

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



Prot. No. MPL: 94/26/14

CIRCULAR

EVERY SYRO-MALABAR COUNTS

2026 AUSTRALIAN CENSUS - TUESDAY, 11 AUGUST 2026

Dear priests, sisters, parents, brothers and sisters in Christ,

On Tuesday, 11 August 2026, Australia will conduct its national Census. As you are aware, the Census is compulsory, and every person in Australia on Census night must be included in the Census form. The Census provides vital information about Australia's population and communities, enabling governments, service providers, churches and community organisations to plan effectively for the future.

When completing the Census, please pay particular attention to the following questions:

Question 21 - Language

Does the person use a language other than English at home?

Please answer: **MALAYALAM**

Accurate information about languages spoken at home helps governments and organisations provide appropriate resources, communication, education and community services.

Question 24 - Religious Affiliation

What is the person's religion?

To record your ecclesial identity accurately:

1. Select **“Other (specify)”**.

2. Write clearly:

SYRO-MALABAR CATHOLIC

Please do not simply select “**Catholic**”, as this does not specifically identify our Syro-Malabar Catholic identity.

Religious affiliation data assists with planning places of worship, educational facilities, aged-care services, hospital and prison chaplaincies, and other pastoral and community services. By correctly identifying ourselves, we help provide a faithful picture of the Syro-Malabar Church’s presence and contribution in Australia and support its future pastoral planning and mission.

I kindly request all parish priests, ministry and organisation directors, and community leaders to bring this message to the attention of the faithful through parish announcements, newsletters and social media in the weeks leading up to Census Night. Please encourage every family to complete the Census carefully and accurately.

For official information, please visit: www.abs.gov.au/census

Let us work together so that every member of our community is counted and our Syro-Malabar identity is faithfully represented.

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,

23 July 2026
Eparchial Curia Melbourne

✠ Bishop John Panamthottathil CMI
Bishop of Syro Malabar Eparchy of
St Thomas the Apostle Melbourne

NB: This circular is to be read during the Holy Qurbana in all churches of the Melbourne Eparchy on Sunday, 2 August 2026.