

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



Prot. No. MPL: 88/26/13

CIRCULAR

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

This circular is to lovingly remind you and share with you an important milestone in the history of our Eparchy. The first Eparchial assembly of our eparchy which completes 11 years of a rich journey of faith, will be held from **19 to 21 November, 2026 at SANTHOM GROVE**, our Pastoral Centre in Melbourne.

The Eparchial Assembly is an important body where representatives of parishes and missions gather, incorporating the prayers and thoughts of all family members in the diocese. Through this assembly, we can discuss the pastoral matters of the diocese and assist the bishop in the administration of the diocese.

Five key points for our prayerful reflection:

1. Eucharistic Centered Spirituality

The Holy Eucharist is the lifeblood of the spirituality and pastoral activities of the Syro-Malabar Church. We need to think together about how we can deepen this Eucharistic experience in our lives and the lives of our children.

2. The Challenges of our Families

As an immigrant community, work pressures and modern lifestyles are severely affecting our family relationships. We need to seriously discuss these crises that families face and the spiritual and practical solutions to them.

3. Spiritual Growth of our Youth

We need to recognize the pastoral, social, and cultural challenges our children, adolescents, and young people face, and we need to think together about what we can do to keep them more engaged with the Church and God.

4. Catechism (Sunday School)

There are approximately 13,500 children receiving faith formation in 71 communities in our diocese. We must think about how to overcome the current limitations and make this training more effective under the leadership of parents, teachers and priests.

5. Community Empowerment

We are simultaneously a spiritual community and a socio-cultural community. We should take advantage of the great support provided by the Australian and New Zealand governments to pass on our identity and language to the next generation. We have a duty to develop these countries in which we live culturally and spiritually.

In addition to the above topics, other suggestions of pastoral importance can also be discussed.

Preparation for the Eparchial Assembly

The above topics will be explained by the respected parish priests during the Holy Mass on the coming Sundays. Discussions should then be held at the ward level and with the leadership of various organizations.

The Parish Committee, consisting of the parish vicar, parish clerks, and members of the Pastoral Council, will lead the discussions.

The reports of the discussions should be collected and compiled by the member of Parish pastoral council.

Based on suggestions shared by many of you during my parish visits, I am happy to announce two new projects at the diocesan level.

1. Rendezvous

A three-day program is being organized at the Diocese Pastor Centre in **October (9-11)** as a golden opportunity for our beloved young men and women of marriageable age to meet and get to know each other. Only the first 100 people who register will be allowed to participate. The program will be led by the Diocese Family-Youth Ministries. Parents are requested to send their children to the said program.

2. Home for Homeless

Providing shelter for the homeless is a beautiful act of charity envisioned by the Holy Scriptures. This is a project that builds houses for the homeless poor of Syro-Malabar families in the Diocese of Adilabad, India. A small house costs only \$6,000. Our parishes, missions, with the help of our children and youth can sponsor one house each. It would be a source of blessings for us and the poor families as well.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever,

Asking for the prayers of all for the success of the Eparchial assembly. I bless you all with all my heart in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

With love in Christ,

15 July 2026
Eparchial Curia Melbourne

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