



Marthoma Vision

VOL 9 APRIL 2026

SYRO- MALABAR EPARCHY OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE MELBOURNE

EPARCHIAL BULLETIN



...Dear friends, let us ask for the grace of a Lent that leads us to greater attentiveness to God and to the least among us. Let us ask for the strength that comes from the type of fasting that also extends to our use of language, so that hurtful words may diminish and give way to a greater space for the voice of others.

Let us strive to make our communities places where the cry of those who suffer finds welcome, and listening opens paths towards liberation, making us ready and eager to contribute to building a civilization of love.

I impart my heartfelt blessing upon all of you and your Lenten journey.

*Pope Leo XIV
Lenten message 2026*



This Easter, may we see
and believe anew!
From the silence of the tomb,
hope rise-what seemed
like an end becomes
a glorious beginning.
Defeat turns to victory,
darkness to light.

He is risen!
He is risen indeed!

**BLESSED
EASTER**



BP JOHN PANAMTHOTTATHIL CMI
Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St.Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

Table of Contents

Editorial	05
Circular	06
EPARCHY NEWS	19
Department Update	41
Parish Update	52
Days to Remember	68

Editorial

Marthoma Vision 2026



“Peace Be With You”

When Pope Leo XIV greeted the world with the words “Peace be with you,” he reminded us of a peace that is humble, disarming, and rooted in God’s unconditional love. In a time marked by uncertainty, conflict, and pressures within our own communities, this message speaks powerfully to our hearts.

In the Gospel of John (20:19–31), the Risen Lord brings peace to His disciples in their fear, strengthens them through the Holy Spirit, and restores Thomas the Apostle in his doubt. Like Thomas, we too may feel overwhelmed—but Christ meets us with compassion and calls us to faith and hope.

We are pleased to present this edition of Marthoma Vision 2026, made possible through the generous efforts of our clergy, contributors, editors, and volunteers. We sincerely thank all who have collaborated to bring this publication to life.

As we celebrate the joy of the Resurrection, may this season renew our hearts and inspire us to be bearers of Christ’s peace in our families and communities.

Wishing you all a blessed and grace-filled Easter. Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

Fr Thomas Pezhumkattil

Director -Eparchy Media



CIRCULARS PASTORAL LETTERS



മാർത്തോമ്മാ വിഭാഗം
MELBOURNE EPARCHIAL BULLETIN

Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne



Prot. No. MPL: 11/26/11

12 February 2026

CIRCULAR

We are once again entering the holy season of Lent. The 40-day fast of Jesus is the basis of this period known as Great Lent. However, we usually call this period 50 days of Lent. The reason for saying 50 days of Lent is the tradition of Marthoma Christians who fasted from 'Pethurtha' Sunday to Easter Sunday. The Syriac word 'Pethurtha' means ending, looking back. This word signifies ending material celebrations and returning to spirituality.

We enter Lent with the Holy Qurbana, and the penitential service held on Ash Monday. The cross drawn on the forehead with ashes fosters the thought of suffering and death. When we say ash, it means dust. This indicates that one day I too will become dust.

God himself speaks to us about how to make this short life on earth that God gives us only once meaningful. Prayer is defined as a conversation with God. Speaking and listening are equally important in conversation. We spend most of our time talking to God. Consciously listening to God is also part of prayer. This Lent is an opportunity to listen God more.

We spend most of our time for the material well-being and achievements of our lives. But a few days that we desire the most for God's blessing and experience of God are essential for our spiritual life. Fasting, prayer, and acts of penance are the best ways to connect with God. Lent is a sign of the journey to God. These are holy days when we strive for spiritual purification in harmony with the suffering life of the Messiah. Fasting and prayer are putting on the armor of God (Eph. 10:12 -13).

Just as good food brings joy and celebration to the body, so prayer and fasting bring joy and enthusiasm to the soul. 'This is the truth that Jesus revealed during his 40 days of fasting and prayer in the desert: "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from God. "'(Matthew 4:4)

A beautiful Lenten prayer of Saint Ephrem is as follows: 'Give me, your servant, purity, humility, patience, and love, O Lord, open my eyes to see my faults, and grant me the ability not to judge my neighbor.'

During this Lent, we should make a sincere effort to participate in Holy Communion every day and to involve our children in it. I also remind you to make a conscious effort not to neglect family prayer and to read the Holy Scriptures with greater zeal. Children should be taught the meaning of fasting, prayer, and abstinence and trained in it. These are the best catechism classes that parents can give to their children.

Even if you have taken two or three days off, you should participate in the fasting meditation that is held at the parish level. Holy Confession, which is held in connection with fasting, is the sacrament that helps us the most in our spiritual renewal and growth. The fast that we begin with the penitential service, is completed through the sacrament of Holy Confession. Jesus turned to Peter and looked at him (Luke 22:61). One look from Jesus changed Peter's life. He went out and wept bitterly (Luke 22:62). This is the thought of repentance that we should have during Lent. Let us wait for the gaze of Jesus. These days are an opportunity for prayer when He holds our hands and raises them.

The fasting and prayer of this Lent should naturally lead us to almsgiving. Your generous donations during the natural calamities in *Chooralmala* and *Vilangad* in Wayanad are a testament to your generosity. Seven houses are being completed in these two places. Last month I was able to visit those places and visit the houses that are being completed. I would like to express my special gratitude to all of you.

Last year, the Bishops 'Appeal for the formation of our seminary students raised \$1,30400. This Lent, as usual, the Bishops 'Appeal will be held for the education of our seminary students. As you know, our seminary is currently operating in a rented house. This year at least, we need to complete our own seminary building. The first phase of the seminary building is expected to be completed with two crores Indian Rupees. I kindly remind you to sincerely cooperate in the formation of priests who will lead the work of our diocese in the future. I remember with gratitude the help you have done and appreciate you on this occasion.

It has been decided to convene the **Eparchial Assembly** on 20, 21 November 2026 to evaluate the activities of our diocese over the past 11 years and to formulate pastoral plans for the coming years. The guideline will be circulated for discussion in all the missions and parishes of the diocese to get your suggestions and opinions. Further details will be shared shortly. I look forward to your valuable cooperation and participation.

In this Lent, I pray that prayer, fasting and almsgiving may help us to become more spiritual, while remembering the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. I bless you all with all my heart in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

With love in Christ,

Bishop John Panamthottathil CMI
Bishop of Syro Malabar Eparchy, Melbourne

Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne



Prot. No. MPL: 11/26/11

സർക്കുലർ

നോമ്പുകാല സന്ദേശം

മിശിഹായിൽ സ്നേഹം നിറഞ്ഞ വൈദികരേ മാതാപിതാക്കളേ സഹോദരീസഹോദരന്മാരേ വാത്സല്യമുള്ള കുഞ്ഞുമക്കളേ,

പരിശുദ്ധമായ വലിയ നോമ്പുകാലത്തേക്ക് നാം ഒരിക്കൽ കൂടി പ്രവേശിക്കുകയാണ്. ഈശോയുടെ 40 ദിവസത്തെ ഉപവാസമാണ് വലിയ നോമ്പ് എന്ന പേരിൽ അറിയപ്പെടുന്ന ഈ കാലത്തിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനം. എങ്കിലും നാം സാധാരണയായി 50 നോമ്പ് എന്നാണ് ഈ കാലത്തെ വിളിക്കുക. മാർത്തോമ്മാ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ 'പേത്തൂർത്ത ഞായർ' മുതൽ ഉയിർപ്പുതിരുനാൾ വരെ നോമ്പ് നോക്കിയ പാരമ്പര്യമാണ് അമ്പത് നോമ്പ് എന്ന് പറയാനുള്ള കാരണം. 'പേത്തൂർത്ത' എന്ന സുറിയാനി വാക്കിന്റെ അർത്ഥം അവസാനിപ്പിക്കൽ, തിരിഞ്ഞുനോക്കൽ എന്നൊക്കെയാണ്. ഭൗതികമായ ആഘോഷങ്ങൾ അവസാനിപ്പിച്ച് ആത്മീയതയിലേക്കുള്ള തിരിച്ചു പോകലാണ് ഈ പദം കൊണ്ട് അർത്ഥമാക്കുന്നത്.

വിദ്യുതി തികളാഴ്ച നടത്തുന്ന വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയോടും അനുതാപ ശുശ്രൂഷയോടും കൂടിയാണ് നോമ്പിലേക്ക് നാം പ്രവേശിക്കുന്നത്, ചാരം കൊണ്ട് നെറ്റിയിൽ വരയ്ക്കുന്ന കുരിശ്, സഹന ചിന്തയും മരണ ചിന്തയും നമ്മിൽ വളർത്തുന്നു. വിദ്യുതി എന്നു പറഞ്ഞാൽ 'ദസ്'മം/പൊടി' എന്നാണല്ലോ അർത്ഥം. ഒരുന്നാൾ ഞാനും പൊടിയാകേണ്ടതാണെന്ന സൂചനയാണ് ഇത് തരുന്നത്.

ദൈവം ഒരിക്കൽ മാത്രം നമുക്കായി നൽകുന്ന ഭൂമിയിലെ ഈ ചെറിയ ജീവിതം എങ്ങനെ അർത്ഥപൂർണ്ണമാക്കാം എന്ന് ദൈവം തന്നെ നമ്മോട് സംസാരിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. പ്രാർത്ഥന ദൈവവുമായുള്ള സംഭാഷണമായിട്ടാണ് നിർവചിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്. സംഭാഷണത്തിൽ 'പറയുകയും' 'ശ്രവിക്കുകയും' തുല്യ പ്രാധാന്യമുള്ള കാര്യങ്ങളാണ്. നമ്മുടെ പ്രാർത്ഥനയിൽ കൂടുതൽ സമയവും നാം ദൈവത്തോട് പറയുകയാണ് ചെയ്യുന്നത്. ബോധപൂർവ്വം ദൈവത്തെ കേൾക്കുക എന്നുള്ളതും പ്രാർത്ഥനയുടെ ഭാഗമാണ്. ഈ നോമ്പുകാലം ദൈവത്തെ കൂടുതൽ ശ്രവിക്കുവാനുള്ള അവസരമാണ്.

നമ്മുടെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഭൗതികമായ സുസ്ഥിതിക്കും നേട്ടങ്ങൾക്കും വേണ്ടിയാണ് കൂടുതൽ സമയവും നാം ചെലവഴിക്കുന്നത്. എന്നാൽ ദൈവാനുഗ്രഹത്തിനും ദൈവാനുഭവത്തിനുമായി ഏറെ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്ന കുറച്ചു ദിവസങ്ങൾ നമ്മുടെ ആത്മീയ ജീവിതത്തിന് അത്യന്താപേക്ഷിതമാണ്. നോമ്പും പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ഉപവാസവും പ്രായശ്ചിത്ത പ്രവർത്തികളും ദൈവത്തോട് ബന്ധപ്പെടുവാനുള്ള ഏറ്റവും നല്ല മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളാണ്.

ഓൺ. ദൈവത്തിങ്കലേക്കുള്ള യാത്രയുടെ അടയാളമാണ് നോമ്പുകാലം. മിശിഹായുടെ സഹന ജീവിതത്തോട് യോജിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് ആത്മവിശുദ്ധീകരണത്തിനായി പരിശ്രമിക്കുന്ന പുണ്യദിനങ്ങളാണിത്. നോമ്പും ഉപവാസവും ദൈവത്തിന്റെ ആയുധം ധരിക്കലാണ് (എഫേ.10:12-13).

നല്ല സ്വാഭാവിഷ്ടമായ ഭക്ഷണം ശരീരത്തിന് എപ്രകാരം സന്തോഷവും ഉത്സാഹവുമൊക്കുന്നുവോ അതുപോലെ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ഉപവാസവും ആത്മാവിന് സന്തോഷവും ഉത്സാഹവും നൽകുന്നു. മരുഭൂമിയിലെ 40 ദിവസത്തെ നോമ്പിന്റെയും പ്രാർത്ഥനയുടെയും അവസരത്തിൽ ഈശോ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തിയ സത്യം ഇതാണ്: “മനുഷ്യൻ അപ്പം കൊണ്ട് മാത്രമല്ല ദൈവത്തിന്റെ നാവിൽ നിന്നു പുറപ്പെടുന്ന ഓരോ വാക്കുകൊണ്ടുമാണ് ജീവിക്കുന്നത്” (മത്തായി 4:4)

വിശുദ്ധ അപ്രമിന്റെ മനോഹരമായ ഒരു നോമ്പുകാല പ്രാർത്ഥന ഇപ്രകാരമാണ്: “നിന്റെ ദാസനായ എനിക്ക് ശുദ്ധതയും എളിമയും ക്ഷമാശീലവും സ്നേഹവും നൽകണമേ, നാഥാ, എന്റെ തെറ്റുകൾ കാണുവാൻ എന്റെ കണ്ണുകൾ തുറപ്പിക്കണമേ, എന്റെ അയൽക്കാരനെ വിധിക്കാതിരിക്കുവാനുള്ള കഴിവും നൽകണമേ.”

ഈ നോമ്പുകാലത്ത് എല്ലാ ദിവസവും വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയിൽ പങ്കെടുക്കുവാനും കുട്ടികളെ പങ്കെടുപ്പിക്കുവാനും ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി പരിശ്രമിക്കണം. അതുപോലെതന്നെ കുടുംബ പ്രാർത്ഥന മൂടകാതിരിക്കുവാനും വിശുദ്ധഗ്രന്ഥ വായന കൂടുതൽ തീഷ്ണതയോടെ നടത്തുവാനും നിങ്ങൾ ബോധപൂർവ്വം ശ്രമിക്കണമെന്ന് ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. നോമ്പിന്റെയും പ്രാർത്ഥനയുടെയും ഉപവാസത്തിന്റെയും അർത്ഥങ്ങൾ കുട്ടികൾക്ക് പറഞ്ഞു കൊടുക്കണം, അവരെ അതിന് പരിശീലിപ്പിക്കുകയും വേണം. മാതാപിതാക്കൾക്ക് കുട്ടികൾക്ക് നൽകുവാൻ പറ്റിയ ഏറ്റവും നല്ല വേദോപദേശ ക്ലാസുകളാണ് ഇവയൊക്കെയും. രണ്ടോ മൂന്നോ ദിവസങ്ങൾ അവധിയെടുത്തിട്ട് ആണെങ്കിലും നിർബന്ധമായും ഇടവക തലത്തിൽ നടത്തുന്ന നോമ്പ് ധ്യാനത്തിൽ തീർച്ചയായും നിങ്ങളെല്ലാവരും പങ്കെടുക്കണം. നോമ്പിനോടനുബന്ധിച്ച് നടത്തുന്ന വിശുദ്ധ കുമ്പസാരം നമ്മുടെ ആത്മീയ നവീകരണത്തിനും വളർച്ചയ്ക്കും നമ്മെ ഏറ്റവും കൂടുതൽ സഹായിക്കുന്ന കൂദാശയാണ്. അനുതാപ ശുശ്രൂഷയിലൂടെ നാം ആരംഭിക്കുന്ന നോമ്പ് പൂർത്തീകരിക്കപ്പെടുന്നത് വിശുദ്ധ കുമ്പസാരം എന്ന കൂദാശയിലൂടെയാണ്.

‘കർത്താവ് പത്രോസിന്റെ നേരെ തിരിഞ്ഞ് അവനെ നോക്കി’ (ലൂക്ക 22:61) ഈശോയുടെ ഒരു നോട്ടം പത്രോസിന്റെ ജീവിതത്തെ മാറ്റിമറിച്ചു. “അവൻ പുറത്തു പോയി മനംനൊന്ത് കരഞ്ഞു” (ലൂക്കാ 22: 62) നോമ്പുകാലത്ത് നാം സ്വന്തമാക്കേണ്ട അനുതാപത്തിന്റെ ചിന്തയാണിത്. ഈശോയുടെ നോട്ടത്തിനായി നമുക്ക് കാത്തിരിക്കാം. അവിടുന്ന് നമ്മുടെ കരങ്ങൾ പിടിച്ചു ഉയർത്തുന്ന പ്രാർത്ഥനയുടെ അവസരമാണ് ഈ ദിവസങ്ങൾ.

ഈ നോമ്പുകാലത്തെ ഉപവാസവും പ്രാർത്ഥനയും സ്വാഭാവികമായി ദാനധർമ്മങ്ങളിലേക്കും നമ്മെ നയിക്കണം. വയനാട്ടിലെ ചുരൽ മലയിലും വിലങ്ങാടും

പ്രകൃതിക്ഷോഭം ഉണ്ടായപ്പോൾ നിങ്ങൾ നൽകിയ വലിയ സംഭാവനകൾ നിങ്ങളുടെ ദാനധർമ്മത്തെ പ്രകടമാക്കുന്നതാണ്. ഈ രണ്ടു സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലുമായി ഏഴു വീടുകൾ പണിപൂർത്തീകരിച്ചു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. കഴിഞ്ഞമാസം എനിക്ക് ആ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ പോകുവാനും പൂർത്തീകരിക്കുന്ന ഭവനങ്ങൾ സന്ദർശിക്കുവാനും സാധിച്ചു. നിങ്ങളെ എല്ലാവരെയും പ്രത്യേകമായി ഞാൻ അഭിനന്ദിക്കുകയാണ്.

കഴിഞ്ഞവർഷം നമ്മുടെ സെമിനാരി വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ പഠനത്തിന് ആവശ്യമായി നടത്തിയ ബിഷപ്പ്സ് അപ്പീലിന് 1,30140. ഡോളർ ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ നോമ്പുകാലത്തും പതിവുപോലെ നമ്മുടെ സെമിനാരി വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ പഠന ആവശ്യത്തിനായി ബിഷപ്പ്സ് അപ്പീൽ നടത്തുന്നതായിരിക്കും.

നിങ്ങൾക്കറിവുള്ളതുപോലെ ഇപ്പോൾ നമ്മുടെ സെമിനാരി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നത് ഒരു വാടക വീട്ടിലാണ് ഈ വർഷമെങ്കിലും നമുക്ക് നമ്മുടേതായ സെമിനാരി കെട്ടിടം പണിപൂർത്തിയാക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. രണ്ട് കോടി ഇന്ത്യൻ രൂപയാണ് സെമിനാരി കെട്ടിട നിർമ്മാണത്തിന്റെ ആദ്യഘട്ടം പൂർത്തിയാക്കുവാൻ പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്നത്. നമ്മുടെ രൂപതയുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾക്ക് ഭാവിയിൽ നേതൃത്വം നൽകേണ്ട വൈദികരുടെ രൂപീകരണത്തിൽ നിങ്ങൾ ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി സഹകരിക്കണമെന്ന് സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. നിങ്ങൾ ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ള സഹായങ്ങളെ ഈ അവസരത്തിൽ നന്ദിയോടെ ഓർക്കുകയും നിങ്ങളെ അഭിനന്ദിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

നമ്മുടെ രൂപതയുടെ കഴിഞ്ഞ 11 വർഷത്തെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ വിലയിരുത്തുവാനും വരുന്ന വർഷങ്ങളിലേക്കുള്ള അജപാലനപരമായ പദ്ധതികൾ ആവീഷ് കരിക്കുവാനുമായി ഈ വർഷം നവംബർ 20, 21 തീയതികളിൽ Eparchial Assembly വിളിച്ചു കൂട്ടുവാനായി തീരുമാനിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. നിങ്ങളുടെ നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും അഭിപ്രായങ്ങളും അറിയുന്നതിനായി രൂപതയിലെ എല്ലാ മിഷനുകളിലും ഇടവകകളിലും മാർഗരേഖ ചർച്ചയ്ക്കായി തരുന്നതാണ്. വിശദവിവരങ്ങൾ പിന്നീട് അറിയിക്കുന്നതാണ്. നിങ്ങളുടെ വിലയേറിയ സഹകരണവും പങ്കാളിത്തവും ഞാൻ പ്രതീക്ഷിക്കുന്നു.

ഈ നോമ്പുകാലത്തിൽ ഈശോയുടെ സഹനവും മരണവും ഉത്ഥാനവും അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നതിനോടൊപ്പം തന്നെ കൂടുതൽ ആത്മീയരാക്കുവാൻ പ്രാർത്ഥനയും ഉപവാസവും ദാനധർമ്മങ്ങളും നമ്മെ സഹായിക്കട്ടെയെന്ന് ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് പിതാവിന്റെയും പുത്രന്റെയും പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന്റെയും നാമത്തിൽ നിങ്ങളെ ഏവരെയും ഹൃദയപൂർവ്വം ആശീർവദിക്കുന്നു.

മിശിഹായിൽ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം,

മെത്രാസനമന്ദിരം
മെൽബൺ, 12.02.2026

ബിഷപ്പ് ജോൺ പനത്തോട്ടത്തിൽ സി.എം.ഐ
മെൽബൺ രൂപതയുടെ മെത്രാൻ

Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne



Prot. No. MPL: 28/26/12

27 March 2026

CIRCULAR

The Celebration of Pesaha: A Heritage of Faith and Family Tradition

With Palm Sunday, we enter the Holy Week- the final week of the Fifty Days' Lent. Today, we commemorate the glorious entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem. The rituals and prayers we observe during these holy days, as we meditate upon the Passion, Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus, carry profound spiritual meaning.

As parents living abroad, you hold a sacred responsibility to pass on certain noble traditions of faith to your children with the utmost care. In an era where many precious customs of the Marthoma Christians are vanishing, I wish to remind the new generation of our traditional *Pesaha* (Passover) observance.

1. The Feast of Pesaha: Background

The Old Testament Passover is a generational remembrance of God liberating the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. It was a celebration featuring unleavened bread and a sacrificed lamb (Exodus 12:1-30). However, Jesus chose this very feast for His Last Supper. By offering His own Blood instead of the lamb's blood, and His own Body instead of the unleavened bread, He instituted the Holy Eucharist (Luke 22:1-38). For 2000 years, we have passed down this experience of God through a simple and soul-stirring Pesaha observance.

2. Breaking the Pesaha Bread: A Unique Heritage

The breaking of the Pesaha bread is a sacred tradition preserved within our families for generations, and it is unique to our community among global Christian denominations. It signifies the deep Jewish roots of the St. Thomas Christian faith.

The Preparations

- **Spiritual Preparation:** Preparation begins with a Lenten Confession involving all family members. Even those who may not have strictly followed the Great Lent observe rigorous fasting and dietary discipline during Holy Week.

- **External Preparation:** Families abstain from celebrations and entertainment. The home and its surroundings are cleaned, and clothes are washed and readied. Much like preparing for a great journey, the home must be ready before Maundy Thursday (Exodus 12:11).

3. Preparing the Bread and Milk

The primary elements are the unleavened Passover Bread (Pesaha Appam or Inri Appam) and the Pesaha Milk, crafted with coconut milk, jaggery, and spices.

- **Inri Appam:** The batter is made from rice flour and prepared immediately without allowing it to ferment. It is also called Kurishappam or Inri Appam. "INRI" stands for "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" (Matthew 27:37). It is prepared after bathing and wearing clean clothes and may be baked on coals or steamed.

- **The Cross (Kurishu):** On the dough kneaded by the mother, the head of the family prayerfully places a cross made from the palm leaves received at church on Palm Sunday. Only one such "Crossed Bread" is made per household, though more bread may be made from the same dough.

- **Pesaha Milk:** Prepared with coconut milk, jaggery, and spices, it also contains a cross made of palm leaves. There was an ancestral custom of pouring the coconut water onto the roof when breaking the coconut, symbolizing the sprinkling of the lamb's blood on the doorposts by the Israelites.

4. The Rite of Breaking the Bread

On the night of Pesaha, the family gathers for dinner, followed by the breaking of the bread led by the family elder. This is done to ensure the Pesaha meal is the final food consumed that night.

- **The Family as the Altar:** The home is the true stage for this rite, where the father or elder acts as the celebrant, highlighting their role within the family.

- **The Order of Prayer:** The rite begins with the reading of Holy Scripture, specifically Psalm 135 and Exodus Chapter 12.

- **The Breaking:** The elder removes the cross from the bread and divides it into 13 pieces. It is then distributed to everyone according to age, received with both hands outstretched. This is the only occasion in our homes where the head of the family serves the food.

- **The Manner of Eating:** The bread is eaten while standing, symbolizing the urgency of the Israelites as they prepared to depart Egypt. The bread is dipped into the Pesaha milk.

- **Note:** This specific Kurishappam is traditionally not served to those who are unbaptized or non-Christians.

5. The Social Dimension

If a direct relative has passed away since the previous Pesaha, that family does not steam the bread in their home as a sign of mourning. Instead, relatives or neighbors bring Pesaha dishes to them, reinforcing love and unity among the faithful.

As Pesaha is a domestic celebration, there are no official ceremonies for it in churches. However, for students living abroad and those living alone, our parishes may conduct this ceremony informally.

I urge every family in our Eparchy to observe Pesaha with preparation this year, explaining the meaning of this tradition to our children and encouraging them to participate wholeheartedly.

I wish you all a blessed Holy Week and a glorious Easter. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

With love in Christ,

Chancery, Melbourne.
27.03.2026

Bishop John Panamthottathil CMI
Bishop of Syro Malabar Eparchy, Melbourne

NB: This circular is to be read during the Holy Qurbana in all churches of the Melbourne Eparchy on Sunday, 29 March 2026.

Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas, the Apostle, Melbourne



Prot. No. MPL:28/26/12

27 March 2026

സർക്കുലർ

പെസഹാ ആചരണം: വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെ പൈതൃകവും കുടുംബപാരമ്പര്യവും

ഓശാനത്തോടൊപ്പം കൂടി നമ്മൾ അമ്പതുനോമ്പിന്റെ അവസാനവാരമായ പീഡാനുഭവവാരത്തിലേക്ക് പ്രവേശിക്കുകയാണ്. മിശിഹായുടെ മഹത്വപൂർണ്ണമായ ജെറുസലേം പ്രവേശനത്തെയാണ് ഇന്ന് നമ്മൾ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നത്. ഈശോയുടെ പീഡാനുഭവം, മരണം, സംസ്കാരം, ഉത്ഥാനം എന്നിവയെക്കുറിച്ച് ധ്യാനിക്കുന്ന ഈ പുണ്യദിനങ്ങളിൽ നാം നടത്തുന്ന ഓരോ കർമ്മങ്ങൾക്കും പ്രാർത്ഥനകൾക്കും ആഴ്ചമേറിയ അർത്ഥങ്ങളുണ്ട്.

വിദേശ രാജ്യത്ത് വസിക്കുന്ന മാതാപിതാക്കൾ എന്ന നിലയിൽ, നിങ്ങളുടെ കുഞ്ഞുങ്ങൾക്ക് അതീവ ശ്രദ്ധയോടെ കൈമാറേണ്ട ചില ഉദാത്തമായ വിശ്വാസ പാരമ്പര്യങ്ങളുണ്ട്. മാർത്തോമാക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളായ നമ്മുടെയിടയിൽനിന്ന് അമൂല്യമായ പല ആചാരങ്ങളും അപ്രത്യക്ഷമായിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ, പരമ്പരാഗതമായ നമ്മുടെ പെസഹാ ആചരണത്തെക്കുറിച്ച് നവതലമുറയെ ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു.

1. പെസഹാ തിരുനാൾ: പശ്ചാത്തലം

ഈജിപ്തിലെ അടിമത്തത്തിൽനിന്നും ദൈവം ഇസ്രായേൽ ജനത്തെ മോചിപ്പിച്ചതിന്റെ തലമുറകൾ നീളുന്ന ഓർമ്മയാചരണമാണ് പഴയനിയമപെസഹാ. പുളിപ്പില്ലാത്ത അപ്പത്തിന്റെയും കൊല്ലപ്പെട്ട കുഞ്ഞാടിന്റെയും ആഘോഷമായിരുന്നു അത് (പുറപ്പാട് 12:1-30). എന്നാൽ ഈശോ തന്റെ അന്ത്യത്താഴ്ചയിൽ ഈ തിരുനാൾ തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു. കുഞ്ഞാടിന്റെ രക്തത്തിനുപകരം തന്റെ രക്തവും, പുളിപ്പില്ലാത്ത അപ്പത്തിനുപകരം തന്റെ ശരീരവും നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് അവിടുന്ന് വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാന സ്ഥാപിച്ചു (ലൂക്കാ 22:1-38). കഴിഞ്ഞ 2000 വർഷങ്ങളായി ലളിതവും ഭക്തിനിർഭരവുമായ പെസഹാ ആചരണത്തിലൂടെ നാം ഈ ദൈവാനുഭവം കൈമാറിവരുന്നു.

2. പെസഹാ അപ്പം മുറിക്കൽ: സവിശേഷതകൾ

ലോകത്തിലെ മറ്റു ക്രൈസ്തവ സമൂഹങ്ങളിൽ കാണപ്പെടാത്തതും, നമ്മുടെ കുടുംബങ്ങളിൽ മാത്രം തലമുറകളായി നിലനിൽക്കുന്നതുമായ പാവനമായ പാരമ്പര്യമാണ് പെസഹാ അപ്പം മുറിക്കൽ. മാർത്തോമാക്രിസ്ത്യാനികളുടെ വിശ്വാസപൈതൃകത്തിന് പിന്നിലെ യഹൂദവേദകളെയാണിത് സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്.

ഒരുക്കങ്ങൾ:

• **ആന്തരിക ഒരുക്കം:** കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങൾ എല്ലാവരും ഒത്തുചേർന്ന് നടത്തുന്ന നോമ്പുകാല കുമ്പസാരത്തോടെ ഒരുക്കം ആരംഭിക്കുന്നു. വലിയനോമ്പ് കൃത്യമായി പാലിക്കാത്തവർ പോലും വലിയആഴ്ചയിൽ കർശനമായ നോമ്പും ഭക്ഷണക്രമവും പാലിക്കുന്നു.

• **ബാഹ്യമായ ഒരുക്കം:** ആഘോഷങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നും ഉല്ലാസങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നും മാറി നിൽക്കുന്നു. വീടും പരിസരവും ശുദ്ധിയാക്കുന്നു. വസ്ത്രങ്ങൾ കഴുകി വൃത്തിയാക്കി വെയ്ക്കുന്നു. ഒരു വലിയ യാത്രയ്ക്കുള്ള ഒരുക്കം പോലെ പെസഹാവ്യാഴത്തിന് മുൻപേ ഭവനം ഒരുക്കിയിരിക്കണം (പുറപ്പാട് 12:11).

3. അപ്പവും പാലും തയ്യാറാക്കൽ

പെസഹാദിവസം മാത്രം തയ്യാറാക്കുന്ന പുളിപ്പില്ലാത്ത പെസഹാഅപ്പവും (ഇൻറി അപ്പം), തേങ്ങാപ്പാലും ശർക്കരയും സുഗന്ധവ്യഞ്ജനങ്ങളും ചേർത്തുള്ള പെസഹാപാലും ആണ് പ്രധാന വിഭവങ്ങൾ.

• **ഇൻറി അപ്പം:** അരിപ്പൊടി കുഴച്ച് മാവ് തയ്യാറാക്കിയ ഉടനെ, അത് പുളിക്കാൻ അനുവദിക്കാതെയാണ് അപ്പം ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നത്. പെസഹാ അപ്പത്തിന് **കുരിശപ്പം** അല്ലെങ്കിൽ **ഇൻറി അപ്പം** എന്നും പേരുണ്ട്. 'യൂദന്മാരുടെ രാജാവായ നസ്രായനായ ഈശോ' (INRI) എന്നാണ് ഇതിനർത്ഥം. (മത്തായി 27: 37) കുളിച്ച് ശുദ്ധി വരുത്തി വൃത്തിയുള്ള വസ്ത്രങ്ങൾ അണിഞ്ഞാണ് പെസഹാഅപ്പം തയ്യാറാക്കേണ്ടത്. കനലിൽ ചുട്ടുകയോ ആവിയിൽ പുഴുങ്ങുകയോ ചെയ്യുന്ന വ്യത്യസ്തമായ രീതികളും ഉണ്ട്.

• **കുരിശപ്പം:** കുടുംബനാഥ കുഴച്ച മാവിനു മുകളിൽ, ഓശാന ഞായറാഴ്ച പള്ളിയിൽ നിന്നും ലഭിച്ച കുരുത്തോല മുറിച്ച് കുരിശാകൃതിയിൽ കുടുംബനാഥൻ പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചു പതിക്കുന്നു. ഒരു വീട്ടിൽ ഒരു കുരിശപ്പം മാത്രമാണ് ഉണ്ടാകുക. എന്നാൽ അതേ മാവുകൊണ്ട് കുരിശുവയ്ക്കാത്ത കുടുതൽ അപ്പങ്ങളും ഉണ്ടാക്കാം.

• **പെസഹാ പാൽ:** തേങ്ങാപ്പാൽ, ശർക്കര, സുഗന്ധവ്യഞ്ജനങ്ങൾ എന്നിവ ചേർത്ത് പാൽ തയ്യാറാക്കുന്നു. ഇതിലും കുരുത്തോല കൊണ്ടുള്ള കുരിശ് ഇടുന്നു. തേങ്ങ ഉടയ്ക്കുമ്പോൾ അതിന്റെ വെള്ളം പുരപ്പുറത്തേക്ക് ഒഴിക്കുന്ന പതിവ് മുൻഗാമികൾക്കിടയിൽ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഇത് പഴയനിയമത്തിൽ യഹൂദർ കട്ടളപ്പടിയിൽ കുഞ്ഞാടിന്റെ രക്തം തളിച്ചിരുന്നതിനെ അനുസ്മരിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

4. അപ്പം മുറിക്കൽ കർമ്മം

പെസഹായുടെ രാത്രിയിൽ കുടുംബാംഗങ്ങൾ എല്ലാവരും ഭവനത്തിൽ ഒത്തുചേർന്ന് അത്താഴം കഴിക്കുന്നു. അതിനുശേഷമാണ് അപ്പംമുറിക്കൽ ചടങ്ങ് നടക്കുന്നത്. കുടുംബത്തിലെ കാരണവരാണ് ഇതിന് നേതൃത്വം നൽകുന്നത്. പെസഹാഭക്ഷണം ആ രാത്രിയിലെ അവസാനത്തെ ഭക്ഷണമാകേണ്ടതിനാണ് ഇപ്രകാരം ചെയ്യുന്നത്.

കുടുംബത്തലവൻ കാർമ്മികനായുള്ള ഈ കർമ്മത്തിന്റെ യഥാർത്ഥവേദി കുടുംബമാണ്. കുടുംബത്തിലെ കാരണവരുടെ സ്ഥാനം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്ന ഒരു ക്രമമാണിത്. അപ്പം മുറിക്കൽ വിശുദ്ധ ഗ്രന്ഥ വായനയോടെയാണ് ആരംഭിക്കേണ്ടത്.

• **ക്രമം:** സങ്കീർത്തനം 135, പുറപ്പാട് പന്ത്രണ്ടാം അധ്യായം എന്നിവ വായിച്ചു പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

• **അപ്പം മുറിക്കൽ:** കുടുംബനാഥൻ/ പ്രായംചെന്ന കാരണവർ അപ്പത്തിന്മേലുള്ള കുരിശ് മാറ്റി, അപ്പം 13 കഷ്ണങ്ങളായി മുറിക്കുന്നു. തുടർന്ന് പ്രായമനുസരിച്ച് എല്ലാവർക്കും നൽകുന്നു. ഇരുകൈകളും നീട്ടിയാണ് അപ്പം സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നത്. നമ്മുടെ ഭവനങ്ങളിൽ കുടുംബനാഥൻ ഭക്ഷണം വിളമ്പി കൊടുക്കുന്ന ഏക അവസരമാണിത്.

• **ഭക്ഷിക്കുന്ന രീതി:** നിൽക്കുന്ന രീതിയിലാണ് അപ്പം ഭക്ഷിക്കുന്നത്. ഇത് ഈജിപ്തിൽ നിന്നും പുറപ്പെടാനുള്ള ഇസ്രായേൽജനത്തിന്റെ വ്യഗ്രതയെ സൂചിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. പാലിൽ മുക്കിയാണ് അപ്പം കഴിക്കുന്നത്.

• **പ്രത്യേക ശ്രദ്ധയ്ക്ക്:** മാമ്മോദീസ സ്വീകരിക്കാത്തവർക്കോ അക്രൈസ്തവർക്കോ ഈ കുരിശപ്പത്തിൽ നിന്ന് നൽകാറില്ല.

5. സാമൂഹിക വശം

കഴിഞ്ഞ പെസഹായ്ക്കുശേഷം കുടുംബത്തിലെ നേരിട്ടുള്ള ബന്ധുക്കൾ ആരെങ്കിലും മരിച്ചുപോയിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ ആ കുടുംബം ആ വർഷം തങ്ങളുടെ വീട്ടിൽ ദുഃഖാചരണത്തിന്റെ ഭാഗമായി അപ്പം പുഴുങ്ങാറില്ല. പകരം ബന്ധുക്കളോ അയൽക്കാരോ അവർക്ക് പെസഹാ വിഭവങ്ങൾ എത്തിച്ചു നൽകുന്നു. ഇത് വിദ്യാഭ്യാസികളുടെ ഇടയിലുള്ള സ്നേഹവും ഐക്യവും ഉറപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

പെസഹാ ആഘോഷം തികച്ചും ഗാർഹികമായ (വീടുകളിൽ നടക്കേണ്ട) ഒന്നാണ്. അതിനാൽ പള്ളികളിൽ ഇതിന് ഔദ്യോഗികമായ ചടങ്ങുകൾ ഇല്ല. എന്നാൽ പ്രവാസികളായ വിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്കും തനിച്ചുതാമസിക്കുന്നവർക്കുംവേണ്ടി നമ്മുടെ ഇടവകകളിൽ അനൗദ്യോഗികമായി ഈ ചടങ്ങ് നടത്താറുണ്ട്.

നമ്മുടെ രൂപതയിലെ എല്ലാ കുടുംബങ്ങളും ഈ വർഷം ഒരുക്കത്തോടെ പെസഹാ ആചരിക്കണമെന്നും നമ്മുടെ മക്കൾക്ക് ഈ പാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ അർത്ഥം പറഞ്ഞുകൊടുക്കണമെന്നും അവരെ ഇതിൽ ഹൃദയപൂർവ്വം പങ്കുചേർക്കണമെന്നും ഞാൻ ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. അനുഗ്രഹീതമായ ഒരു വിശുദ്ധവാരവും ഉയിർപ്പുതിരുനാളും നിങ്ങൾക്കേവർക്കും ഞാൻ ആശംസിക്കുന്നു.

നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവായ ഈശോമിശിഹായുടെ കൃപയും പിതാവായ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സ്നേഹവും പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന്റെ സഹവാസവും നിങ്ങളെല്ലാവരോടുംകൂടെ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കട്ടെ. ആമ്മേൻ.

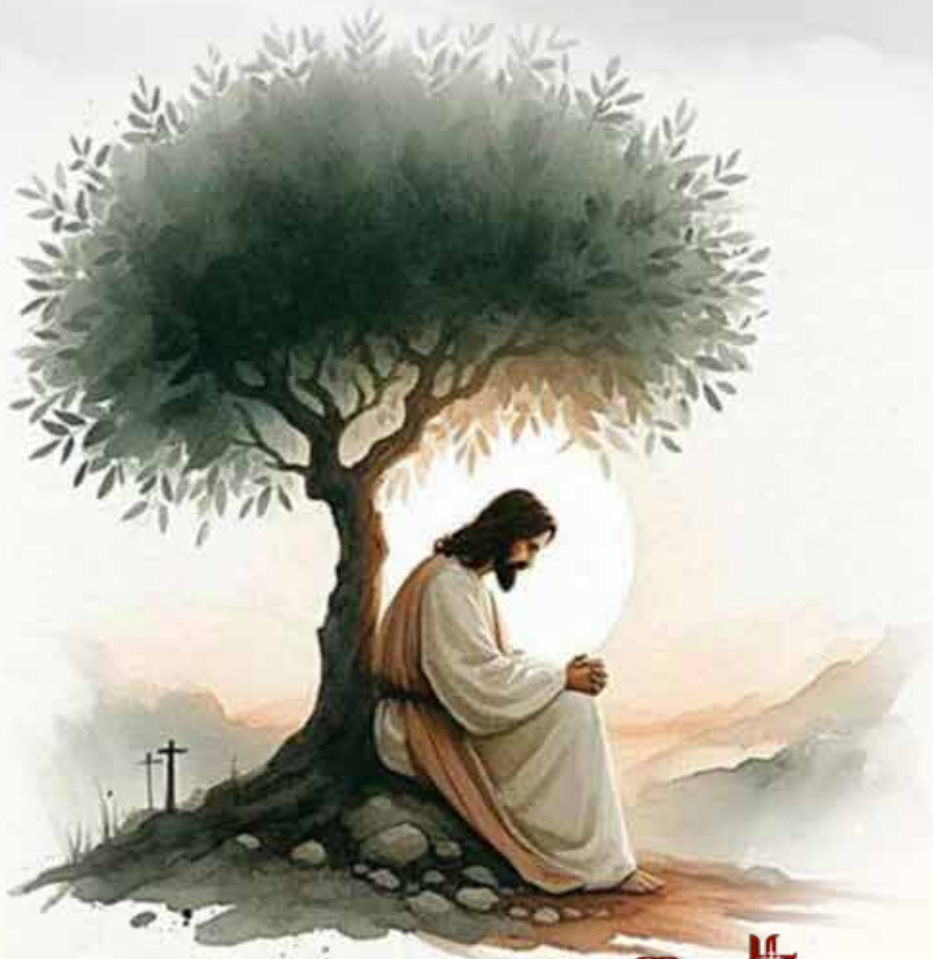
മിശിഹായിൽ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം,

മെത്രാസനമന്ദിരം
മെൽബൺ, 27.03.2026

ബിഷപ്പ് ജോൺ പനത്തോട്ടത്തിൽ സി.എം.ഐ
മെൽബൺ രൂപതയുടെ മെത്രാൻ



Eparchy News



WELCOME

to the

Eparchy Family

FR SAJAN VADAKENPARAMBIL



FR AJI AIKARRA



SYRO-MALABAR EPARCHY
OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE MELBOURNE

www.syromalabar.org.au



Church Choir Operational Guideline





SYRO MALABAR EPARCHY OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, MELBOURNE

Dear Fathers, beloved members of our Choir Ministry, and parish community,

Sacred music holds a cherished place in the life of the Church. Choral singing, in particular, embodies the Church as communion: distinct voices, united in harmony, become a living sign of the Body of Christ in prayer. In our liturgy, choir is a service, not a performance. Its strength lies in harmony, solemnity, and fidelity, guiding the faithful into deeper participation in the sacred mysteries.

I express my profound appreciation to all choir members for your time, talent, and devotion. Your dedication enriches our liturgy and strengthens the prayer life of the entire community. As ministers of this sacred ministry, you are called to serve with reverence and excellence, foster collaboration, encourage participation, and nurture a shared mission. I invite and encourage the whole parish community to be part of this ministry reflecting the communal and inclusive nature of the Church's prayer.

It is with joy that I present our Eparchial Church Choir Operational Guidelines, designed to provide a clear framework for our church choir ministry. They define your responsibilities, promote engagement with the parish community, and inspire broader participation in this ministry in a safer environment. Following these guidelines, you will enhance the beauty of our liturgy, deepen the prayerful participation of the faithful, and invite more souls to experience the joy and power of sacred music.

May the harmony of your singing reflect the unity of your faith, and your voices continually glorify God and inspire His people.

With prayers and blessings,

✠ Bishop John Panamthottathil CMI
Bishop of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne

1st March 2026

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

*"Singing and music can touch hearts, give beauty, and restore zest and hope.
Singing is joy, especially when it is done in choir.
When you put enthusiasm into your singing, you give a great gift to those who hear you.
How much we need joy in our world" (Pope Francis).*

1. Introduction: Church Choir is a vital ministry of our Parishes and missions, dedicated to enriching the liturgical life of the community through sacred music. Choir ministry serves by leading the assembly in sung prayer and by fostering reverence, participation, and unity in worship. On the Jubilee of Choirs in November 2025, Pope Leo XIV reminded choir members that their service is "a true ministry that requires preparation, commitment... and above all, a deep spiritual life" so that they may help others pray through their singing. He cautioned against turning liturgical music into a performance: "You are not on stage, but rather a part of the community," called to foster unity rather than "ostentation," which would hinder full participation of the faithful.

Parish Choir Operational Guidelines aims to provide a unified framework that supports disciplined, high-quality liturgical music across all parishes, missions and institutions under the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne. They outline clear expectations for formation, roles, and conduct, ensuring consistency and harmony within the music ministry throughout the eparchy. The guidelines will be reviewed periodically or as required. Use or distribution of this document outside the intended parish and mission settings requires prior approval from the Eparchy.

2. Aim of Church Choir: The Church Choir aims to provide a unique platform for members to express their faith and worship through choral singing and aural musicianship. It seeks to nurture spiritual growth, enhance worship services, and foster a strong sense of community and fellowship among its members.

3. Mission and Spiritual Foundation

- To create a great musical experience for worship that exemplifies and focuses on the good news of the Lord, edifying His church.
- To encourage members to see their service as a form of prayer and discipleship.
- Music has the power to touch hearts, uplift spirits, and unite people in faith, and our church choir embodies these transformative qualities.
- In the sacred liturgy, music is indispensable, accompanying ritual acts and elevating the entire worship experience.

4. Choir Membership- Eligibility, Inclusion and Safeguarding Requirements:

The Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne is committed to fostering an inclusive community, welcoming and supporting all individuals. Choir shall make reasonable adjustments to ensure that individuals with special needs can fully participate in its ministry.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

Choir Membership:

- Individuals who are registered under the parish or mission and are 18 years or older, with a basic singing skills are welcome to join the parish choir; prior experience is not required.
- Choir members comprise choir leads/conductors, vocalists, instrumentalists and audio-visual technicians.
- Interested members should complete the enrolment form and may contact Choir Director for more information. Choir lead and choir members are to encourage and welcome wider community to join this sacred music ministry.
- Every choir member is equally important regardless of their prior experiences and skills. New members should feel welcomed, and current members should not feel their importance diminish as the choir grows.
- Members inactive for more than three months without valid reasons notified to the Director will be removed from the choir. If any member no longer able to be part of the choir due to any reasons is to inform the director.
- Members must complete Safeguarding training, follow the Code of Conduct, hold a valid Working with Children Check (volunteer or employee), and sign the volunteer agreement. They are also required to meet all parish safeguarding requirements and follow directions from parish safeguarding officers.
- All choir members are required to read, understand, and familiarise themselves thoroughly with these guidelines and to adhere to them faithfully.

5. Choir Leadership and Responsibilities

Choir Director:

The Parish Priest/Mission Chaplain serves as the Choir Director, providing guidance, mentorship, and support. Through his presence and leadership, director instils confidence and self-belief in the choir members, empowering them to become strong musicians and individuals.

- The Choir Director may appoint an Assistant Director/Choir Coordinator (Assistant Parish Priest where possible) to assist in managing responsibilities during his absence and to ensure continuity and smooth functioning within the liturgical music.
- Director will be the admin of all Choir social media or other communication platforms and may assign others as admin if required. Any WhatsApp or social media group related to the choir must obtain approval from the Choir Director (admin) before being created.

Choir Lead: The Choir Lead plays a crucial role in fostering a vibrant and prayerful worship experience through music, nurturing the talents of choir members, and contributing to the spiritual growth and community life of the parish.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

- The Choir Lead works collaboratively with Choir Director and parish choir, leading rehearsals and services with clarity and expression.
- Choir Lead to communicate effectively with choir members, Director, the celebrant and the liturgical team of the parish/mission, audio visual operators, to allow everyone to familiarise themselves with the music and lyrics, ensuring that all elements of the service align harmoniously.
- It is the responsibility of the Choir Lead to arrange and finalise the positioning of choir members, including audio-visual team, well in advance of the liturgical celebrations.
- The Choir Lead is appointed for a 12-month term and may serve up to maximum of two consecutive terms if appropriate; however, preference shall be given to a different member. Any member—vocalist or instrumentalist—may be chosen for this role. The selection shall be made annually in consultation with the choir members and the Director, and the appointment of the new Choir Lead shall take effect from the first Sunday of September each year.
- The Choir Lead is to delegate their duties to another choir member/s during his or her absence.
- The Choir Lead is to refrain from holding other ongoing positions in the parish to ensure they have adequate time for their choir responsibilities.
- The choir lead is responsible for calling members' meetings (at least once every three months) to review the choir's progress, as well as an annual meeting to elect the choir leader in discussion with choir director. They must also maintain written minutes of all meetings for future reference and any other records as required.
- The Choir Director may assign specific responsibilities (choir related) to the Choir Lead for special occasions, and the Lead is expected to carry out these duties accordingly.
- The Choir Leader shall communicate with the Director well in advance of any special liturgical occasions and ensure that all necessary preparations are duly made.

7. Choir Categories: Various choir groups may be constituted in line with the demographic profile of each parish or mission. These may include senior (above 35), youth (18-35) yrs, children (under 18), parish ward units, and other categories including mothers, fathers, catechism teachers, and pious organisations. Each group shall have their own choir leads. These groups shall be rostered by the Choir Director for regular or special church duties as appropriate. It is recommended that a separate Children's Choir (under 18) be established with its own operational guidelines, rather than integrating children into the adult choir, in order to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures.

Regular Choir: Regular Choir refers to the choir routinely scheduled to sing during the Holy Qurbana on Sundays and weekdays throughout the liturgical year. Choir groups as mentioned above will be rostered to lead the choir as assigned.

Community Choir: For major liturgical occasions (Christmas, Easter, Parish Feast and any other special occasions as indicated by the Director) a Community Choir shall be formed,

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

bringing together representatives from all choir categories, including parish wards, youth, and senior choirs. It is the responsibility of the senior choir lead to organise and coordinate the community choir and they may designate another member in their absence. This unified choir ensures that the music reflects the collective spirit of the entire parish community, fostering participation, reverence, and a sense of togetherness during these significant occasions.

8. Spiritual Preparation for Choir Service:

As members of the regular choir, members are entrusted with the special ministry of leading the congregation in prayer through music. With gratitude for this calling, members to prepare their hearts and minds so that our service may bring glory to God and provide spiritual support to the faithful. Choir members are encouraged to arrive at least 15 minutes early for the Holy Qurbana or any liturgical celebrations, allowing time to settle in and be present to the moment. Following guidelines to be followed:

- Observe 'quiet time' 15 minutes prior to the start of Holy Qurbana, using this sacred space for personal prayer, reflection, and readiness to serve.
- Each member is invited to participate fully and reverently in the liturgy recognising that our unity in worship strengthens our collective ministry.
- Out of reverence for the sacredness of the liturgical celebration, all members are strictly required to refrain from socialising, unnecessary movement, and the use of mobile phones during the services.
- Members are expected to be mindful of their body language and facial expressions while at the choir knowing that our presence can inspire and uplift the community gathered for worship.

9. Principles for Choosing Appropriate Church Music: Certain principles help us discern and select music that is truly fitting for worship in the Church (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd ed., Paragraph 1157*)

- **Beauty and Prayerfulness:** The composition and performance of the music should reflect beauty and be genuinely expressive of prayer.
- **Active Participation:** The music should encourage and enable the full, conscious, and active participation of the assembly at the appropriate moments.
- **Suitability to the Occasion:** The music should correspond to the solemnity of the celebration and the liturgical moment.

10. Song and Music Selection: Song and Music in Qurbana is a shared activity that celebrates Jesus Christ. Therefore, great importance is attached to singing during the celebration of Holy Qurbana and liturgy. Holy Qurbana songs can be a cappella for the human songs alone or accompanied by instrumental music.

- Songs should ensure liturgical stability (simplicity of lyrics and tunes), be suitable for the occasion, and invite prayer.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

- Songs for the Holy Qurbana should be selected from the Syro-Malabar Holy Qurbana text book, including its appendix (*Anubandham*).
- Entrance, Holy Communion, and final or special songs can be chosen from other sources as appropriate. However, it is recommended that hymns and songs familiar to the worshipping community be given preference. Those Songs may be selected in different languages if they create a prayerful atmosphere and are understood by the assembly.
- Integrity and flow of liturgical elements to be maintained during liturgical services, particularly when it comes to prayers done in song form.
- It suggests that while certain parts, like the Creed, should not be abbreviated when sung, psalms can be shortened if necessary.
- Music or songs to enhance the worship experience without causing delays or disruptions to the liturgical proceedings, ensuring that the celebrant can proceed smoothly without unnecessary pauses.
- The unanimous involvement of the assembly should be ensured when selecting different tunes/languages for Holy Qurbana songs; it should not be just for promoting any particular language, culture, tradition or sector liturgical influence.
- Prayers and songs shall be in accordance with the liturgical guidelines given for the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne and members and priests shall refrain from enforcing any kind of their own individual and personal liturgical ideologies.
- A choral singing style (group singing in harmony aiming unified and blended sound) shall be observed for all liturgical services. The designated stand-mounted choral microphones, intended for shared use, are to be utilized at all times; the use of hand-held microphones is strongly discouraged to preserve balance, reverence, and musical cohesion. There is significance of solo vocal and instrumental performances within the liturgy apart from choral singing; however, their usage being dependent on the specific context of the service. This balanced approach allows for flexibility while maintaining the solemnity and reverence of the worship experience.
- All vocalists shall use only the same type of church-issued choral microphones; the use of personal or specialised microphones is strictly prohibited. The application of reverb or any other sound effects is not permitted, and all microphone use must strictly comply with the directions of the director and the church audiovisual team.
- While karaoke or minus tracks is not preferred during liturgical services, their judicious use can help maintain continuity in worship when other options (live music) are unavailable. However, the music and audio quality to remain aligned with the expectations reflecting the solemnity, reverence, and appropriateness for the liturgical setting.
- The choir shall observe designated moments of silence to allow the clergy and congregation time for prayer and reflection. During these times, members must refrain from unnecessary singing, conversation, or movement, maintaining a spirit of reverence.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

11. Audio- Visual Operations

Audio-visuals are being used to complement and enhance the worship experience without overshadowing the spiritual focus. Choose visuals (images, videos, slides when using screen projections) that are respectful, relevant, and suitable for the liturgical context.

- Audio visual operators are also part of the liturgical assembly and should actively participate in the celebrations.
- Operators are to understand the liturgical celebrations and familiar with both equipment and its functions. They need to fulfil their role in a quiet and discreet manner, which prevents the distraction of the assembly.
- A balance between technology and sacred space to be maintained preserving the reverent atmosphere of worship. Excessive use of sound, flashy or distracting visuals that could detract from the spiritual focus to be avoided.
- Proper sound management within the church environment involves balancing the volume levels to maintain clarity without overpowering or distracting worshippers.
- The use of musical instruments/recorded music to accompany the singing can act as a support to the voices, render participation easier, and achieve a deeper union in the assembly. However, their sound should not so overwhelm the voices that it is difficult to make out the text; and when some part is proclaimed aloud by the priest or a minister by virtue of his role, they should be silent.
- Liturgical or sacred music serves a distinct purpose within liturgical services, separate from secular music and performance art.
- Managing the audio visuals separately from the vocalists or instrumentalists is recommended to help minimise distractions during the service. It also allows them to focus entirely on their musical roles and spiritual engagement, ensuring a seamless and reverent worship experience for the congregation.
- It is essential that the church's sound system match the building's acoustics and serve only to help the congregation clearly follow the liturgy without overwhelming or disturbing their sensory needs.
- Audio-visual technicians shall ensure that all choir premises are maintained in a safe and hazard-free condition at all times. This includes the proper installation, arrangement, and securing of all cables, wires, sound equipment, and related devices to prevent tripping risks, electrical hazards, or any other safety concerns. Regular inspections shall be conducted to identify and promptly address potential risks, ensuring a safe environment for choir members and all participants.

12. Choir Rehearsals and Training Sessions

Rehearsals are crucial for achieving excellence.

- Choir Lead to communicate in advance with director and members about the venue and time of the rehearsals to ensure the safety and integrity of all members.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

- Choir members are encouraged to come prepared, having done personal practice so that group rehearsal time can be used effectively.
- While absence from a single rehearsal does not automatically prohibit participation in a worship service, persistent absence (exceeding 25%) may result in exclusion from participation in specific services. Such cases shall be evaluated by the Director in consultation with the Choir Lead.
- Additional rehearsals for major feast days and special liturgical presentations shall be scheduled and arranged well in advance.
- Choir program may include vocal training, ensemble singing and participation in choir festivals and competitions.
- Choir members are encouraged to attend external training (if possible) to advance their musical skills, but it is not mandatory for Choir membership

13. Choir Meetings: All choir members are expected to attend periodic choir meetings as they are valuable opportunities for communication, collaboration, and coordination among the choir community. During these meetings, members can discuss upcoming choir services, review music selections, address any concerns or questions, and provide feedback on rehearsals or previous choir services.

14. Photography and Videography: To honour the privacy and integrity of our choir ministry, members should refrain from taking or sharing photographs or videos of choir rehearsals, services, or events on social media or public platforms without prior consent and discussion with the Choir Director. This ensures that all content is shared responsibly, respectfully, and in a way that reflects the dignity of our ministry and the trust of our members. Church may use any photographs or videos of the choir for communication purposes.

15. Choir Member Conduct and Communication Guidelines

As members of the choir, we are called not only to lead the congregation in worship through music but also to reflect Christ's love, humility, and unity in all our interactions. Our conduct and the way we communicate with one another are an extension of our ministry, helping to foster harmony, mutual respect, and a spirit of fellowship within the choir and the wider church community. By embracing these guidelines, we honor God, encourage one another, and strengthen our shared mission in worship.

- Members should maintain a respectful and reverent attitude/behaviours to the Choir Director, Choir Leaders, fellow choir members and the parish/mission community.
- A Zero-tolerance Alcohol and other Substances policy of Syro-Malabar Eparchy to be followed in all choir rehearsals and related activities.
- The members are expected to respect the privacy and confidentiality of their fellow choir members and church personnel in all communications, including social media platforms.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne

- The members are encouraged to raise any concerns or questions with the Choir Director appropriately, upholding the choir group's, parish's/mission's and Melbourne Syro-Malabar eparchy's best interests.
- The members are expected to be open to relevant feedback and willingness to improve their musical and teamwork skills.
- Any unclear messages should be verified directly with the relevant team and members must take care not to spread incorrect information. Messages intended for the choir group should remain within the group and not be shared externally.

16. Managing Noncompliance with Choir Guidelines and Policies:

Any failure to adhere to the Choir Guidelines will be taken seriously. Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, consequences may include a warning, temporary suspension from choir activities, or permanent removal from the choir, following due consideration and investigation by the Choir Director. It is essential for all choir members to uphold the established rules and guidelines in order to preserve the integrity, harmony, and spiritual spirit of the choir community.

1. **Verbal warning** from Choir Leadership or director and requirement to review choir policies and expectations for minor breaches (e.g., tardiness, improper conduct during rehearsals).
2. **Written warning** issued by the Choir Director and possible suspension from choir activities pending investigation for serious breaches (e.g., misconduct during services, failure to comply with safeguarding protocols).
3. **Suspension** from choir activities for a specified period and review of continued membership status by parish authorities for severe breaches (e.g., repeated serious misconduct, breach of confidentiality, failure to comply with safeguarding protocols).
4. **Immediate dismissal** and notification to parish/Eparchial authorities and relevant legal entities as necessary (e.g., criminal behaviour, endangerment of members, failure to comply with safeguarding protocols).

17. Conflict Resolution:

Disputes or disagreements among choir members should be approached with humility, patience, and a spirit of reconciliation. Members are encouraged to seek peaceful resolution through open and respectful communication. When necessary, the Choir Director, together with parish leadership, may serve as mediators to guide discussions and restore harmony. In cases involving sensitive issues or the wellbeing of members, the safeguarding officer should be involved to ensure the safety and protection of all individuals.

Our goal is to resolve conflicts in a way that strengthens relationships, fosters understanding, and preserves the unity and spiritual focus of the choir community.

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne



SYRO MALABAR EPARCHY
OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, MELBOURNE

CHURCH CHOIR ENROLMENT FORM

1. Full Name: _____
2. Gender: _____
3. Address: _____
4. Mobile Number: _____
5. Emergency Contact Name & Mobile Number: _____
6. Email: _____
7. Date of Birth/Age (Optional): _____
8. Marital Status: _____
9. Participation in the choir A. vocalist B. Instrumentalist C. audiovisual
10. Musical Instruments (if applicable): _____
11. Working with Children Check Card Number: _____
12. Working with Children Check Expiry Date: _____
13. National Police Clearance Number (if applicable): _____
14. Any special needs and requirements to be aware of:

15. Consent for parish to take photos/videos for church media platforms: Yes No
16. I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the choir terms and conditions as outlined in the Eparchial church choir guidelines, and I am willing to join the choir

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Church Choir Operational Guidelines- Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne



Night Vigil Observance Guideline





SYRO MALABAR EPARCHY OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, MELBOURNE

Night Vigil Observance - Guidelines

Purpose: To provide guidelines to streamline and standardise the observance of Night Vigils in Parishes, Missions, and Pious Associations under the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne.

Introduction: Night vigils are regarded as a sacred time for deep prayer and reflection, inspired by biblical teachings and the liturgical traditions of the Syro-Malabar Church. These practices highlight the communal and spiritual life of the community, emphasising the central role of prayer and shared worship. Night vigils held in churches are unique and often extended services that include prayer, reflection, and at times liturgical celebrations. As these gatherings frequently take place late at night or continue into the early hours of the morning, they require particular attention to safety, security, and compliance with safeguarding standards. For this reason, the Eparchy has established these guidelines, which apply to all parishes, missions, and pious associations under the jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne. These guidelines aim to prevent risks, not just respond to them. These guidelines shall be reviewed periodically or whenever deemed necessary by the Eparchial authorities. Any sharing, distribution, or reproduction of these guidelines outside of the Eparchial entities requires prior written approval from the relevant Eparchial authority.

Guidelines for Conducting Night Vigils

1. Authorisation and Coordination: The organisation of a night vigil must be discussed with and endorsed by relevant clergy—such as parish priest/chaplain or priest in charge at parishes and missions prior to the event. If any external Christian or Catholic organisation intends to conduct a vigil under the auspices of any Eparchial entity, including any pious associations, prior consultation and approval from the eparchy/parishes/mission authorities are required.

2. Timing: Night vigils are generally conducted on the First Friday of each month or on all Fridays throughout the month, and may also be organised on other special occasions with the approval of the parish/mission authorities. While there may be some flexibility regarding the commencement time, the vigil must conclude by 9:30 PM.

3. Liturgical Structure: Night vigils provide unique opportunities for deep prayer and reflection. Although the structure may allow some flexibility, the atmosphere should always remain prayerful and reverent. All liturgical prayers, the usage of sacred vestments, and liturgical articles must follow the liturgical norms of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne; the introduction of personal or sectarian ideologies is strictly not permitted. Night Vigils are usually centred on a specific spiritual theme, such as Eucharistic adoration, preparation for a feast, or penitence, it may also include Scripture readings, Periods of silence, Rosary, Spiritual reflections, Hymns, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and other liturgical prayers. Prayers should be conducted in a language understood by all participants. If Eucharistic Adoration is scheduled for an extended period, the organisers must ensure that at least three persons are always present, and adoration must not extend beyond 9:30 PM. If *Dhoopakutty* (censer/thurible) is used, organisers must ensure that it is operated only in well-ventilated areas to prevent smoke accumulation and minimise respiratory discomfort. A safe distance must be maintained between the censer and attendees, particularly children, the elderly, and those with breathing sensitivities. The censer

Night Vigil Guidelines - Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne - March 2026 v1.

must be always handled carefully and must never be left unattended to ensure the health and safety of everyone present.

4. Venue and Environmental Arrangements:

4.1. The venue and timing of the night vigil must be confirmed in advance with the parishes/mission authorities.

4.2. Conducting such gatherings at private residences is not permitted.

4.3. Access to church or hall entrances must be appropriately managed to ensure the security of attendees during late evening hours.

4.4. Adequate lighting must be provided to maintain safety while preserving a calm and prayerful atmosphere.

4.5. All activities must occur in open, visible, and well-lit areas within the church or parish hall; isolated rooms and unsupervised outdoor spaces must be avoided.

4.6. The premises must remain secure, with clear and accessible procedures in place for reporting any safety concerns during the vigil.

5. Safeguarding and Zero-Tolerance Policy: All church activities, including night vigils, operate under a strict zero-tolerance policy towards the abuse of minors or adult at risk. The use of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substances is not permitted on parish/mission/pious association premises.

Organisers must ensure that all attendees are informed of essential housekeeping and safeguarding information, including the locations of exits, evacuation procedures, restrooms, first aid stations, safeguarding contact for the night, drinking water points (attendees should be encouraged to bring their own water bottles), waste bins, and other necessary facilities. Any additional instructions related to safety or convenience must also be clearly communicated to all attendees.

All attendees must feel welcomed and included throughout the prayer service.

6. Volunteers and Safeguarding Compliance: All members involved in organising or conducting the vigil must comply with safeguarding requirements, including holding a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) or an equivalent clearance applicable to the jurisdiction and the Eparchy. All attendees must adhere to the applicable safety, traffic, pedestrian, and parking regulations of the jurisdiction. Designated volunteers, identifiable by safety vests, may assist with supervision.

Night Vigil Coordinator and all supervisors must hold a valid safeguarding training certificate.

7. Supervision of Children and Young People:

7.1. Parents are primarily responsible for their children and young people attending the night vigil. Children and young people must never be left unsupervised in church premises, and must remain with their parents/guardian at all times during the event.

7.2. Children and young people must remain within the designated night vigil area at all times and must not wander outside unsupervised. If a child or young person is unable to remain attentive or feels unwell, they may leave the vigil area in a safe and orderly manner, accompanied by their parents or guardian.

Night Vigil Guidelines - Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne - March 2026 v1.

7.3. Avoid one-to-one interactions between adults and minors in isolated places.

7.4. All interactions between adults and children must remain respectful and appropriate at all times, and physical contact with children is strictly not permitted.

7.8. Children must not be left unattended in vehicles or parking areas during the night vigil.

7.9. Children with special needs must be welcomed and supported during the night vigil, with reasonable accommodations and appropriate support provided to ensure their safety, comfort, and meaningful participation.

7.10. Failure to supervise children or to collect them at the conclusion of the night vigil, will result in incident reporting and management by the safeguarding team.

8. Photography and Media: Photographs or videos involving minors may only be taken with prior parental consent. The *Eparchial media policy must be followed when using social media platforms.*

9. Audio and Music Usage: Sound systems and music during the night vigil must be kept at a moderate and respectful volume, supporting prayer and worship without disturbing the attendees nearby residents or the surrounding community. Organisers must also be mindful of attendees with sensory sensitivities. All music and hymns must be appropriate to the liturgical and devotional nature of the gathering. Organisers must comply with local noise regulations and parish guidelines, particularly during late hours, and must avoid excessive amplification. The *Eparchial Choir Operational Guidelines must be followed during the night vigil.*

10. Safety and Emergency Preparedness:

10.1. A risk assessment must be completed prior to the event to identify potential risks related to late-night timing, building security, and personnel.

10.2. First aid officer and first aid supplies must be available at the venue.

10.3. In the event of an emergency, 000 must be contacted immediately.

10.4. Church facilities must be properly secured once the program concludes.

11. Reporting your concerns:

Any safeguarding concern must be reported to the Parish Safeguarding Officer in accordance with the Eparchial Safeguarding Policy.

Any suspicion, disclosure, allegation of abuse, or serious threat must be reported without delay to the safeguarding officer, or local child protection authorities, or the Police on 000.

✠ **Bishop John Panamthottathil CMI**
Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne

March 2026



Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol Drugs Smoking and Vaping



ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON ALCOHOL, DRUGS, SMOKING AND VAPING

Document number:	SMEST_ZAODS V1 2025_
Functional sub-groups:	<i>The Eparchy:</i> Governance
	<i>Apex Board:</i> Monitoring compliance
	<i>Parishes and Missions:</i> Implementation
	<i>Individuals:</i> Compliance with this policy
Summary:	This policy statement stipulates a Zero Tolerance on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping. This policy strictly prohibits the possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, other drugs, nicotine products, and vaping devices within any parishes, church-related community settings and during church events.
Author:	Policy Division, Professional Standards Division, Syro-Malabar Eparchy
Approved by:	Bishop John Panamthottathil CMI
Publication date:	01 September 2025
Next review data:	September 2030
Prot. number:	
Status:	Live
This policy applies to:	The Syro-Malabar Eparchy, Melbourne-Parishes and Missions
This policy is distributed to:	Parishes and Missions

Note: The Syro-Malabar Catholic Church is a Major Archiepiscopal Church in full communion with the Apostolic See of Rome. The Syro-Malabar Catholic Church is one of 23 Eastern Catholic Churches in the Catholic Communion. It is the second largest Eastern Catholic Church that follows the East-Syrian liturgy. Australia and New Zealand has had a large presence of Syro-Malabar followers since the widespread migration of Catholics from the Indian subcontinent.

Holy Father, Pope Francis, established the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne (Australia) in December 2013 with the Bishop Bosco Puthur as its first Eparchial Bishop. The formal inauguration was on 25 March 2014 in Melbourne.

The Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese is a member of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC).

Name: SMEST_ZAODS V1 2025 Policy Statement – Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping;
 Owner: Policy Division, Professional Standards Syro-Malabar Eparchy
 Version: September2025 ; Review Date: September2030
 Please refer to www.syromalabar.org.au for the latest version of this policy. Hardcopy versions of this document may be outdated.

Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking and Vaping

Syro-Malabar Eparchy is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and spiritually focused environment within our church community. To uphold our values and promote the well-being of all individuals, we have implemented a Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping. This policy strictly prohibits the possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, other drugs, nicotine products, and vaping devices within any parishes, church-related community settings and during church events.

The Eparchy and parish leaders are responsible for ensuring consistent enforcement to maintain a safe and spiritually focused environment.

Aim of the Policy:

By adopting the Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping, the Syro-Malabar Eparchy reaffirms our commitment to creating a safe, supportive, and spiritually-focused environment for all members of our church community.

Policy Statement:

Prohibition of Alcohol and Other Drugs and Nicotine Products

The possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, other drugs, and nicotine products is strictly prohibited within all church facilities, including church buildings, grounds, parking lots, and any other areas under the church's jurisdiction. This prohibition also applies to all church-sponsored events, gatherings, meetings, and activities, whether held on or off church premises. These events include, but are not limited to, Christmas Carol programs, Perunnal, Feasts, Parish Day, Sports and Arts events, First Holy Communion, as well as other church-related gatherings such as Family Meetings, Ward Prayers, and Ward Meetings.

Volunteer Compliance:

All volunteers, including staff, leaders, and anyone serving in any capacity within the church, are expected to fully comply with the Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping. This includes refraining from the possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, other drugs, and nicotine products, including vapes, while engaged in any church-related duties or activities.

Volunteers are also expected to refrain from consuming alcohol or other drugs before, during, or immediately after their volunteer duties within any church setting. This applies to all activities related to worship services, community outreach programs, and other church-sponsored events.

Smoking and vaping of tobacco or nicotine products are strictly prohibited within all church facilities, including the church compound and any church-hired premises.

Name: SMEST_ZAODS V1 2025 Policy Statement – Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping;

Owner: Policy Division, Professional Standards Syro-Malabar Eparchy

Version: September2025 ; Review Date: September2030

Please refer to www.syromalabar.org.au for the latest version of this policy. Hardcopy versions of this document may be outdated.

Community Member Accountability:

All individuals associated with the Syro-Malabar Eparchy, including parishes, missions, communities, members, attendees, and visitors, must comply with the Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping while attending any Syro-Malabar Church events or activities, whether on or off church premises.

Pastoral Leadership:

Our pastoral leaders and staff are expected to uphold and model the Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping. They should serve as role models by abstaining from these substances in all church-related contexts and promoting healthy lifestyles and spiritual well-being.

Support and Pastoral Care:

The Syro-Malabar Church recognizes that individuals within our community may struggle with issues related to alcohol, other drugs, and nicotine. Our church is committed to providing compassionate support, guidance, and pastoral care to those in need. The Eparchy encourages individuals to seek assistance, and we will strive to connect them with appropriate resources and support networks.

Accountability and Disciplinary Measures:

Any breach of the Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping shall be regarded as a serious violation. Immediate action may include reporting to the appropriate authorities (e.g., 000) as the church has a responsibility to safeguard children and the broader church community from potential harm. Such violations may also result in warnings, disciplinary measures, referral to counselling, or suspension/termination of volunteer duties. These measures are implemented proactively to protect the well-being and spiritual environment of our church community.

Education and Awareness:

The Syro-Malabar Eparchy, along with its parishes and missions, is committed to providing education and support for individuals and families who may be affected by issues related to alcohol, other drugs, and nicotine. The Eparchy encourages open discussions, awareness programs, and resources that promote healthy lifestyles, personal well-being, and community support.

The Eparchy recognizes that this policy may differ from individual beliefs or practices outside the church community; however, it is implemented to maintain a safe, inclusive, and spiritually focused environment that aligns with our mission and values.

Name: SMEST_ZAODS V1 2025 Policy Statement – Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping;
Owner: Policy Division, Professional Standards Syro-Malabar Eparchy
Version: September2025 ; Review Date: September2030
Please refer to www.svromalabar.org.au for the latest version of this policy. Hardcopy versions of this document may be outdated.

If you are struggling with alcohol or other drug addiction, please contact the appropriate support service at the number(s) listed below.

Alcohol & Other Drugs Support Helplines by State

New South Wales (NSW): 1800 250 015

Queensland (QLD): 1800 177 833

South Australia (SA): 1300 131 340

Northern Territory (NT): 1800 131 350

Tasmania (TAS): 1800 811 994

Victoria (VIC): 1800 888 236

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Eparchy acknowledges that we have reviewed and used information and themes from the State Government and various Dioceses in Australia to assist the compilation of this policy. The Eparchy would like to thank these organisations and individuals for their work.

Enquiries & Contact

Professional Standards Division

Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas Melbourne Australia (The Eparchy)

Email: office.professionalstandards@syromalabar.org.au

Web: www.syromalabar.org.au

Name: SMEST_ZAODS V1 2025 Policy Statement – Zero Tolerance Policy on Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, and Vaping;

Owner: Policy Division, Professional Standards Syro-Malabar Eparchy

Version: September2025 ; Review Date: September2030

Please refer to www.syromalabar.org.au for the latest version of this policy. Hardcopy versions of this document may be outdated.



Department Update



DEPARTMENT OF CATECHESIS

JAN - MARCH 2026

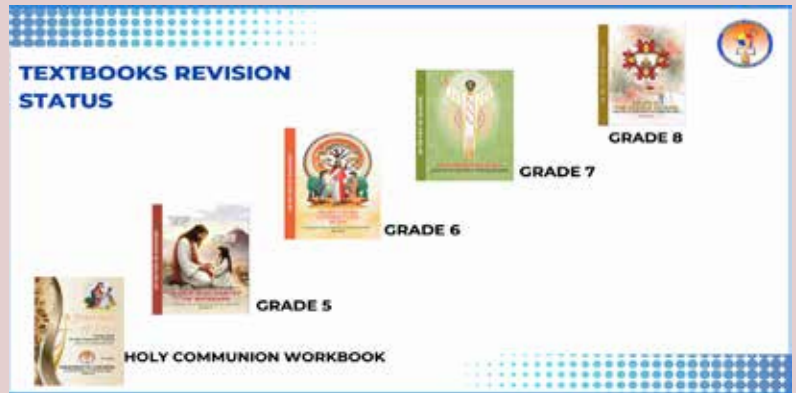


YEAR-BEGINNING LETTER

At the commencement of the catechetical year, the Department of Catechesis issued a comprehensive circular to all catechism centres outlining the essential guidelines and preparatory requirements for the smooth reopening of classes. The circular detailed key details, including the organisation of a Holy Hour, completion of volunteer agreements, scheduling of staff meetings, inauguration of catechism classes, preparation of the annual budget, and the formation of the student council. This communication served as a reference to ensure uniformity, and effective functioning across all centres.

COMMON SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

The Department has issued a common Sunday School Assembly procedure for uniformly of assembly across our catechism centres. This shared structure ensures that every catechism day begins in prayer, unity, and joyful participation. The assembly is led by Class Representatives (Grades 4–12) in coordination with their teachers and is conducted before classes begin, lasting approximately ten minutes. The order includes the Opening Prayer -The Angelus, student announcements, the principal's announcements, the Catechism Anthem, and dismissal. The Angelus is now the standard opening prayer, with the aim that all students learn it by the end of the year.



RELEASE OF NEW CATECHISM TEXTBOOKS

The Department proudly released an updated series of catechism textbooks in 2026,

1. Year 5 Textbook - Second Edition
2. Year 6 Textbook - Third edition
3. Year 7 Textbook - Third edition
4. Year 8 Textbook - First edition
5. Holy Communion workbook - Sixth Edition

Teachers guide for all the above new textbooks are available on the website for use by the respective teachers.

RELEASE OF NEW PRAYER BOOK FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

A new prayer book containing prayers in English and Manglish has been released by the Department of Catechesis in 2026. It is designed to help students pray with better understanding and confidence, while supporting families in building a consistent prayer life. The book also ensures that all students can easily learn and recite the common prayers of our Church.



VIC REGIONAL CATECHISM TEACHERS CONFERENCE LUMEN FIDEI 6.1

The VIC Regional Catechism Teachers Conference was held on **28 February 2026** at **St. Alphonsa Cathedral Parish, VIC**. The meeting was inaugurated by **Vicar General Msgr. Fr. Francis Kolencherry**. This full day gathering welcomed **200 participants** representing 10 catechism centres across Victoria. The conference featured enriching sessions, including “Forming Disciples” by **Rojas Coalbe** and “Forming Hearts and Minds in Faith” by **Noby Joseph**. The event provided a valuable platform for catechism teachers to strengthen their pedagogical skills, share experiences, and grow together in their mission.



PRINCIPALS MEETING: FIRST QUARTER 2026 LAUDATO SI 6.1

The Q1 Principals Conference was held virtually on Saturday, 21st March 2026, via Zoom. The meeting was graced by the presence of Fr. Mathew Areeplackal, Catechism Director, who extended blessings to all participants. The highlight of the gathering was the Lenten keynote address delivered by Rev. Fr. Dominic Muriyankavunkal, faculty member of Paurasthya Vidyapitham, Kottayam. The meeting reviewed first-quarter events, welcomed 14 new principals, and expressed gratitude to outgoing leaders. A total of 43 principals from various catechism centres participated.

WA PERTH CATECHISM TEACHERS CONFERENCE LUMEN FIDEI 6.2

The WA Regional Catechism Teachers Conference was held on 28 March 2026 at St. Joseph’s Parish, Perth, bringing together 120 dedicated catechism teachers from six centres across the region. The day featured two impactful formation sessions: “Forming Disciples” presented by Anu Paul, and “Forming Hearts and Minds in Faith” led by Noby Joseph. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions, practical learning, and shared reflections throughout the day.



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY APOSTOLATE

JAN - MARCH 2026



MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE: MELBOURNE, MAY 2025

The Family Apostolate Department continues to nurture and support families across Australia through its Marriage Preparation Courses (MPC), offering both practical guidance and spiritual formation for couples preparing for the sacrament of marriage.

Two **three-day residential MPC programs** were successfully conducted in **Melbourne** - from **14–16 November 2025** and **21–23 February 2026**. These programs welcomed **49 and 35 participants respectively**, representing diverse regions across Australia. This rich diversity added depth to the shared learning and fellowship experience.

The courses were led by a dedicated team of resource persons, including clergy, medical professionals, and experienced married couples, under the guidance of **Fr Joseph Ezhumayil**. The presence and involvement of our Bishop and priests further enriched the sessions.

A strong spiritual foundation marked each program, with participants engaging in:

- Daily Holy Qurbana
- Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Eucharistic Adoration

These elements offered moments of reflection and grace, helping couples deepen their understanding of marriage as a sacred vocation.

Overall, the residential MPC programs proved to be a deeply enriching experience—equipping participants not only with essential life skills but also fostering spiritual readiness for their journey ahead

UPCOMING MPC SCHEDULE – 2026

- **21–23 August 2026 (Fri–Sun)**
- **7–9 November 2026 (Sat–Mon)**

(All programs will be held at **Santhom Grove**)

**CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES
FOR REGISTRATIONS AND FURTHER DETAILS:**

Santhosh Jose

Mobile: 0423 450 768

Email: office@familyapostolate.syromalabar.org.au

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE - MAY 2026

3 DAYS RESIDENTIAL COURSE

**FRIDAY 22ND MAY 9.00 AM TO
SUNDAY 24TH MAY 4.30PM**

SANTHOM GROVE
80 MCNAMARAS RD WESBURN, VIC 3799

- **Accommodation and food** will be provided
- Registration will be complete only after we receive the **proof of payment** and a **digital passport size photo**
Email to: office.familyapostolate@syromalabar.org.au
- Last date for Registration : **10th May 2026**
syromalabar.org.au/services/marriage-preparation-course

LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE

For Enquiries please contact
Coordinator

SANTHOSH JOSE
0423 450 768



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY APOSTOLATE
SYRO MALABAR EPARCHY
OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, MELBOURNE

UPCOMING MPC – MAY 2026

The next **three-day residential MPC** will be held at **Santhom Grove – Pastoral & Community Resource Centre:**

- **22–24 May 2026 (Friday to Sunday)**

DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Director: Fr Joseph Ezhumayil

Associate Director: Fr Tijo Devasia

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY APOSTOLATE

JAN - MARCH 2026



DEPARTMENT OF SAFEGUARDING

JAN - MARCH 2026



Safeguarding in Action: Strengthening the Mission of the Church

Three-Day Safeguarding Conference Concludes at Santhom Grove, Victoria

The Syro-Malabar Eparchy in Australia recently brought together its safeguarding team and parish safeguarding officers for a three-day conference titled “Safeguarding in Action” at Santhom Grove, Wesburn, Victoria.

The gathering highlighted a clear and important message: safeguarding is not merely a compliance requirement, but an essential expression of the Church’s mission and participation in God’s work.

Throughout the conference, participants reflected on the Church’s mission through the lens of synodality. It was emphasised that Baptism is the foundation of a synodal Church, granting every member equal dignity and a shared responsibility in Christ’s mission. In this light, safeguarding is not the responsibility of a few, but of the entire People of God—ensuring that dignity is respected and protected in every aspect of Church life.

Speakers also underlined that safeguarding strengthens professionalism and integrity within the Church. Clergy, lay professionals, volunteers, and safeguarding officers each bring their unique gifts and skills, working together to uphold transparency, responsible governance, and accountability—both to the community and ultimately to God.

The conference addressed the practical needs of a growing Church community. With approximately 85,000–90,000 faithful across the Eparchy, the importance of clear policies and consistent practices becomes increasingly vital. Participants recognised that as the Church grows, safeguarding frameworks must also evolve to ensure that every parish and mission remains a safe and nurturing environment. Safeguarding policies are not about bureaucracy, but about protecting human dignity and promoting the well-being of all.

A strong focus was placed on embedding safeguarding into parish culture. While acknowledging that challenges and resistance may arise, the conference encouraged perseverance and ongoing formation. The Synod on Synodality highlights formation as essential for building a healthy, accountable, and mission-oriented Church.

Rooted in the Gospel, the conference reaffirmed the Christian call to protect the vulnerable. Reflecting on Proverbs 31:8–9 and Acts 20:28, participants were reminded that safeguarding is a mission born out of love—love for God and for all people, especially children, families, and those most vulnerable. It is a faithful response to Christ’s call to care for “the least of these.”

Discussions also emphasised the importance of creating safe places, safe people, and safe practices. Supporting volunteers and leaders is equally important, enabling them to serve confidently and responsibly in the Church’s mission.

In this spirit, participants reflected on the words attributed to Pope Leo XIV:

“The Church is not a building. The Church is its people. And the most vulnerable among our people deserve the full force of our protection.”

The conference concluded with a renewed and united commitment to strengthening safeguarding practices across all parishes, missions, and ministries.

Final Commitment

The Syro-Malabar Church in Australia reaffirms its mission to uphold the dignity of every person created in the image of God. Through faithful safeguarding practices, ongoing formation, and shared responsibility among all the faithful, the Church commits itself to preventing harm and ensuring that every parish and mission remains a safe, welcoming, and life-giving community for all.



DEPARTMENT OF SAFEGUARDING

JAN - MARCH 2026



DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH APOSTOLATE

JAN - MARCH 2026

Isho Mishihakyu Sthuthiyirikyatte,

The period from January to March 2026 has been a meaningful and grace-filled time for the Syro-Malabar Youth Movement across Australia. Anchored in faith and guided by mission, our youth engaged in initiatives that fostered leadership, service, and belonging. The following entries illustrate the life and mission of SMYM as expressed through the collective efforts and dedication of our youth.

Youth Leaders Summit (YLS)

The SMYM Youth Leaders Summit 2026, held in February at Santhom Grove in Melbourne, brought together youth leaders from across Australia for a time of renewal, formation, and vision-setting. A key highlight of the summit was the election of the new national team, marking the beginning of a new chapter of leadership for SMYM Australia.

The summit focused strongly on leadership formation, equipping leaders with the spiritual, pastoral, and practical tools needed to serve their communities effectively. Through sessions, discussions, and moments of prayer, participants were challenged to grow in their personal faith, strengthen their leadership capacity, and align with the mission of SMYM.

Overall, the summit fostered unity, clarity of purpose, and a shared commitment among leaders to guide and inspire young people across the country.



Our 2026 Šlihā daMšihā Missionaries

They have answered the call to serve as full-time missionaries for the youth apostolate of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne. Officially commissioned as missionaries by Bishop John Panamthottathil.

Since February 2025 the Šlihā daMšihā team has covered many parishes and missions, delivering our “EMBRACE” a parish renewal programs and residential retreat for pre-teens, teens, and youth. All programs delivered have explored the themes of Identity (“I am”), Intimacy (“My family is”), and Impact (“My community is”).

The missionaries have covered parishes in Mildura, New Castle, Maitland, Taree, Wagga Wagga, Wodonga and Adelaide. We have been extremely blessed to minister to many young people in just 2 months, witnessing powerful transformations and life-changing encounters.



DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH APOSTOLATE

JAN - MARCH 2026



Media Outreach – Yeshuvinoppam

Yeshuvinoppam is a Lenten journey of walking closely with Eesho through reflection. Every Sunday SMYM Australia releases new challenges for the parish youth to participate, it invites us to grow in faith, deepen our relationship with Christ, and prepare our hearts for His Passion, Death, and Resurrection

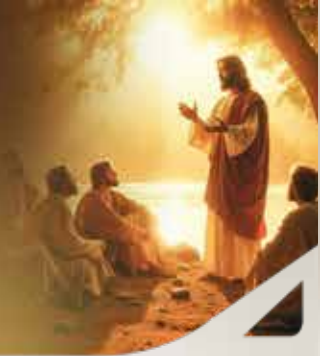
24 Hour Zoom Rosary Intercession Chain – For Peace during the Ongoing Violence and War

On 14–15 March, SMYM Australia hosted a 24-hour Zoom Rosary Chain, uniting youth from across Australia in prayer for peace amid the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Beginning at 12:00pm on Friday 14 March and concluding at 12:00pm on Saturday 15 March, participants committed to praying the Rosary every 30 minutes for a full 24 hours. We give thanks for the strong turnout and the spirit of faith and solidarity shown by all who joined in this powerful time of prayer.



SEMINARY NEWS

JAN - MARCH 2026



NEWS UPDATE FROM THE RECTOR

As we continue our journey through the sacred season of Lent, warm greetings of prayer and grace to you all.

We are pleased to share a joyful milestone in the life of our seminary. Recently, four of our seminarians were ordained to the **Subdiaconate (Hevupdiakona)**, and two others received the **Minor Order of Karoya**. These are important steps in their formation, and we humbly request your continued prayers for them, and for all our seminarians, as they prepare for a life of service in the Church.

As of **30th March**, our seminarians have now begun their vacation period. Those from Australia have returned home, while others have travelled to their respective homes across Kerala. During this time, our seminarians in Kerala are actively involved in **youth ministry**, particularly by leading and supporting youth camps in various parishes.

We kindly ask you to continue remembering us, our seminarians, and all these pastoral efforts in your prayers. Your support is deeply valued and remains a source of strength for our community.

SUPPORT OUR SEMINARIANS

We warmly invite you to support our seminarians and their formation through your generous contributions. Your support helps nurture future priests who will serve the Church with faith and dedication.

To assist us in recording your contribution and keeping you informed, please provide:

- Full Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Parish
- Residential Address
- Preferred Way to Contribute (One-time / Monthly / Yearly Sponsorship / Other)

SYRO MALABAR EPARCHY
OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE, MELBOURNE

Minor Orders

Hevupdiakona

 Bro. Jojin Ayikkal	 Bro. Jomin Thekkumbadavayal	Conferred by Mar Joseph Pamplany 23rd March 2026 Dharmaram, Bangalore
 Bro. Prince Padayatty		Conferred by Mar Pauly Kannookadan 28th March 2026 Injalakuda
 Bro. Jibin Zanabedath		Conferred by Mar Jose Porunnadam 30th March 2026 Mananthavady

Karoya

 Bro. Abin Kakkappilly	 Bro. Ronald Vanikumbary	Conferred by Mar Joseph Pamplany 23rd March 2026 Dharmaram, Bangalore
------------------------------	--------------------------------	--

With Paternal Blessings from
Mar John Panamthottathil CMI

SEMINARY NEWS

JAN - MARCH 2026



CONTRIBUTION DETAILS

For Transactions from Australia

- Account Name: Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas
- Bank: National Australia Bank
- BSB: 083347
- Account No.: 2478 51691
- **Reference (Very Important):** Seminary_[Your Full Name]

For Transactions from India (INR only)

- Account Name: St John Paul II Minor Seminary Trust
- Bank: South Indian Bank Ltd., Koratty
- Account No.: 0646053000004126
- IFSC: SIBL0000646
- MICR: 680059049
- SWIFT Code: SOINI55XXX

WAYS TO SUPPORT

- Sponsor a Seminarian for full formation (12 years): **AUD \$10,000**
- Sponsor a Seminarian yearly: **AUD \$1,000**
- Support daily seminary needs: **AUD \$100/month**
- Contributions can be made as one-time or recurring gifts

With gratitude and prayers,

Fr. Lawrance Thaikattil (Rector)

Fr Bibin Velamparambil (vocation Promotor)





MY LORD MY GOD

Parish Updates



മാർത്തോമിപ്പിടി
MELBOURNE EPARCHIAL BULLETIN

Christ The King Mission, Holsworthy

ST. JOSEPH'S DAY CELEBRATION – 15 MARCH 2026

We celebrated **St. Joseph's Day** on **15 March 2026** with great devotion and joy.

The celebration included the **Holy Qurbana**, followed by the traditional **St. Joseph Ladeenju**. All parishioners named Joseph were specially invited forward, and **special prayers and blessings** were offered for them. The parish also organised "**Oottu Neercha**" (**community meal**), providing lunch to all parishioners, fostering a spirit of fellowship and togetherness.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION - 8 MARCH 2026

We celebrated **International Women's Day** on **8 March 2026** with prayer, gratitude, and joy. The celebration began with the **Holy Mass**, during which **special blessings** were offered for all women. As a token of love and appreciation, a **rosary was presented to the ladies** of the parish. The occasion also included a **group photo session**, and we took the opportunity to **acknowledge and appreciate the valuable contributions of women** in the growth and development of our parish and community.

CHURCH FUNDRAISING RAFFLE PRIZE DISTRIBUTION – 1 MARCH 2026

As part of our **church fundraising initiative**, the **raffle draw prizes** were distributed on **1 March 2026** after the **Holy Qurbana**.

The **first prize, a brand new Toyota RAV4 Hybrid**, was presented to **Pradeep Mathew and Family**.

The **second prize, an iPhone 16**, was awarded to **Jeril Prince**.

The **third prize, an iPad 11" (A16)**, was presented to **Susetty John**.

We congratulate all the winners and sincerely thank all parishioners and supporters for their generous participation and contribution towards the church fundraising efforts.

SUCCESSFUL SETTLEMENT OF CHURCH LAND – 22 DECEMBER 2025

With **God's abundant grace**, the settlement of our **church land at 63 Wills Road, Long Point, NSW** was completed successfully on **22 December 2025**.

This was a truly blessed and memorable milestone in the journey of our parish. To mark this joyful occasion, we celebrated with a **Thanksgiving Holy Qurbana**, followed by the sharing of **cake with parishioners**.

We extend our **sincere and heartfelt thanks** to each and every one of you for your **prayers, generous contributions, and unwavering support** throughout this journey. Your faith, sacrifice, and commitment have played a vital role in making this dream a reality.



MARY MATHA SYRO MALABAR CATHOLIC MISSION, GOLD COAST

(December 2025 – March 2026)

Over the past few months, our parish community has been richly blessed with numerous faith-filled celebrations and spiritual activities, strengthening our unity and deepening our relationship with Christ.

Feast of Holy Innocents

The Feast of Holy Innocents (Kunji Paithangalude Thirunnal) was celebrated on 27 December 2025 with Holy Mass, followed by a special blessing for children.

Acknowledgement and Leadership Transition

A heartfelt thanksgiving was offered to Ms. Remya Joy for her dedicated service as Sunday School Principal (2023–2026). Mr. Joseph Thomas was warmly welcomed as the new Sunday School Principal.

Commemoration of the Departed Faithful

In keeping with the Syro-Malabar tradition, the parish commemorated the departed faithful on Friday, 13 February 2026, with Holy Mass followed by the Office for the Dead (Oppisu).

Annual Retreat

The Annual Lenten Retreat was held from 29 February to 1 March 2026, led by Rev. Fr. Jison Paul Vengasery, a renowned preacher. These spiritually enriching days renewed hearts, enlightened minds, and strengthened families in faith.

Special Prayer for Peace

In response to the call of the Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil, a Day of Prayer for peace in the Middle East was observed on 6 March 2026 with Stations of the Cross, Holy Mass, and Eucharistic Adoration.

Bible Reading Initiative

The Nurses Ministry organised a Bible reading session on 17 March 2026 in the church, following Holy Mass, encouraging deeper engagement with the Word of God.

Sunday School Activities

- The Sunday School academic year commenced on 8 February 2026 with Holy Mass and an inauguration ceremony. Catechism classes for this year was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Prince Joseph Thapurayidathil. Students were warmly welcomed, especially new preparatory class members.
- On 15 February 2026, catechism teachers led the offertory, followed by a special blessing and lamp-lighting ceremony.
- The Year 12 Graduation Ceremony and Academic Excellence & attendance awards distribution ceremony for 2025 were conducted on 29 March 2026.

Youth Ministry (SMYM)

The youth ministry actively engaged in parish life through monthly gatherings, adoration, and fellowship programs. Notably, SMYM Coordinator Meldrine Frank was selected to the National Team of the SMYM.

Ongoing Parish Activities

- From 9 December 2025, an additional Holy Mass has been introduced every Tuesday at 9:30 AM, alongside the regular weekly Masses on Wednesdays and Fridays, providing more opportunities for the faithful to participate in the Eucharist.
- First Saturday 9-hour Adoration was faithfully observed, led by the Evangelisation Ministry and family units.
- Thattukada' stalls were regularly organised after Sunday Mass, promoting fellowship.
- Monthly family unit prayer gatherings continued to strengthen community bonds.

Through these months, our parish has experienced abundant spiritual growth and unity. With gratitude to Almighty God and the intercession of Mother Mary, we continue to journey together as one faith-filled community, committed to prayer, service, and love.

St. Alphonsa Syro Malabar Forane Parish - Parramatta

The Feast of Denha

The Feast of the Epiphany, was joyfully celebrated in our Church on 6th January. As part of the celebration, the tradition of Pindikuthi Perunnal was observed. The ceremony included the lighting of candles and the singing of Elpayya.

Feast of St Sebastian

The Feast of St. Sebastian was solemnly celebrated in our parish, with Fr. Sebastian as the main celebrant. St. Sebastian is venerated as a powerful intercessor and protector against epidemics, pestilence, and infectious diseases.

Commemoration of the Faithful Departed

The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed was observed on 13th January in our parish. The day was marked by the celebration of the Holy Qurbana along with special prayers offered for our deceased loved ones.

Kindergarten Offertory & Holy Qurbana

We warmly welcomed 12 new students to the Kindergarten Catechism classes for 2026, on 15th February. Dedicated teachers, Sherin and Amritha, are guiding and nurturing these young learners as they begin their faith journey.

Ash Monday — The Beginning of Great Lent

We began our blessed Lenten journey in our parish with Ash Monday, a day of fasting and abstinence that calls us into a sacred time of repentance and prayer.

Catechism 2026 inauguration by Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen

Catechism 2026 was inaugurated on 1st March by Bishop Vincent Long. The program began with a warm welcome by Principal Sherin, followed by the swearing-in ceremony of the teachers.

Annual Lenten Retreat 2026

The Annual Lenten Retreat was conducted from 20th to 22nd March, led by Br. Dominic P.D. Over the three days, helping the faithful deepen their faith during the Lenten season.

Lenten Berrima Pilgrimage 2026

Missions and parishes gathered in Berrima in the name of Jesus to celebrate the Way of the Cross and the Holy Qurbana.



St. Euphrasia Syro-Malabar Parish

St Euphrasia Church extended a heartfelt welcome to Fr. Saji Thomas, who has commenced his service in our parish, following the completion of Fr. Abraham Kazhunadiyil's tenure and his return to India.

Fr. Sibi Pulickal has taken charge as the Parish Vicar, in addition to his existing role as Forane Church Vicar. On 8th February, the parish warmly welcomed Fr. Aji Aikkara as the Assistant Parish Priest.

A Lenten Retreat was conducted from 6th to 8th March, led by Fr. Saju Elanjyil, providing spiritual renewal and active participation from parishioners.

The parish is actively preparing for the upcoming fundraising program "KADOSH", scheduled for 9th May.

Catechism Department

Catechism classes commenced on 25th January with Pravesanolsavam, marking a joyful beginning to the academic year. The event included: A meaningful lamplight ceremony and Distribution of goodie packs to children

Nurses Ministry – Adelaide North

The ministry currently has approximately 60 members.

Regular Activities: Monthly meetings, including: Prayer and worship, Spiritual talks focused on saints and Chain Rosary held on the 13th of every month for 12 hours

Took part in continuous Bible reading at the Central Parish on 15th December 2025, Attended the Regional Meet in February 2026, Conducted 4-hour Bible reading in our parish on 21st March

Next Regional Meet will be hosted at our parish on 18th May

Pithruvedi

Successfully organized the St Joseph Feast Celebration, which included: Achan's blessing and distribution of candles to all men. Pithruvedi assisted St. Joseph prayer unit to prepare Uttu Nercha

Mathruvedi

The members of Mathruvedi extend their deepest gratitude and a fond farewell to Fr. Abraham Kazhunadiyil in December 2026. We are profoundly thankful for Achan's visionary leadership and unwavering support, which were instrumental in successfully rolling out Mathruvedi within our parish.

His encouragement empowered the mothers of our community to unite in faith and service, creating a vibrant foundation that will continue to flourish.



ST. MARY'S SYRO MALABAR PARISH MELBOURNE WEST

FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

The Feast of the Holy Innocents was celebrated with devotion at St. Mary's Parish following the Holy Qurbana. A special blessing was offered for all children, with prayers for their protection and growth in faith.

The celebration brought together families in a spirit of joy and gratitude, making it a meaningful occasion for the parish community.

FEAST OF ST. SEBASTIAN

The Feast of St. Sebastian was celebrated with great devotion at St. Mary's Parish with Holy Qurbana, followed by a solemn procession and traditional rituals.

The celebration concluded with nercha and the sharing of food, bringing the parish community together in faith, prayer, and fellowship, making it a spiritually enriching occasion.

CATECHISM INAUGURATION

The Catechism year 2026 was inaugurated at St. Mary's Parish with prayer and blessings during the Holy Qurbana. Students, teachers, and parents participated in the ceremony, dedicating the new academic year to God.

The inauguration marked the beginning of faith formation for the children, with the support and guidance of catechism teachers and the parish community.

LENTEN RETREAT

St. Mary's Parish conducted a three-day Lenten Retreat led by Bro. P. Dominic, with active participation from parishioners. The retreat included preaching, prayer sessions, adoration, and the Holy Qurbana, helping the faithful to reflect and prepare spiritually for the Lenten season.

The retreat witnessed a large gathering and was a spiritually enriching experience, strengthening the faith and devotion of the parish community.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SPECIAL PROGRAM

An International Women's Day Special Program was conducted at St. Mary's Parish, featuring a session by Dr. Priya Allencherry, Catholic Psychiatrist. The program focused on self-discovery and the importance of self-

care, offering meaningful insights for participants.

Organised by Mathruvedi in association with Marian Centre, the event empowered women and provided a space for reflection, encouragement, and community support.

TEENS LENTEN PROGRAM

A Lenten program for teens was conducted at St. Mary's Parish with the participation of 52 students. The day began with Holy Qurbana, followed by games, sessions, and activities. Special focus was given to spiritual preparation, with all participants receiving the Sacrament of Confession. The program concluded with a parents' session.



St. Mary's syro malabar church adelaide South

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

On 6th January, the parish celebrated Pindikuthi Perunnal, a cherished tradition rooted in the Syro-Malabar heritage. The ceremony involved the symbolic preparation of the pindi adorned with lights. Parish Council members of the parish along with Sibi Achan participated in lighting the lamps on the pindi, reflecting Christ as the Light of the world.

ST SEBASTIAN THIRUNAL

On 18th of January the feast of St Sebastian was prayerfully celebrated, with the respective family unit arranging the church. The Holy Qurbana and Ladeenju were offered with devotion, and the traditional Amnbu procession was carried out with great reverence. The celebrations concluded with a joyful Snehavirunnu.

YEAR 12 GRADUATION

On 8th March, the parish celebrated the Year 12 Graduation of four students, warmly welcoming them into SMYM, marking an important transition into active youth ministry.

LENTEN RENEWAL

Throughout Lent, several initiatives fostered spiritual renewal within the community. On the 6th Friday of Lent in March, Sibi Achan lead a class on the Holy Qurbana, sharing his love for the Eucharist. Sibi Achan's class was followed by adoration and Eucharistic Procession. From 13th to 15th March, our parish had our Annual Lenten Retreat, led by Fr Saju MST at St Michael's Primary School, for family renewal. Simultaneously, a preteen and teen's retreat was organised by Parish and was led by the Sliha De Mishiha team.

Further strengthening youth involvement, a Youth Retreat was held from the 20th to the 22nd March at Port Hughes, with around 60 participants. The retreat was marked by vibrant sessions of music, adoration, and reflection, and was led by our own Sliha De Mishiha Team.

ST JOSEPH THIRUNAL

On the 21st of March, St Joseph's Thirunal was reverently observed with the respective family unit beautifully

arranging the church. The celebration included the Holy Qurbana and Ladeenju, while families brought various vegetables as offerings, symbolising gratitude and providence. The feast concluded with a warm Snehavirunnu,

PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday was joyfully observed at St.Mary's Parish .The Palm Sunday service began in the front grass area of the church, where palm leaves were distributed. The priest and devotees then processed to the church marking the beginning of the Holy Week and commemorating of Jesus triumphant entry into Jerusalem.



ST THOMAS PARISH, CAMPBELLTOWN

BIBLICAL DRAMA - THACHAN

The biblical drama Thachan was a deeply moving and memorable experience for everyone who watched it. Its calm and thoughtful storytelling drew people in, making them feel connected to the message in a simple yet powerful way.

Parishioners from different parishes came together to watch the drama, and every feedback from the spectators said how touching it was. They were not just watching a story, but sharing a meaningful moment of faith and reflection. Many were touched by the themes of humility, purpose, and trust in God.

CATECHISM AND BIBLE FEST PRIZE DISTRIBUTION

The Catechism and Bible Fest Prize Distribution was a joyful and encouraging event for the parish community. It was a special moment to recognize the hard work, dedication, and faith of the children who actively participated in the catechism classes and Bible Fest competitions.

The winners were awarded prizes and certificates, appreciating their efforts in learning and understanding the Word of God. Their enthusiasm and commitment were truly inspiring, bringing pride to their families and teachers.

ST SEBASTIAN FEAST DAY

The Feast Day of St. Sebastian was celebrated in our parish with great devotion and joy, led by Fr. Francis Kolenchery. The day began with a solemn Holy Mass, where parishioners gathered to honor the life and faith of St. Sebastian through prayer and reflection.

Following the Mass, blessings were given, spreading a sense of peace and spiritual grace among all who attended. The celebration brought together parishioners of all ages, uniting the community in faith and shared devotion.

The day concluded on a joyful note with a delicious meal shared by everyone, fostering fellowship and togetherness.

ANNUAL RETREAT 2026

The Annual Retreat held from 6th to 8th March was a spiritually enlightening experience for the parishioners, led by Fr. Benny Mundanattu. During the retreat, Father focused on explaining the meaning of various traditions and customs practiced in the Syro-Malabar Church, helping everyone understand the rich heritage and spiritual significance behind them.

He also provided deep insights into the Holy Sacraments, revealing their profound importance in the life of every believer. Through his guidance, parishioners gained a clearer understanding of how these sacred practices nurture faith, strengthen community, and bring them closer to God.

The retreat was a time of reflection, learning, and spiritual growth, leaving participants with renewed devotion and a deeper appreciation of the Syro-Malabar Church's traditions and sacraments.



St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Church, South East Melbourne

Over the past few months, our community has been blessed with a vibrant series of spiritual, cultural, and social gatherings that brought us together in faith, fellowship, and celebration in Jesus Christ.

February 7 – Santhom Sports Event

Santhom Multicultural centre conducted Football and volleyball tournaments that drew energetic teams and supporters, creating a spirited environment where participants from different community background competed. Our SMYM team competed in the Football competition and showcased excellent sportsman spirit. The event served as a wonderful opportunity to strengthen camaraderie while witnessing our faith in Jesus Christ among the youth and the Syro-Malabar tradition.

February 20th to 22nd – Lenten Retreat with Bro. Dominic

Our Lenten journey was enriched by a three day retreat led by Bro. Dominic. The sessions focused on the significance of Eucharistic adoration and the Holy Qurbana, guiding participants into deeper spiritual reflection. The sports centre area was transformed into a contemplative space, displaying Eucharistic miracle photographs and inspirational quotes from Saints.

March 9th: Lenten talk and Adoration

The Lenten session was led by Rev. Fr. Sebastian Areekattu, Rev. Sr. Dr. Julia and Bro. Benny which was coordinated by the Parish Evangelization team.

March 13th-15th: Jubilee Cross

The Migrant Jubilee Cross was solemnly received, and a reverential procession was conducted in the Church revering the Holy relics and the significance of the message from Pope Leo.

March 22nd: Couples' Retreat with Fr. Daniel Poovannathil

Married couples from the community gathered for a special retreat led by Fr. Daniel Poovannathil. The session offered spiritual nourishment through adoration, practical guidance to the secrets of love language which helps the individuals to understand each other, reaffirming the sacramental beauty of marriage and the importance of nurturing family with a prayerful environment.



Santhom Healthcare Awards 2026 Celebrate Excellence in Healthcare

The Santhom Cultural Centre Ltd proudly hosted the Santhom Healthcare Awards 2026 on Sunday, 29 March 2026 at 11:00 AM at St Thomas' Syro-Malabar Parish South-East Melbourne.

The prestigious awards ceremony honoured outstanding healthcare professionals for their dedication, innovation, and service to the community.

The awards were formally presented by Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP, Minister for Health, Minister for Ambulance Services, and Minister for Women. The ceremony was held in the presence of Hon. Lee Taramis MP; and Hon. Pauline Richards MP.

Award Recipients

The 2026 award recipients are:

- **Innovation and Improvement Award** – Anand Tom
- **Clinical Excellence Award** – Jancy Jaison Alappadan
- **Community Impact and Engagement Award** – Justin Jose
- **Research and Evidence-Based Practice Award** – Dr. Bindu Joseph Kishore
- **Leadership Excellence Award** – Dr. Bindu Narolil Mammen

These individuals were recognised for their exceptional contributions across various areas of healthcare, demonstrating leadership, compassion, and a commitment to improving patient outcomes and community wellbeing.

Jury Members

The organisers extend their sincere appreciation to the esteemed jury members for their valuable time and careful evaluation:

- **Dr. Joe Thomas**
- **Dr. Johnson George**
- **Mr. Joby Philip**

Organising Committee

The event was organised under the leadership of the Santhom Cultural Centre Office Bearers:

- **Msgr. Francise Kolencherry** – Director, Santhom Cultural Centre Ltd

- **Anto Mathew** – Secretary & PRO
- **Mr. Jomon Varghese** – Treasurer

The organisers expressed their gratitude to all participants, nominees, and supporters who contributed to the success of the event.

About Santhom Healthcare Awards

The Santhom Healthcare Awards aim to recognise and celebrate excellence in healthcare within the community, highlighting individuals who have made a meaningful impact through innovation, service, research, and leadership.

Media Contact:

Santhom Cultural Centre Ltd
525-531 Frankston-Dandenong Road, Dandenong South, VIC 3175, Australia
Email: info@santhomculturalcentre.org.au



St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Wollongong

FEAST OF ST. SEBASTIAN

On January 20, St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Church, Wollongong, celebrated the Feast of St. Sebastian, the patron saint of soldiers and defenders of faith. The solemn Holy Qurbana, led by Fr. Sebastian Mandapathil, was attended by parishioners who gathered to offer prayers and thanksgiving. The faithful sought St. Sebastian's intercession for strength, protection and perseverance in faith.

ANNUAL LENTEN RETREAT

Our parish held its Annual Lenten Retreat on March 13 and 14, beautifully led by Rev. Fr. Benny Mundanattu. The retreat served as a sacred time for renewal, prayer and reconciliation as we prepared for Easter. Through powerful preaching, prayer sessions and adoration, parishioners found themselves spiritually strengthened and refreshed. The event rekindled our commitment to live our faith more deeply and to walk closer with Christ during this holy season.

CATECHISM INAUGURATION

The Catechism Inauguration for the year 2026 was celebrated on February 22 at St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Church, Wollongong. The ceremony began with prayers and blessings for our dedicated teachers and enthusiastic students. We were delighted to welcome new children joining our Kindergarten class, marking the beginning of their journey in faith education. The event reflected our commitment as a parish to nurture our young ones in the love of Christ and the teachings of the Church. May this year be filled with learning, joy, and spiritual growth for all our students.

LENTEN PILGRIMAGE TO BERRIMA

On Saturday, March 28, 2026, our parishioners embarked on a Lenten Pilgrimage to Berrima—a day of prayer, reflection, and fellowship. The pilgrimage offered time for personal meditation, communal prayer and moments of quiet gratitude amidst serene surroundings. Walking together on this journey reminded us of Christ's own pilgrimage of love and sacrifice. It was a deeply moving and spiritually enriching experience, strengthening our unity as one parish family in faith.

PALM SUNDAY

We joyfully celebrated Palm Sunday, marking the beginning of Holy Week, with deep devotion and reverence. The celebration commenced with the blessing and procession of palms, symbolizing Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Parishioners joined in prayer and song, holding palms high as a sign of faith and hope. The Holy Qurbana that followed invited us to reflect on Christ's humility and sacrifice. It was a meaningful start to the sacred days leading to the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord.



St. Alphonsa Syro Malabar Parish Brisbane North

The faithful at St Alphonsa Syro Malabar Catholic Church observed Palm Sunday, recalling the humility and kingship of Jesus as they begin Holy Week.



Parishioners at St Alphonsa Syro Malabar Parish experienced a spiritually enriching three-day Lenten retreat led by Rev. Fr. Jison Paul Vengasserry, fostering renewal and deeper faith.



St Alphonsa Syro Malabar Catholic Church Brisbane north warmly welcomes all our little stars as they begin their beautiful journey in Year 1 Sunday School Catechism.



Mathruvedi Day celebration at church on Saturday 7th February



A special ceremony at St Alphonsa Syro-Malabar Catholic Parish recognized Year 12 catechism graduates, celebrating their faith formation alongside dedicated catechism teachers.



The Feast of the Holy Innocents, on December 28 honoring the baby boys in Bethlehem massacred by King Herod in his attempt to kill the newborn Jesus, marking them as the first Christian martyrs



Celebrating the faith, talent, and dedication of our Sunday School children at our 2025 Sunday School Anniversary on Sunday 30 November.

ST JOSEPH SYRO-MALABAR PARISH, PERTH

The Parish Day and Catechism Anniversary was a vibrant celebration filled with energetic performances such as dances, songs, skits, and tableaux. It was a joy to see the catechism students actively involved in the cultural programs, and the hard work of the teachers and volunteers behind the event was clearly on display. The students were also recognised with catechism awards in appreciation of their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

Leavers provided an opportunity for the new Year 12 graduates to come together after a demanding year and spend time in fellowship. SMYM organised a three-day event that allowed the young adults to bond, reflect, and take part in meaningful experiences, including receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Qurbana. It also offered thought-provoking opportunities and, most importantly, gave them the chance to relax, express themselves, and enjoy each other's company.

Christmas Qurbana was celebrated with parishioners joyfully sharing in the birth of Christ, our Saviour. This year, we also commemorated the occasion with a Christmas bonfire—a cherished tradition symbolising the offering of warmth to baby Jesus, as incense was added to a fire lit outside the church. A parish Christmas celebration was also organised, bringing the community together in joyful fellowship. The event featured vibrant cultural programs, including dances and songs presented by parish members. With gratitude, we offered a Qurbana to remember God's providence throughout the year 2025 and to welcome the New Year, 2026, seeking His blessings and presence.

With the month of March dedicated to St. Joseph, our St. Joseph Syro-Malabar Parish in Perth prayerfully prepared by seeking the intercession of our heavenly patron throughout this special time. On March 22nd, the entire parish came together to partake in the culmination of these preparations with a solemn Qurbana and joyful feast. It was a truly blessed and joyous occasion, as we honoured our patron in a beautiful and meaningful way.



St Alphonsa Forane church Adelaide

From January to March, St. Alphonsa Syro Malabar Forane Parish organized a series of spiritually enriching events, strengthening faith, unity, and fellowship within the community.

Deneha-Thirunal (January 6): In celebration of Deneha Thirunal, committee members, representatives from Mathruvedi, Pithruvedi, and the youth, solemnly lit the Pindithiri, symbolizing the revelation of the Holy Trinity at the baptism of Christ. The event included a reverent liturgical celebration, uniting the faithful in prayer and reflection on this divine manifestation.

Catechism Inauguration (February 2)

The Catechism Year 2025 was inaugurated with a solemn Holy Qurbana. The Nila Vilakku was lit by Father Siby, along with the principal, deputy principal and student leaders, marking the beginning of the academic year. The catechism teachers took their pledge, reaffirming their commitment to faith formation.

Food Festival (February 8)

The Youth Food Festival was held with great enthusiasm, filled with vibrant dance, uplifting music, and a variety of delicious food. The event was successfully organised and led by our dedicated youth, showcasing their teamwork and creativity. This initiative was undertaken as a fundraising effort to support the YLS Youth Summit, contributing towards the development and formation of our youth leaders.

Eucharistic procession in family units (February 21 – March 7)

A Eucharistic Procession was reverently conducted across each family unit, with the Blessed Sacrament prayerfully brought into the home of a designated member from each prayer unit. Families gathered in faith, offering prayers and reflecting together, creating a deeply spiritual and enriching atmosphere. This sacred moment fostered unity among the families, strengthening their bond with Christ and with one another through shared worship and heartfelt prayer.

Lenten Retreat by Fr Saju Elanjyil (March 13-15)

The Lenten Retreat was prayerfully conducted at St. Michael's School Campus, led by Fr. Saju Elanjyil MST. The retreat provided a spiritually enriching experience, guid-

ing the faithful through reflection, prayer, and renewal during the Lenten season. Alongside this, a Children's Retreat was also held, led by the Sliha Da Mishia team and youth leaders of the parish, offering a meaningful and engaging space for young participants to grow in faith.

Feast of Saint Joseph (March 19)

The celebration began with the Pithruvedi members and St Joseph family unit processing into the church, presenting offerings and petitions. The Holy Qurbana was celebrated by Fr. Saji Elanjyil MST, with the statue of St. Joseph reverently placed beside the altar. The ceremony concluded with a cake-cutting to honour all the Josephs, followed by the Ootu Nercha, a traditional act of offering and prayer.

20 hours Bible reading (March 19-20)

A 20 Hours Bible Reading was reverently conducted, led by all the Family Units, as they gathered to proclaim and listen to the Word of God, deepening their faith through Scripture.

SEEK 2026 (March 20-23)

The SEEK Retreat was a 3-day residential retreat designed to encounter God and seek Him more deeply. Led by the Sliha Da Mishia team, it provided opportunities for Adoration, prayer, fellowship, and spiritual sharing, allowing youth to grow in faith and build a personal relationship with Christ.



ST Alphonsa Cathedral Melbourne

The beginning of a new year is an exciting time for all of us, and the Cathedral Parish welcomed 2026 with open arms. It was a time for growth, development and new initiatives.

On the 4th of January, we were blessed to have Fr Jose Panthalanikal CMI join us to celebrate the Holy Qurbana during the feast of St Kuriakose Elias Chavara. It was an eye-opening experience to hear of his missionary experiences and endeavours.

Then on 10th January, we were blessed to have Fr Antony Parankimalil VC, Director of Divine Centre Kigali, Rwanda, join us to share the Word of God and lead a Healing Adoration.

Fast forward to February, and one of the most significant periods of our Parish Calendar — our thirunnal, celebrating St Alphonsa, our Parish patroness, and St Sebastian. We were blessed to have various priests join us for Holy Qurbana and Novena from 6th February. Bishop John Panamohtottathil offered the thirunnal Qurbana on February 15th. One of the major highlights of the thirunnal, aside from the fellowship, feastal celebrations and prayers, was the mega margamkali, which encompassed 150 participants, including youth and mothers. The performance was truly show-stopping, and the coordination was unbelievable given the numbers.

We officially inaugurated the Catechism Academic Year on Sunday 8th February. Teachers who were continuing the ministry and new teachers were welcomed and introduced to the parishioners. Then, with the lighting of the lamp, the new Catechism year was initiated.

We had our Cathedral Youth Day on Sunday, March 1st. All youth joined together for the offertory Holy Qurbana, and then there was a special formation session following Holy Qurbana.

The Cathedral Parish hosted Lumen Fidei 6.1, the National Conference for Catechists of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle, Melbourne. We

had catechists from all parishes and missions in Victoria attend, and it was a day filled with discussion, insights and sharing of experiences.

We were also fortunate to have received the Migrant Cross to our Cathedral on Friday, March 6th. This was a profound experience, and being able to have a connection with so many other migrant communities also finding their faith in Australia was a deeply meaningful experience.

We celebrated the feast of St Joseph on March 19th, seeking the heavenly patronage of St Joseph. St Joseph's Ward was able to organise nercha and choir for the feast day.

As we enter Holy Week, St Alphonsa Cathedral wishes everyone the peace and joy of the Risen Lord!



St. Mary's Syro Malabar Mission, Sunshine Coast

NEW YEAR AND DENEHA THIRUNAL

This year we welcomed the new year with a New Year Day Holy Mass on 1 st January. Celebrations for this year commenced with Denaha Thirunal which was celebrated on the 6 th of January. Following the Holy Mass, a procession was held and as a final act of reverence, the congregation participated in the lighting of the Pindi, symbolizing our collective prayers and intentions. It was a beautiful day of worship and fellowship, reminding us of the importance of tradition and the power of shared faith.

CATECHISM INAUGURATION AND PREVESHANOLSAVAM

The Catechism Academic Year 2025 of St. Mary's Syro-Malabar Mission, Sunshine Coast, was inaugurated on February 2 at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, Caloundra, following the Holy Qurbana. Fr. Tijo Puthenparampil delivered an inspiring address, highlighting the importance of faith formation and the Catechism Motto: "To Know Jesus, To Live in Jesus, and To Give Jesus." He emphasized the family's role in catechism and echoed Pope Francis' words on guiding children to encounter Jesus. The event featured a Lamp Lighting ceremony, the Catechist Oath, and 'Praveshanotsavam', welcoming 24 new students. The day concluded with Eucharistic Adoration led by the students.

FEAST OF SAINTS

Our Parish also celebrated many feasts during this period which includes Feast of St. Chavara and Feast of St. Devasahayam Pillai. The Feast of St. Sebastian was celebrated in a grand manner this year as well. The celebration started with the Holy Qurbana, La-deenju, Solemn Procession and end up with a Nercha. In addition, we also celebrated Feast of Our lady of Lourdes on February 12 th and Feast of Blessed Rani Maria on February 23 rd . We also had special Mass for the departed souls on the 28 th of February which is the annual Commemoration of the dead.

Our parish launched a Bible Reading Challenge through a dedicated WhatsApp group, inviting parishioners to read the entire Bible over the course of a year. The initiative aims to deepen the spiritual lives of the participants. The participants will receive daily scripture readings, along with reflections and prayer prompts, to help guide their reading.

On March 19th, we celebrated the Feast of St. Joseph, a day that highlights his quiet strength, unwavering commitment to his family, and his vital role as the protector of the Holy Family. In addition to this celebration, we also continued the beloved tradition of the Ootu Nercha Sadya, a long-standing custom within the Syro-Malabar Church, marking the Feast of St. Joseph with fellowship and community.

On March 23, Fr. Tijo welcomed the newly appointed Student Council representatives in their first meeting, outlining their roles and stressing the importance of leadership, service, and active support for catechism activities. He encouraged them to be role models and to foster a faith-driven environment.

On March 30, following the Holy Qurbana, twenty student representatives from Years 4 to 12 took their oath of commitment. Fr. Tijo addressed them, emphasizing the importance of Christ-like values and their responsibility to lead with integrity, compassion, and service—marking a significant step in their journey as catechism leaders.



DAYS TO REMEMBER

April

April 24
വിശുദ്ധ ഗീവർഗീസ് സഹദയുടെ
തിരുനാൾ

May

May 1
തൊഴിലാളി മദ്ധ്യസ്ഥനായ വിശുദ്ധ
യൗസേപ്പ്

May 6
വിശുദ്ധ ഡൊമിനിക്കു സാവിയാ

May 14
നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവിന്റെ
സ്വർഗ്ഗാരോഹണ തിരുനാൾ

May 24
പന്തക്കുസ്താ തിരുനാൾ

May 29
സ്വർണ്ണ വെള്ളി

May 30
പരിശുദ്ധ കന്യാകാമറിയത്തിന്റെ
സന്ദർശനം

May 31
പരിശുദ്ധ ത്രിത്വത്തിന്റെ തിരുനാൾ

June

June 4
പരിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ തിരുനാൾ

June 8
വിശുദ്ധ മറിയം ത്രേസ്യ

June 9
മാർ അപ്രേം

June 9
ഈശോയുടെ തിരുഹൃദയ തിരുനാൾ

June 13
പരിശുദ്ധ
കന്യാകാമറിയത്തിന്റെ വിമല ഹൃദയ തിരുനാൾ

June 13
പാദുവായിലെ വിശുദ്ധ അന്തോനീസ്

June 29
വിശുദ്ധ പത്രോസ്
വിശുദ്ധ പൗലോസ് ശ്ലീഹന്മാർ



EPARCHY MEDIA COMMISSION

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

AUTHORISED BY : Msgr. FRANCISE KOLENCHERRY

(Vicar General, Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas The Apostle, Melbourne)

PUBLISHED BY : FR. THOMAS PEZHUMKATTIL

DIRECTOR, EPARCHY MEDIA COMMISSION

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

COORDINATOR : GAVEEN GEORGE

