



St. Thomas

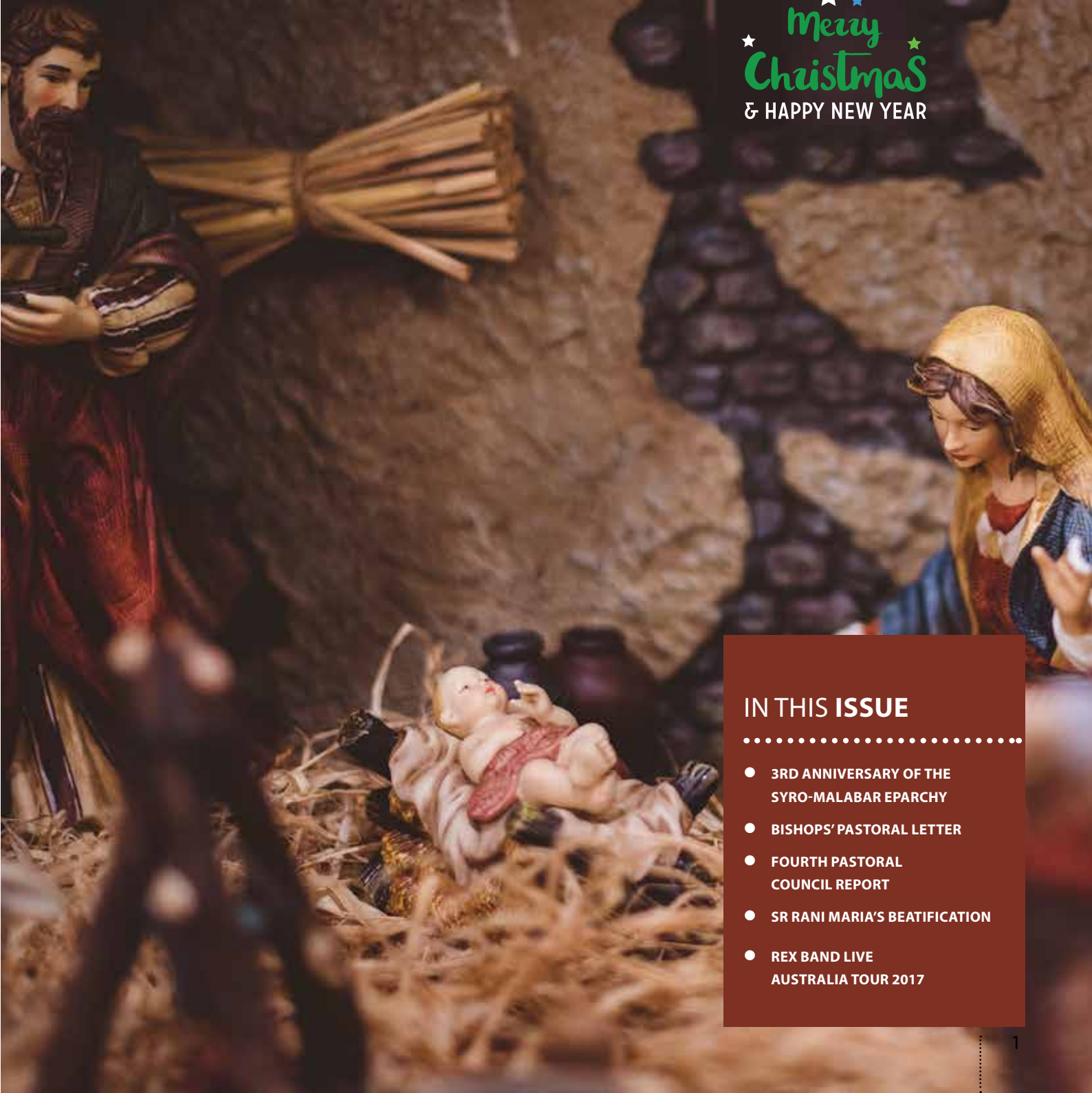
NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2017, VOLUME 4, NO. 3

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



★ ★
Merry
Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR



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3RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SYRO-MALABAR EPARCHY

WELCOME SPEECH - BISHOP BOSCO PUTHUR



Dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, Today is the day that Lord has given to us, a day of thanksgiving for all the graces he abundantly showered on the Syro-Malabar community in Australia, especially in WA and in Perth. I am sure you experienced the presence of god through this bible convention led by Fr. Dominic.

And a word about the Syro-Malabar community in Australia especially for the knowledge of our guests. Syro-Malabar church is an ancient catholic community bloomed from the apostleship of St.

Thomas the apostle in India. We are the children of St. Thomas and we consider him as our father of faith. That is why we were traditionally called Thomas Christians. At present there are 5 million Catholics in the Syro-Malabar church and we got lot of migrants from our church all over the world. in Australia, the Syro-Malabar diocese was inaugurated in 2014. The place where we come from, the southern state in India has got number of educational institutions run by catholic church. We have high literacy rate but

lack of enough job opportunities and demographic reasons lead us to migrate to other places like Australia. Of course, we come here for job or for study, but we uphold our tradition and faith and at the same time try to become relevant to the Australian society.

Now, I am entering into my duty of welcoming everyone. First of all, I would like to introduce to you a man who is living according to the heart of Jesus here in Australia. I shall share with you an experience I had when I went to



meet Archbishop Emeritus Barry Hickey. I saw a homeless old lady lying in front of his house and came to know that he accommodates many homeless like that. And he even makes coffee for her. I was humiliated and edified to see that because I am not able to do that by myself. Media who speak about scandals of the church never see such kinds of goodness in the church and they don't want to speak about it. A man according to the heart of Jesus. In the name of all gathered here I cordially welcome Archbishop Emeritus Barry Hickey.

And we have got Tony Buti, a politician, member of Armadale and representative of Hon. Minister Paul Papalia, minister for multicultural affairs. His name shows he is an Italian. Italians are very generous, loving and lively. I am happy that being the member of assembly he agreed to come for this meeting. I cordially welcome you to this meeting.

Another distinguished personality with us is Adrian Martino, vice principal of La Salle College, Perth. Many of our children are studying here and they all agree that he is a good teacher and I am sure he is loved by all the students. Dear Adrian, thank you so much for being with us today and I welcome you to this meeting.

Of course, here with us, Fr. Francis, the Vicar General of our diocese. I need not welcome him because he is one of us. Yet for all the hard work he has done for this great event, I thank Fr. Francis and welcome him to our midst.

**DEAR FRIENDS, WE
HAVE BEEN SPENDING
TIME KNOWING JESUS
AND LOVING JESUS.
MOTHER THERESA SAID,
"THE FRUIT OF SILENCE
IS PRAYER, FRUIT OF
PRAYER IS FAITH, FRUIT
OF FAITH IS LOVE, AND
THE FRUIT OF LOVE IS
SERVICE". IMPORTANT
THING IS TO LOVE AND
TO SERVE.**

And then we have got Fr. Anish, the parish priest of the St. Joseph Syro-Malabar parish in Perth. I am so happy to welcome him to this meeting.

Dear friends, we have been spending time knowing Jesus and loving Jesus. Mother Theresa said, "The fruit of silence is prayer, fruit of prayer is faith, fruit of faith is love, and the fruit of love is service". Important thing is to love and to serve. This is a chance to know and love Jesus to prepare ourselves to serve others. Let us make use of this time effectively.

Thanking God for everything and seeking the intercession of Mother Mary, I welcome all of you once again. Thank you.





SPEECH BY EMERITUS ARCHBISHOP BARRY HICKEY ON THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY MEETING AT PERTH

Most Rev. Bosco Puthur, Distinguished guests, Vincentian Priests, ladies and gentlemen...

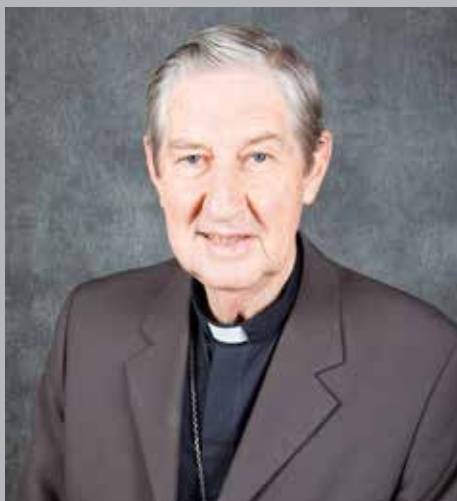
It was indeed a pleasure to receive an invitation to address this public meeting on the third Anniversary of the establishment of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy in Australia. I do so on my own behalf and on behalf of the Most Rev. Timothy Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth, who unfortunately could not be here today.

The establishment of the eparchy is an indication of the strong religious desire of the many people from Kerala and other parts of India who are now residents in Australia, to participate in the vibrancy of the Syro-Malabar rites, community life and language that they enjoyed back home.

In my visits over the years to India and to Kerala in particular, I have personally witnessed the strong faith and traditions of the Syro-Malabar people, and count among the priests some seminary classmates.

This public meeting comes at the end of the three days of a bible convention during which faith was shared by a huge number of enthusiastic participants.

I am pleased to note that some years before the establishment of the eparchy, the Syro-Malabar Vincentian priests accepted my invitation to come to Perth to administer two of our parishes, Shenton Park and Maddington and to provide chaplaincy at some of our public hospitals.



Since then they have shown remarkable energy and zeal in offering not only those of Syro-Malabar rite but all of our people vibrant preaching, healing services, retreats and Christian formation programmes. Very recently they opened a residential retreat centre in Byford (Karrakup).

Now, since the establishment of the eparchy they are pioneering even more activities to

cater for the particular needs of the Syro-Malabar community.

I am deeply impressed by their enthusiasm and dynamism, especially in this country where Christianity is facing formidable challenges.

Your excellency, Bishop Bosco, I congratulate you for adding new life and vigour to Christian life in Australia in these difficult times.

I can assure state and federal governments around Australia that the members of the newly established eparchy will add new religious and cultural richness to Australian life and be an enormous force for good.

May God's blessings continue to bring energy, happiness and love to and through the Syro-Malabar eparchy of St. Thomas.

Thank you.

FELICITATION SPEECH ADRIAN MARTINO



Honestly it's a pleasure for us to host and have you all here at La Salle College. John De La Salle is a great saint on whose name this college is known. So there is nothing wrong when you hold a Bible convention at this place, which proves education and faith goes hand in hand. So we welcome you to La Salle College. It's our pleasure to have it here in the lovely Swan Valley and we wish you all the best for the rest of your Bible Convention and for the establishment of your community here in Perth. Thank you.



BISHOP'S PASTORAL LETTER



Bishop Bosco Puthur

SYRO-MALABAR
EPARCHY OF
THE ST. THOMAS
THE APOSTLE,
MELBOURNE



Prot.No.MPL: 52/17/19 (ENG)

PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Rev Fathers, Brothers, Sisters,
and my dear Children in Jesus Christ,

The liturgical season of Annunciation has commenced. It is a graceful season for us to prepare spiritually and mentally for the birth of our Lord Jesus. Let us prepare ourselves these days before Christmas with prayer, penance and fasting. Christmas greetings to everyone! Not just in the cribs, but let the baby Jesus be born in our hearts and families as well.

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." (Luke 2: 10-12) Yes, dear ones, today also God invite us to meet Jesus! Each Christmas gives us the good news of great joy to encounter Jesus in our lives regularly, to experience Jesus' love in the Gospel continuously and to welcome others to Jesus' fraternal circle. Let us pray that this Christmas may once again be a cause for "God's glory in the high" and "peace for people on earth".

For the past two years during Christmas our Eparchy organised a gift for baby Jesus from the sacrifices made by our members. This year I invite you to make "A shelter for baby Jesus".

As you know there are many thousands in Kerala who are destitute and homeless, who have no place to sleep. There are many

institutions that arrange a home for these homeless people in our homeland. I am very happy to introduce to you one of these charity institutions called "Deivadhan" (meaning Gift of God), which specially deserves our helping hand.

Many of you may know Fr. Abraham Kaippanplackal who was a priest from Palai Diocese. He was a saintly priest who was called to his heavenly abode at the age of 100, while taking care of thousands of homeless people. Fr. Kaippanplackal established a religious order for sisters called "Deivadhan" (DDS) at Malayattoor in 1998. Currently this congregation has 23 professed sisters (Nuns). More than 800 homeless people receive their shelter and services across Malayattoor, Kanjoor, Vadakancherry, Kolayad, Thankamani under Deivadhan institutions. I invite you to give this year's Christmas gift to the poor as "a shelter for baby Jesus" to Deivadhan.

The amount gathered from your sacrifices during the season of Annunciation, may be donated when you participate at the Christmas Qurbana. This is also a good opportunity to encourage our little children to help the poor in the name of Jesus.

I request all Parish Priests/ Chaplains to announce and remind their communities about this great charity program. I would be most grateful if the amount collected during the Christmas Qurbana services could be transferred to the Eparchial finance office on time. May baby Jesus bless you for your love for the poor.



Our Eparchy has received \$43,846.95 (Rs 21,44,000) last year as the Christmas gift named "a meal for baby Jesus". I am happy to inform you that I personally handed over the amount collected to Sri. P. U. Thomas from Navajeevan Trust. Thank you for your generosity. Baby Jesus is waiting for your kind-hearted gesture this Christmas season as well.

Dear brothers and sisters, on this occasion, I would like to draw your attention to another serious topic. As we are aware, the Australian community, which generously received us, which we made our home, is currently going through turbulent situations. The current political instabilities, legalisation of same-sex marriages and euthanasia (with a pet name of "mercy killing"), and Royal commission reports, all have the capacity to seriously influence our faith community and personal life. I hope you have a very clear view on these issues based on our Christian faith. Apart from the older generation, I specially invite you to have healthy discussions with your children and young people, who risk having their future deeply affected by these issues.

We have a duty to lead a family life rooted in Christian faith and its moral values, as well as to be actively involved in promoting those same values to the public/general community. Let us ask forgiveness for the failures which happened in these areas of our church community and church life. Let us pray for God's grace.

Let me say a word of thanks before I conclude. As you are aware, the Rexband concert tour in November was organised by our Eparchy in seven cities of Australia, and was a great success. Many Australian Bishops contacted me to convey their congratulations in organising such a fruitful concert tour. The Rexband concerts benefited us with faith proclamation, to introduce Jesus to others and to empower our faith communities. I offer my sincere thanks to all priests and lay members who took on leadership roles, and the benefactors and lay faithful for their active involvement and promotion of the concerts.

With Christmas wishes,

Your Loving Father,

+ Bosco Puthur

FROM THE EPARCHIAL CURIA, PRESTON, MELBOURNE
3 DECEMBER 2017.

N.B: This pastoral letter is to be read during the Sunday Holy Qurbana on 10 December 2017.

FELICITATION SPEECH TONY BUTI MLA



It's a very great pleasure that I am here for the third diocesan anniversary meeting for Syro- Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas. Also I acknowledge Most Reverent Archbishop Barry Hickey, Bishop Bosco Puthur, Fr. Francis, Fr. Anish and Adrian Martino, the Vice Principal of this collage. As mentioned by Archbishop Barry Hickey, this church has given new vibe to Christian catholic community in Western Australia and the whole of Australia. If my research is correct, I believe this is the biggest diocese of the Syro-Malabar church outside India. As Bishop Barry Hickey said the Catholic Church has to face new challenges in Australia. Of course, as I mentioned, if you go back to the history of Catholic Church of Australia we find that we had to learn a lot to accept the new incoming catholic communities. The Syro-Malabar community is really strong in Western Australia. As a member of Armadale I welcome all to Armadale and any one can come and live in Armadale. Because of your outstanding community services and respect for education, I think we have a new class of your community in Armadale area. You all are welcome, come down to Armadale. We open our hands to you and in respect to your community in my region. Even though I am representing the Minister for cultural affairs here now, I was introduced to your community much before by your own community members. I hope you have the ability to make a new church and I hope that it will be functional soon. You deserve your own church as you are a fantastic Christian community. So dear congregation, God bless you and happy anniversary and I wish all the best in future. Thank you



REXBAND LIVE IN AUSTRALIA

The successful "Rexband Australia Tour 2017" would mark the close of the year 2017 with beautiful experience of the joy that Jesus brought in the lives of many Australians including our faithful from all seven cities of Canberra, Melbourne, Perth, Darwin, Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane. This would continue to be a source blessing for many. The ways in which the members of the Rexband use their God gifted talents would remain as powerful testimonies for many Australians in the years to come.

The members of the Rexband arrived on 08 November 2017 in Sydney and travelled to Canberra by road for a day of intense practice and final shaping of the entire



tour, the first performance being on 10 November 2017 in Canberra. The meeting of the band members with the Archbishop of Canberra Christopher Prowse served as a great source of blessings for the members during their entire tour.

On 11 November 2017, the Melbourne Convention Centre hosted the biggest crowd of the entire tour, inaugurated by Bishop Bosco Puthur of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Australia again was another testimony of the four intentions, Bishop Bosco envisaged the tour to achieve: evangelisation of youth and other, community building for our parishes, outreach to wider Australian population and a source of fund raising for the financial needs of our Eparchy and parishes.

The band performed at the Perth Convention Centre on 12 November 2017 graced by the presence of Bishop Timothy Costeloe was followed by



the first and most successful outreach to Darwin local community on 14 November 2017, the fourth event of the tour. The large presence of Australian school children at the Darwin Convention Centre was another golden feather to the crown. The event in Sydney graced by Bishop Richard Umbers at the Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre on 17 November 2017 and on the next day at Paradise

Community Church in Adelaide continued to testify God's providential blessings upon the band members and the crowd who came to celebrate the joy Jesus brings through the medium of music. The seventh and final performance of this tour at Edmund Rice Performing Arts Centre in Brisbane concluded the most hectic and first extensive tour in the Asia-Pacific region to a joyful closure.

who attended the concert and the hard work many priests and laymen undertook in the organisation of the tour would continue to keep the flame of faith strong and witnessing to people around us. Thank Almighty God for the protection and anointing all received through the tour may help us to witness our faith in this land with more vigour and value.



The powerful testimonies people





THE EPARCHY OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, MELBOURNE

FOURTH PASTORAL COUNCIL REPORT

29-30 OF SEPTEMBER 2017

FOOTHILLS CONFERENCE CENTRE, 48 EDINBURGH ROAD,
MOOROOLBARK, VIC 3138



The fourth Pastoral Council of the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne was held at Foothills Conference Centre, 48 Edinburgh Road, Mooroolbark, Victoria from Friday, 29 September to Saturday, 30 September 2017. In attendance were Bishop Bosco Puthur, seventeen (17) priests and thirty-two (32) lay representatives, including members from the regional/interstate communities of Australia.

The meeting was inaugurated with a Holy Qurbana celebrated by Archbishop Mar Kurian Vayalumkal, Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. In his homily Archbishop expressed his joy to inaugurate the Pastoral Council of the Eparchy. Bishop Bosco Puthur welcomed Archbishop Vayalumkal and

participants to the Pastoral Council for very fruitful sessions. The themes Council discussed mainly were on:

- Same Sex Marriage and Euthanasia
- Year of the Youth - 2018
- Safe guarding Children

Fr. Tony Kerin, Episcopal Vicar for Marriage, Life and Family from the Archdiocese of Melbourne gave the keynote address on Same Sex Marriage and Euthanasia. The below topics on the subject were presented by Fr. Tony:

- Marriage Equality - A misleading but very effective framing of the Same Sex Marriage debate.
- All relationships are important, but not all relationships are a marriage.
- Euthanasia - Proponents of new law are well intentioned, trying to remove its social stigma and falsify the cause of death on certificate.

Dony Peter Chacko, Leadership consultant from Cathedral parish gave a talk on Year of the Youth - 2018, announced by Australian Catholic Church. Dony suggested many practical steps which can be meaningfully implemented during the Year of the Youth. On this occasion, Bishop Bosco announced the appointment of Sojin Sebastian from Darwin as Syro-Malabar Youth Movement Eparchy Director.

Professor Daryl Higgins from Australian Catholic University gave a presentation on general principles in Safeguarding Children. Prof Higgins stressed raising awareness about safeguarding children within the parish communities is extremely important for the successful implementation of the programme. Later, Lissy Tresa & Benny Sebastian



from the Eparchy Professional Standards Division presented on Safeguarding policy & practice guidelines implemented in the Eparchy with open discussion with participants. Bishop Bosco announced the appointment of Lissy Tresa from Christ the King parish, Sydney, as the Eparchial Professional Standards Director and Benny Sebastian from Cathedral parish as Eparchy Safeguarding officer.

The past year's Pastoral Council report was read by Gene Thalappillil, Secretary. Representatives from various communities introduced themselves and presented brief reports/updates on their parish/mission's current status and challenges.

Second day's meeting started with morning prayers, and Holy Qurbana by Bishop Bosco Puthur.

Dr. Cyriac Mathew, member of the Pastoral Council and Santhom Trust board member, emphasised the importance of 'showing Empathy during our walk as a Christian' with an interesting presentation.

Fr. Varghese Vavolil, Eparchy's Catechetical Director, and Fr. George Mankuzhikary, Family Apostolate Director; updated on their respective Ministry activities.

Antony Joseph, member of Eparchial Finance council and Santhom Trust, updated on the Finance policy, legal structure and its compliance of Eparchy and 'SANTHOM TRUST'.

Bishop Bosco reminded and requested prayers for the upcoming Rexband concert tours

in November, which the Eparchy organised as part of its evangelisation effort.

Bishop Bosco informed the council that the 2016 Christmas charity collection was \$43,846.95. It was handed over by Bishop to 'Navajeevan Trust, Kottayam', an institution run by Mr. P.U. Thomas on 26 August 2017. In addition, Bishop Bosco announced the below:

- Appointment of Johnykutty Thomas (Sydney) as the National Coordinator of Catholic Congress.
- Youth Year 2018 to be celebrated widely across our Eparchy.
- Encourage youth to participate in the next World Youth Day (Jan 2019) in Panama, and find sponsors for their travel expenses.
- Wish to start a Catholic Radio channel with support of Radio Maria, Rome.
- Fr. Sebastian Mandapathil is appointed as the Mathruvedhi Director.
- Fr. Sabu Adimakiyil VC is appointed as the Chaplain for Syro-Malabar Youth Movement.

There was time for open discussion with Bishop Bosco before conclusion of the Pastoral Council meeting, where many of the members participated with great enthusiasm. Various suggestions and ideas from the discussions were consolidated for future action. Next year's meeting was decided on 21-22 Sep 2018.

While concluding, Bishop encouraged members to actively participate in the growth of parish/mission and share/communicate the outcome of Pastoral council meetings to the Parish Council. Meeting concluded with a thanksgiving prayer by Bishop Mar Bosco Puthur.

Report prepared by Gene Thalappillil, Secretary



An Indian nun murdered on a bus - on the order of moneylenders affected by her social work among the poor - is the latest person to be beatified in India. Sister Rani Maria Vattalil, a member of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation, was stabbed 54 times in front of more than 50 passengers on January 25, 1995. The crime took place near the village of Udainagar, in the central state of Madhya Pradesh. The state is over 90 percent Hindu and less than 1 percent Christian, and the Christian community often suffers various forms of discrimination.

Vattalil worked with the landless poor, urging them to insist they receive a living wage from their landlords, and encouraging them to give up bad habits, like drinking. In addition, the Kerala-born nun taught farmers more modern agricultural methods, and helped parents send their children to school. She organized village women into self-help groups - that could even pool resources to provide financial assistance in emergencies - and helped families establish savings accounts. Her work among the poor meant



Paul - visited Singh in prison in 2002, and tied a Rakhi to his hand.

The rakhi symbolizes the obligation of the man to honor and protect the woman. The universal meaning of the festival means it has been adapted by other religious groups in India, including Christians. Singh, overcome by this sign of forgiveness, expressed his repentance for the murder.

"I was overcome with grief and remorse for killing an innocent nun, who only selflessly worked to uplift the poor people and make our nation progress," he told Asianews in 2010.

Even though he was hired to perform the murder, he still assumed full responsibility for his actions.

"I accept full responsibility for my heinous murder of Sister Rani Maria. I cannot say that I was instigated, because

my own hands stabbed her repeatedly and for this, I will regret my actions till the day I die," he said. "In my own small way, I try to follow her example, helping those who are less fortunate than me, like Tribal Christians and all those who are marginalized," Singh said at the time. In 2006, at the request of Vattalil's family and Catholic leaders, Singh was released from prison. Singh, a Hindu, has continued to be an advocate of interreligious harmony in India, and has often praised the work of the Christian community in the country. A 56-minute documentary film, Heart of a Murderer, about Vattalil's murder and Singh's repentance, was released in 2013, and won the top prize at the World Interfaith Harmony Film Festival.

SR. RANI MARIA'S BEATIFICATION A "GREAT BLESSING" FOR INDIA

they were less likely to make use of local moneylenders - who often were also the landlords of the villagers - and they arranged to have her killed.

As the 41-year-old nun was dying, she kept repeating the name of Jesus. "Jesus" was the last word from her lips. "Sister Rani Maria, the daughter of the Church of India is a model for heroic life," Cardinal Baselios Cleemis told Crux. Cleemis, the president of India's bishops' conference, said the nun is a symbol of the deep Christian commitment to the service of the poor and marginalized. "Sister Rani Maria is a model for proclaiming the Gospel in a pluralistic country," the cardinal said.

Vattalil's murderer, Samundar Singh, was sentenced to life imprisonment. The nun's younger sister - also a religious, Sister Selmi



"We are sure that Sister Rani Maria who worked, served and died for the people, through her powerful intercession, our services may be more effective for the good of all the people," said Indore Bishop Chacko Thottumarickal. "Blessed Rani Maria is a model for us, as she was ready to shed her blood for the sake of the poor and downtrodden," the bishop said. Thottumarickal told Crux the relic presented at the ceremony is one of the nun's rib bones, which bears the knife marks of her martyrdom. Cleemis told Crux Vattalil's martyrdom and beatification is the culmination of her Christian Life. "She lived, worked and surrendered her life and was martyred for her mission," the cardinal said.

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2017/11/04/murdered-nun-beatified-india-sister-rani-maria-martyr-social-justice/>



Youth camp participants and volunteers with bishop on the concluding day - mount morton camp centre Belgrave heights South east Melbourne.



Marian Procession by St Alphonsa Parish Canberra



Confirmation and Holy Communion at St Alphonsa Cathedral Melbourne North



Kudumbolsavam 2017 ST. Thomas parish Melbourne south East.



Visit of Mar Kurian Vayalumkal, the apostolic Nuncio of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands to St Mary's Knanaya Mission Melbourne



Holy Communion: St Mary's Knanaya Mission Melbourne



Holy Communion: St Alphonsa Parish Canberra



Confirmation and Holy Communion: St Thomas Mission Wollongong



Confirmation and Holy Communion: St Thomas Mission Campbelltown



Bishop's visit at the Bowral community



Annual Retreat of the priests working in the eparchy with Bishop



BISHOP BOSCO'S PROGRAM DIARY

JANUARY 2018

1 MON & 6 SAT:
ORDINATION'S IN KERALA

8 MON- 13 SAT:
SYRO-MALABAR BISHOP'S SYNOD, KERALA

17 WED - 20 SAT:
FATIMA PILGRIMAGE, PORTUGAL

23 TUE: ARRIVAL IN LISBON FOR
ACTON CONFERENCE

24 WED - 27 SAT:
ACTON CONFERENCE, LISBON

28 SUN : RETURN TO AUSTRALIA

FEBRUARY 2018

11 SUN - FEAST OF ST ALPHONSA
CATHEDRAL, MELBOURNE

12 MON - VIBHOOTHI (ASH MONDAY)

20 TUE - BISHOP'S CONFERENCE PLENARY
MEETING (BCPL), SYDNEY

MARCH 2018

2 FRI - 4 SUN - VISITING CHRIST CHURCH,
NEWZEALAND

25 SUNDAY - PALM SUNDAY
HOLY WEEK

APRIL 2018

1 EASTER SUNDAY



"THE FACT IS, GOD LOVES US EVEN MORE THAN WE LOVE OURSELVES. HE BELIEVES IN US EVEN MORE THAN WE BELIEVE IN OURSELVES. HE IS ALWAYS "CHEERING US ON"; HE IS OUR BIGGEST FAN."

POPE FRANCIS



PRAY TO MARY, OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Our Lady of Guadalupe, mystical rose, make intercession for the Holy Church, protect the Sovereign Pontiff, help all those who invoke thee in their necessities, and since thou art the ever Virgin Mary and Mother of God, obtain for us from thy most holy Son the grace of keeping our faith, sweet hope in the midst of the bitterness of life, burning charity and the precious gift of final perseverance. Amen.

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL 2017

The Church in Australia kicked off Advent with a Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney, drawing some 20,000 attendees and including the country's largest Mass since the World Youth Day in 2008. The event was also the opening of a "Year of Youth" meant to "open new horizons for spreading joy for the young Church and our communities." The festival was held Dec. 7-9, shortly after Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, invited the nation's youth to participate in the 2018 Year of Youth, which will last until Nov. 25, 2018. The festival mostly took place at the Sydney Olympic Park. There young people attended workshops, Mass, faith-filled discussions, and even interactive games, such as a Saint John Paul II video game.

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2017/12/12/australian-catholic-youth-festival-draws-tens-thousands/>

