultural precincts including work that has begun on founding and establishing an Indian cultural precinct for our state as well.

Can I particularly say on a personal note, being someone who is the daughter of an immigrant family myself, how welcoming we are of our new immigrants in this nation. Our immigrants' communities have made a significant contribution to this nation and to this state and continue to do so and I have every confidence that your community would also play a very significant role in our state in years to come. So can I just again reiterate on behalf of the premier his congratulations and my personal congratulations to all of you on celebrating today your first anniversary of your congregation being established as the St Thomas church and for hosting today's ceremony. Thank you very much for having me and be a part of your celebration and for your very warm hospitality. Thank you. Congratulations.



# SYRO-MALABAR COMMUNITY MELBOURNE SOUTH EAST

Melbourne South East Community was part of all Melbourne St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Community until July 2012, when the Pothuyogam decided to divide the all Melbourne Community into 3 regions, with the aim of providing weekly services to the Community. The Melbourne South East community is known under the name of our father in faith - Mar Thoma Sleeha (St. Thomas the Apostle) and also our patron saint. Majority of the Melbourne Syro-Malabar migrants, who are mainly health professionals, settled in this region, which is also evident from the number of Qurbana centres currently in existence.

Migration of Syro-Malabar faithful to Melbourne began in the late sixties. Even though they were few in number, they kept in touch with each other along with other

Kerala Christians during the seventies and eighties. The first Syro-Malabar Qurbana was celebrated at the St. Paschals Chapel, Box Hill in the mid-eighties by Fr. Jacob Kavungal, a SVD priest from Changanassery who is a seminary professor in Melbourne. The seventies, eighties and early nineties saw a few more families migrating to Melbourne, but the flow slowly started its momentum by the late nineties.

A one-day Prayer service arranged by the visiting Vincentian Potta team in October 1998 gave momentum and enthused Malayalee Catholics to gather for celebrating Qurbana in Malayalam. Fr. Francis Adapoor O.Carm arrived in Melbourne in 1999 for his higher studies, and under his leadership, the Malayalee Catholic Society of Victoria was formed in year 2000 to organize

monthly Holy Qurbana at Box Hill. The first committee of the Society decided to make a request for a permanent chaplain for the Community. Most Rev. Rev. Denis J Hart, the Archbishop of Melbourne, appointed Fr. John Oravankara as part-time chaplain to the Syro-Malabar Catholics.

The appointment of Fr. John as chaplain to the Syro-Malabar Catholics of Melbourne paved the way towards a Syro-Malabar ecclesial structure and formation of necessary committees. Mar Gregory Karotemprel CMI, who was the then Chairman of the Syro-Malabar Commission for Evangelisation and Pastoral Care of Migrants in consultation with the Archbishop of Melbourne an ecclesial structure for the Syro-Malabar Community in Melbourne was envisaged. On the 15th of August 2004 an adhoc committee was elected to help the implementation of the structure. Fr. John inaugurated the parish structure on the 7th of November 2004 with the newly formed parish council.

The growth of the Syro-Malabar Community was greatly evident in the years that followed especially in the increase in the number of Qurbana centres, frequency of Qurbana and the number of faithful attending. Melbourne saw a steady migration of the Syro-Malabar faithful from all parts of the world in the beginning of the new millennium and it was intensified



during the past 14 years mainly due to the large number of nurses and skilled professionals migrating to Australia.

In 2008 February Fr. Vincent Madathiparambil CMI arrived to Melbourne and was later appointed part-time Chaplain to Syro-Malabar Catholics on 27 September, 2008 with residence at the St Francis Xavier's Parish in Frankston. Gradually Holy Qurbana was commenced at different centres occasionally with the help of Syro-Malabar priests serving in the Latin Parishes of the Archdiocese of Melbourne. The Syro-Malabar faithful in Melbourne are very much indebted to the services of the Syro-Malabar priests in the past, who assisted with Sunday Qurbanas, often travelling great distances for the service.

In 2008 the parish council requested the Melbourne Archbishop to appoint a full time chaplain for the Syro-Malabar faithful. Bishop Mar Sebastian Vadakel, initiated the process in consultation with the Archbishop of Melbourne to appoint a Chaplain for the increasing number of the Syro-Malabar faithful migrating to Melbourne. After a long visa process, Fr. Peter Kavumpuram, a member of the Missionary Society of St Thomas, arrived in Melbourne on February 3, 2011. The South East community flourished under the strong leadership of Fr. Peter with more regular Sunday Qurbanas and Qurbana centres, organised Catechism etc. In early 2014, a 5-acres land was purchased to build a Church at the suburb called Bangholme.

After eleven years of service to Melbourne Archdiocese and Syro-Malabar Community, Fr. John returned to Kerala in December 2012.

Year 2012 was a specially blessed year with the pastoral visit of the Major Archbishop His Beatitude Mar George Cardinal Alencherry. The entire Community cheerfully welcomed him to Melbourne on 2nd December 2012. His Beatitude celebrated solemn Qurbana at St. Patricks Cathedral and gave his pastoral message to the Community during Homily and Reception afterwards. Sixty children from the Community received First Holy Communion and

are more than 600 registered families in the South Eastern region. There are 16 Family Units function in this region which organise ward prayers and various other activities for the Community.

**Night Vigil Service:** Rosary, Novena, Adoration, Confession and Holy Qurbana are conducted every 3rd Friday of the month at Holy Family Church, Doveton from 7.30pm to 11.30pm.

**Thirunal:** Parish Thirunal is celebrated in July



Confirmation from His Beatitude during the Qurbana. In January 2014, His Holiness Pope Francis announced the establishment of a new Eparchy for the Syro-Malabar Catholics in Australia and the appointment of its first Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur.

Reception was given to Bishop Bosco Puthur at St John's College, Dandenong on 30th March 2014. Meeting with children and parish council members was also organised. Reception was given to Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur at Wantirna on 25th May 2014.

Fr. Peter Kavumpuram MST was transferred to Brisbane in July 2014. Fr. Francis Kolencherry undertook the pastoral care of the region till September 2014 when Fr. Abraham Kunnatholy CMI arrived as a full time chaplain of the region in September 2014.

St. Thomas South East region has regular Sunday and weekly Holy Qurbana at Dandenong, Box Hill/Forest Hill, Frankston, and Clayton to spiritually nourish the community members. More than 400 children regularly attend Catechism classes at Dandenong and Forest Hill centres. There

during the Dukrana Feast (martyrdom of St. Thomas the Apostle) at Dandenong.

Since the arrival of Fr. Abraham, the South East region is endeavouring to grow into a fully fledged parish, with its own land, Church and Qurbana centres, Syro-Malabar English Qurbanas etc. The recent visits by Fr. Abraham for house blessing have been well received by the faithful, which displays their enthusiasm to grow in the original and ancient faith but not losing the spiritual traditions and patrimony of Mar Thoma Margam received by our forefathers through generations.



Fr. Abrham



# VISIT OF MOST REV. BISHOP BOSCO PUTHUR TO SYRO MALABAR COMMUNITY IN TOOWOOMBA, QUEENSLAND

Mar. Bosco Puthur, Bishop of the Syro-Malabar in Australia and New Zealand visited his community of faithful at Holy Name Church, Toowoomba on Sunday the 19th of July 2015. The Bishop was accompanied by Fr. Peter Kavumpuram, Episcopal Vicar of the Syro Malabar Church in Queensland. The Bishop and Fr. Peter were greeted by the students of Sunday School who had gathered in the church for their catechetical studies. The Bishop made himself comfortable with the children and ensured that every child was introduced to him personally.

As soon as Sunday School had concluded, the Bishop celebrated the Holy Mass in Malayalam with Fr. Peter Kavumpuram and Fr. Thomas Areekuzhy, Priest coordinator of St. Mary's Catholic Community, Toowoomba. Just before the commencement of Holy Mass, Fr. Thomas Areekuzhy formally

introduced and welcomed Bishop Bosco Puthur and Fr. Peter Kavumpuram to the gathering.

During the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Bishop Bosco Puthur delivered the homily, in which His Excellency spoke about the reasons as to why the Holy Father has established a Syro-Malabar Eparchy for Australia and New Zealand, the very motivation of His Excellency's passion to shepherd His faithful, and most importantly related each message and our lives to the Gospel reading of the day which was the parable of the prodigal son. Soon after the Eucharistic celebrations concluded, the gathering was invited to the front of the Church for a group photograph session. The Bishop urged the gathering to ask him questions and several people were called forward to share their thoughts on different aspects of the Syro-Malabar Church in Australia. His Excellency, during

this session, shed light upon topics relating to the construction of the new Cathedral Church in Melbourne, about the registration of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy in Australia and how happy he was with the co-operation of his people and with the progress made since the installation of the new Eparchy in early 2014. After the discussions had concluded, the Bishop gave the final blessings to the community and also blessed the food for the social meal. During the social meal, the community received an opportunity to have interactions with the Bishop at a more personal level.

Report prepared by Jose Joseph, Co-ordinator of St. Mary's Catholic Community, Toowoomba on 23rd July 2015.





## BISHOP BOSCO'S PROGRAM DIARY

### AUGUST 2015

**AUG 17 - 29**  
SYRO MALABAR SYNOD IN COCHIN, INDIA

### SEPTEMBER 2015

**SEPT 4-** ARRIVING IN ADELAIDE  
**SEPT 6 -** CONFIRMATION IN ADELAIDE  
**SEPT 13 -** VISIT TO WODONGA  
**SEPT 15 - 16 -** IN BRISBANE FOR CMI PROGRAM.  
**SEPT 18 -** MGL DIACONATE ORDINATION OF BAIJU THOMAS, BURWOOD, VICTORIA  
**SEPT 20 -** FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION, CANBERRA  
**SEPT 22 -** MEETING OF ORIENTAL BISHOPS IN SYDNEY  
**SEPT 26 -** FIRST COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION, WAGGA WAGGA  
**SEPT 27 -** FIRST COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION AT ST. ALPHONSA COMMUNITY, WENTWORTHVILLE

### OCTOBER 2015

**OCT 2 -** KNANAYA COMMUNITY FEAST OF OUR LADY  
**OCT 5 - 6 -** VISIT OF ABR. MATHEW MOOLAKATT AT MICKLEHAM  
**OCT 9 - 11 -** CONVENTION IN WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND  
**OCT 11 -** FIRST COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION, AUCKLAND  
**OCT 13 -** RECEPTION & HOLY QURBANA IN WHANGERE  
**OCT 15 -** RECEPTION & HOLY QURBANA AT TAURANGA  
**OCT 16 -** RECEPTION & HOLY QURBANA AT ROTORUA  
**OCT 17 -** RECEPTION & HOLY QURBANA AT HAMILTON  
**OCT 23 - 24** DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL, SYDNEY  
**OCT 25 -** CONFIRMATION AND FIRST HOLY COMMUNION, SUNSHINE COAST  
**OCT 26 -** ACBC COMMISSION FOR PASTORAL LIFE, MARY MACKILLOP PLACE, SYDNEY

### NOVEMBER 2016

**NOV 1 -** VISIT TO DANDENON, VICTORIA  
**NOV 9 - 13 -** CLERGY RETREAT, VARROVILLE NSW  
**NOV 19 -** DINNER OF ORTHODOX JAVA 21, SATURDAY, BEFORE NOON, BLESSING OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN MELBOURNE 2327 ACBC

### DECEMBER 2016

**DEC 3 - 5** AUSTRALIAN YOUTH FESTIVAL ADELAIDE  
**DEC 26 -** JANUARY 30 SYRO MALABAR SYNOD



"ALL OF US CAN COOPERATE AS INSTRUMENTS OF GOD FOR THE CARE OF CREATION, EACH ACCORDING TO HIS OR HER OWN CULTURE, EXPERIENCE, INVOLVEMENTS AND TALENTS."  
**POPE FRANCIS - (LAUDATO SI)**

## Apostolic Exarchate in Canada

The Holy Father Pope Francis erected an Apostolic Exarchate for the Syro-Malabar faithful in Canada with its See in Mississauga and Fr Jose Kalluvellil as its first Exarch.

**Hearty Congratulations and Prayerful Greetings to our new bishops.**



**MAR JOSE KALLUVELIL,**  
APOSTOLIC EXARCH  
OF MISSISSAUGA IN  
CANADA



**MAR JOSEPH  
KODAKALLIL,**  
BISHOP OF SATNA IN  
MADHYAPRADESH



**MAR ANTONY PRINCE  
PANENGADAN, BISHOP  
OF ADILABAD IN  
THELUNGANA**

## Palliyogam Procedure Rules

Bishop Bosco Puthur has promulgated The Palliyogam-Procedure Rules of the Syro-Malabar Parishes/Missions in the Eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne for the structuring and functioning of the parishes and missions in the eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne. It has come into effect on 3 July 2015.

## Ecclesiastical Tribunal

As per the request of Bishop Bosco Puthur, the moderators of the tribunals of the Latin Church in Australia have agreed to handle the marriage cases of the Syro-Malabar faithful in Australia until the eparchy of St Thomas in Melbourne becomes able to establish its own tribunal. The permission to this effect (Prot. N. 5025/3/15/SAT) has been granted to them by the Apostolic Signatura, the Supreme Tribunal of the Catholic Church in Rome.



## Prayer to Mary, Mother of God

**ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, THE GLORIES OF MARY**  
"O most sweet Lady and our Mother, by the merits of thy happy death obtain for us holy perseverance in the divine friendship, that we may finally quit this life in God's grace; and unite with the blessed spirits in praising thee and singing thy glories as thou deservest. Amen."