

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

Prot. No. MPL: 42/25/9



Dear Priests, Parents, Brothers and Sisters, and beloved Children in Christ,

I cordially wish you all a happy Pentecost. Today we celebrate the birthday of the Holy Church. All of you standing before this altar are proof that the Holy Spirit is still working powerfully in the Church today. The Holy Spirit is the constant presence among us, inviting and encouraging each of us from different homes to celebrate the Lord's Day in this holy presence of God. The great message of unity is given by the Feast of Pentecost. After the death of Jesus, the disciples were disappointed and scattered. What we see and experience on the Feast of Pentecost is the gathering together, the opposite of the scattering.

We read in the book of Acts the history of the first Pentecost: “When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind...and they saw tongues like fire resting on each of them.”

The Holy Spirit descended on the apostles not in the form of a dove but in the form of tongues of fire. What is special about the tongues of fire?

We have probably noticed that farmers prepare their fields with fire before sowing. Fire destroys some things to create and some to destroy. So, what does the fire of God, the Holy Spirit, do? It destroys to create. What does it destroy? This fire destroyed the worries and fears in the minds of the apostles who were in the room, locked in fear of the Jews. The Holy Spirit destroys the fears and worries in our hearts. The opposite of love is not hatred, but fear. John says that love casts out all fear, and that is the work of the Holy Spirit. When fear is destroyed, peace, hope, courage and love are created in the mind. The fire that is the Holy Spirit creates a church that lives beyond fear and lives in the power of the risen Christ, an Easter people. The fire of the Holy Spirit works in us as we gather in the name of God and as we receive each of the Holy Sacraments. This fire that is formed in us destroys our sins and fills our hearts with goodness. I pray that God will strengthen us to preach and live the Gospel by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

I would like to inform you of some important things on this Pentecost.

1. The Consecration and blessing of St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Parish, Melbourne South-East will be conducted by **Major Archbishop Mar Raphael Thattil**, the Father and Head of our Church on **Saturday, July 12th at 9:30 am**. I cordially invite all of you, the members of the diocesan family, to join in this consecration ceremony and celebration. I sincerely congratulate and thank the Parish Priest, Monsignor Francis Kolenchery, the Assistant Vicars, Fr. Joyis, Fr. Jinu and Fr. Saji, and all the members of the parish who worked day and night to build this beautiful parish church, which was built as a result of long years of effort, prayer, and unity.
2. Our diocese's Pastoral and Renewal Centre, known as **SANTHOM GROVE (Pallotti College)**, will be officially inaugurated and inaugurated on the 11th of July at 3:00 pm by our Major Archbishop. Meetings, seminars, retreats, marriage preparation courses, etc. for our diocese members will be held at our new Centre. Your esteemed Vicar will explain how you can be a part of this achievement that we can all be proud of. I especially expect the sincere cooperation and presence of all of you.
3. The first Convent in Australia of the **Little Servants of the Divine Providence (LSDP)** nuns' congregation centered in Kunnanthanam, Changanassery will be inaugurated by the Major Archbishop in **St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Parish, Melbourne South-East Parish** on the afternoon of July 12. The first Syro-Malabar Convent in our diocese is being established here. Their main areas of activity will be **Family Apostolate, youth ministry and parish ministries**. Your prayers and encouragement are expected. You are welcome to this work.
4. We especially request the parents to participate in the **EMBRACE** Renewal Program for youth and children, which is being conducted in all our parishes and missions under the leadership of our diocese's SMYM.

Let us pray and work together for the holistic growth of our diocese. May Almighty God bless us. I wholeheartedly bless you all in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

With love in Christ,

Eparchial Curia
Melbourne, 01.07.2025

Bishop John Panamthottil CMI
Bishop - Diocese of Melbourne.