



Bishop's *Circular*

For Priests / Sisters

Bishop George Rajendran sdb
Diocese of Thuckalay

Bishop's House, P B No: 12, Thuckalay PO,
Kanya kumari Dt- 629 175, Tamil Nadu, India

Ref. No. Priests/GR/86/2018

30 September 2018

Dear and Reverend Fathers and Sisters,

We are entering the month of October – a month dedicated to the Holy Rosary. According to an account given by a fifteenth-century Dominican, Alan de la Roch, Mary appeared to St Dominic in 1206 after he had been praying and doing severe penances because of his lack of success in combating the Albigensian heresy. Mary praised him for his valiant fight against the heretics and then gave him the Rosary as a mighty weapon. She explained its uses and efficacy, and asked him to preach it to others. Since then, Catholics all over the world have prayed the Rosary fervently and received abundance of favours from God. In fact, early tradition attributes the defeat of the Albigensians at the Battle of Muret in 1213 to the Rosary. St Pius V attributed the great defeat of the Turkish fleet on the first Sunday of October 1571 to the fact that at the same time the Rosary confraternities at Rome and elsewhere were holding their processions. Accordingly, he ordered a commemoration of the Rosary to be made on that day. Two years later, Pope Gregory XIII allowed the celebration of a feast of the Rosary in churches having an altar dedicated to the Rosary. In 1671, Clement X extended the feast to all Spain. A second great victory over the Turks, who once, like the Russians, threatened the ruin of Christian civilization, occurred on 5 August 1716, when Prince Eugene defeated them at Peterwardein in Hungary. Thereupon, Pope Clement XI extended the feast of the Rosary to the whole Church. Today we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on 7 October.

Blessed Pope Paul VI in his Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, speaks about the devotional practice of reciting the Rosary. He calls the Rosary the compendium of the entire Gospel. I would like to present some pertinent points from this Exhortation for our reflection. The Rosary draws from the Gospel the presentation of the mysteries and its main formulas. As it moves from the angel's joyful greeting and the Virgin's pious assent, the Rosary takes its inspiration from the Gospel to suggest the attitude with which the faithful should recite it. In the harmonious succession of Hail Mary's, the Rosary puts before us once more a fundamental mystery of the Gospel-the Incarnation of the Word, contemplated at the decisive moment of the Annunciation to Mary. The Rosary is, thus, a Gospel prayer, as pastors and scholars like to define it, more today perhaps than in the past.

As a Gospel prayer, centred on the mystery of the redemptive Incarnation, the Rosary is therefore a prayer with a clearly Christological orientation. Its most characteristic element, in fact, the litany-like succession of Hail Mary's, becomes in itself an unceasing praise of Christ, who is the ultimate object both of the angel's announcement and of the greeting of the mother of John the Baptist: "Blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Lk 1:42). We would go further and say that the succession of Hail Mary's constitutes the warp on which is woven the contemplation of the mysteries. The Jesus that each Hail

Mary recalls is the same Jesus whom the succession of the mysteries proposes to us-now as the Son of God, now as the Son of the Virgin-at His birth in a stable at Bethlehem, at His presentation by His Mother in the Temple, as a youth full of zeal for His Father's affairs, as teacher proclaiming the advent of the Kingdom of God, as the Redeemer in agony in the garden, scourged and crowned with thorns, carrying the cross and dying on Calvary, risen from the dead and ascended to the glory of the Father to send forth the gift of the Spirit. As is well known, at one time there was a custom, still preserved in certain places, of adding to the name of Jesus in each Hail Mary reference to the mystery being contemplated. This was done precisely in order to help contemplation and to make the mind and the voice act in unison.

Pope Paul VI lists out the elements of the Rosary:

a) Contemplation in communion with Mary, of a series of mysteries of salvation, wisely distributed into three cycles. These mysteries express the joy of the messianic times, the salvific suffering of Christ and the glory of the Risen Lord which fills the Church. This contemplation by its very nature encourages practical reflection and provides stimulating norms for living. But with St John Paul II, the cycle has been enhanced in recent times when he added the mysteries of Light, which help to meditate on the significant events in the public ministry of Jesus.

b) The Lord's Prayer or Our Father, which by reason of its immense value is at the basis of Christian prayer and ennobles that prayer in its various expressions.

c) The litany-like succession of the Hail Mary, which is made up of the angel's greeting to the Virgin (cf. Lk. 1:28), and of Elizabeth's greeting (cf. Lk. 1:42), followed by the ecclesial supplication, Holy Mary. The continued series of Hail Mary's is the special characteristic of the Rosary, and their number, in the full and typical number of one hundred and fifty, presents a certain analogy with the Psalter and is an element that goes back to the very origin of the exercise of piety. But this number, divided, according to a well-tried custom, into decades attached to the individual mysteries, is distributed in the three cycles already mentioned, thus giving rise to the Rosary of fifty Hail Mary's as we know it. This latter has entered into use as the normal measure of the pious exercise and as such has been adopted by popular piety and approved by papal authority, which also enriched it with numerous indulgences.

d) The doxology Glory be to the Father which, in conformity with an orientation common to Christian piety concludes the prayer with the glorifying of God who is one and three, from whom, through whom and in whom all things have their being (Rom. 11:36).

Each of these elements has its own particular character which, wisely understood and appreciated, should be reflected in the recitation in order that the Rosary may express all its richness and variety. The Rosary is an excellent prayer, but the faithful should feel serenely free in its regard. They should be drawn to its calm recitation by its intrinsic appeal. Let us inculcate this pious practice among our people and insist with them to pray the Rosary in their homes daily with great devotion.

In our Eparchy, we have the pious practice of conducting chain Rosary according to the uravium and this will be held on 21 October 2018. On 28 October, we shall organise the Rosary Rally. Besides, these I also request you, dear Fathers, to organise solemn recitation of the Holy Rosary for any ten days of the month of October in your respective parishes. Besides these practices, let us find ways and means to inculcate love for our Blessed Virgin Mary during this month of the Holy Rosary.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Mission Group Meeting: A selected people of the Eparchy gathered in the Bishop's House on 1 September 2018 at 10.00 am in order to discuss about the future plans and possibilities of mission work in the extended territory of the Eparchy. It was felt that with the help of the members of Vincent De Paul Society of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudy dioceses, it is possible to pursue new Mission work in these areas.

Flood Relief Work at Thekkekara: The KKSSS arranged a team of 32 skilled labourers and sent them to Thekkekara for two days in order to clean and repair the flood ravaged houses. The team consists of Mechanics, Electricians, Plumbers and Masons. The team worked in Thekkekara on 1 and 2 September 2018. A medical team also went with them and organised a medical camp for the people. I celebrated Holy Qurbana for people at Thekkekara Church on 2 September 2018 and inaugurated the medical camp. I sincerely thank all the skilled labourers, the members of the medical team, Rev. Fr Vinu D. Joseph and Rev. Fr Saji Elambasseril.

Ongoing Formation Course for Junior Priests: The ongoing formation course for junior priests was held on 13 and 14 September 2018. Rev. Fr Camelus SDB animated the programme. Rev. Fr Thomas Sathianesan and Mr Edwinson also took sessions for them. I personally met all the junior priests. On 13 September 2018, we had an interactive session. The course ended with the Priests' Conference at 4.00 pm. I thank God for the junior priests of the Eparchy and thank them for sparing their time to attend this course.

Shenkottai Mission: I visited Shenkottai Mission on 16 September 2018. After the Holy Qurbana at Puliyarai at 7.00 am on 16 September 2018, I met all the Fathers and Sisters working in Shenkottai mission at Holy Cross Convent, Mekkarai. It is heartening to witness the enthusiasm of our missionaries. During the meeting, the Fathers and the Sisters in-charge of various pious associations presented their plans for the coming year. We also remembered and prayed for all those who celebrated their birthdays and feast days.

On my way back to Thuckalay, I visited Rev. Fr Ginoy Thottiyil and Rev. Fr Alex Puthettu at Thirunelveli.

CRI Prayer at Kalluvilai: The Sisters of the Eparchy organised a one-day prayer and adoration at the Sinai Retreat Centre, Kalluvilai on 21 September 2018 from 7.00 am to 4.00 pm for peace and harmony in the Indian Church. They also prayed that the issues concerning Bishop Franco of Jalandhar and the Sisters may be resolved amicably.

Deva Matha Export Unit: The new garment unit at Killiyoor was blessed on 24 September 2018 at 4pm. This is yet another initiative of the Eparchy to give job opportunities to poor and deserving families. At present, there are 20 staff working and the unit has the capacity to accommodate nearly hundred staff in the future. I am grateful to Rev. Fr Santhosh and the parishioners for establishing this institution on behalf of the Eparchy.

Blessing of New Presbytery at Thettivilai: We thank and praise God for the new presbytery at Thettivilai. For years we were unable to modify or build any structure due to the constant disturbances

of fundamentalist groups or due to court cases. However, through constant prayers and legal assistance, Rev. Fr Jomon, the parish priest, with the full support of the parishioners ventured to build the priest's residence. The work was completed in a record time of 55 days and was blessed on 28 September 2018 at 5pm. Rev. Fr Jomon will be staying in Thettivilai three days a week and rest of the days he will spend at Marappady. We are grateful to Fr Jomon and the parishioners for this great achievement.

Priests and Religious Sangamam: The Sangamam of priests and religious of the Eparchy was held on 29 September 2018 at Pilankalai. The Sangamam was organised in order to improve the interaction between priests and religious working in the Eparchy. It was also an occasion to wish all the priests and religious who celebrate their Silver or Golden Jubilee of their ordination or profession this year. The Golden Jubilarians are Rev. Sr Agnetta CMC, Rev. Sr Anila FCC, Rev. Sr Bennet FCC, Rev. Sr Lillit John CMC, Rev. Sr Marya Purathil SDS. The Silver Jubilarians are Bishop George Rajendran sdb, Rev. Fr. Luka Kollampampil CMI, Rev. Fr Geo Choozhikunnel, Rev Fr. Kurian Koipuram, Rev. Sr Ancy Karingadu SABS, Rev. Sr Cicy Mariya FCC, Rev. Sr Elsy FDSHJ and Rev. Sr Vimala Jose CHF. All the Jubilarians were honoured and thanked for their selfless service to the Eparchy. I made use of the occasion to thank all the CMI Fathers, especially Rev. Fr Thomas Thekkethala CMI and Rev Fr Anto Rabin CMI for having organized the programme at Little Flower Church, Pilankarai. A special thanks go to Rev. Fr Jinu Thekkethalackal who anchored the programme. I also sincerely thank and congratulate all the Fathers and Sisters who arranged the programme in a colourful way through their active participation.

MAJOR EVENTS IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

- ❖ **Pastoral Council Meeting** will be held at Sangamam on 19 October 2018. I request all the Fathers who are members to attend the Council meeting. Kindly make arrangements for the lay members of the Pastoral Council from your respective parishes to attend it
- ❖ **Mission League Rally:** On 7 October 2018, Mission League of the Eparchy is organising a Rally from Thiruthuvapuram Latin church to Padanthalumoodu to celebrate the feast of St Theresa of the Child Jesus. I ask all the Fathers, Sisters, animators and coordinators of the Mission League to make the necessary arrangements to bring the Mission League children for the Rally. I acknowledge the hard work of Rev. Fr John Joseph, Director, Rev. Fr Jose Vayalil, Assistant Director, Rev. Sr Ann Grace FCC, Secretary, Forane Directors and Animators for taking the initiative in organising this event. This year our Eparchy is privileged to organise the Mission League National level annual gathering. For this event, national level leaders and participants from other Syro-Malabar Eparchies will come to our Eparchy and attend the Rally. A brief public meeting will be held at the end of the Rally at Padanthalumoodu. Kindly instruct the children to maintain discipline during the meeting.
- ❖ **Inauguration of Chrisma and Pulari Enterprises:** The Chrisma Religious Articles Centre, which was functioning at Padanthalumoodu church campus, will be shifted to a new location just opposite to the Padanthalumoodu bus depot. We have an acre land there and we have built a 3000 square feet showroom to showcase the religious articles for sale. The office of the Pulari Enterprises and its showroom will also be housed in the same place. It will supply school related materials to all our schools. I thank the education commission of the Eparchy for this new venture. I place on record my gratitude to Rev. Fr Robins Kuzhikodil for working hard to execute the plans. The formal blessing and inauguration of this showroom will be held on 7 October 2018 soon after the Mission League Rally. I request all the Fathers to attend this brief function.
- ❖ **Mission Sunday Cover Collection:** The Church by its very nature is missionary (AG 2). As a true missionary, the Church always concentrates her energy on the Mission work all over the world. Mission Sunday is an occasion for all the believers to express their solidarity to the universal

Church in her work of evangelization. The celebration allows the people to express their desire to become missionaries through their prayers and financial support. This year the Church celebrates Mission Sunday on 21 October 2018. The collection on that day will be sent to Rome for the mission work around the globe. Hence, I request you, dear Fathers, to create awareness among people about the mission work and to encourage them to be generous towards the missionary work of the Church. Kindly submit the Mission Sunday collection immediately after the celebration to the Eparchial Procurator.

- ❖ **Chain Rosary and Rosary Rally:** Chain Rosary in the families will be held on 21 October according to the *uraviams*. Likewise, the Rosary Rally will be held from St James Church, Mankarai to Devamatha Church, Killiyoor, on 28 October 2018. The Mariain Senai will organise it. It is a public witness to our Christian faith and an expression of our filial devotion to Blessed Mother. Kindly send as many people as possible from your parishes especially from those of Soosaipuram Forane.
- ❖ **Vestition and First Religious Profession:** This year, the FCC province of Thuckalay will be holding the first religious profession and Vestition of three Sisters. They are **Rev. Sr Sam Priya from Palukal, Rev. Sr Abisha from Chenamcode and Rev. Sr Anuja from Ramanathapuram Eparchy**. We feel happy and proud that we have two Sisters from our own Eparchy committing their lives to God. The religious profession will be held at 9.30 am on 20 October 2018 at Pilankalai parish church.
- ❖ **Inter-department meeting:** The Inter-departmental meeting will be held on 17 October 2018 at the Bishop's House. There will be two sessions. The first session will begin at 10.00 am and the second session at 12.30 pm. All the departments are requested submit the annual programme list for 2019 during the meeting without fail.

INFORMATION

- ❖ **Rev. Fr Joseph Thankachan sdb** visited Saudi Arabia for the spiritual animation of migrant Catholic community. He returned to the Eparchy on 18 September 2018.
- ❖ **Rev. Fr Sagan Nettekattu** will be returning to the Eparchy on 3 October 2018 after completing more than two years of pastoral ministry in the UK. We welcome him whole heartedly to the Eparchy.
- ❖ **Rev. Fr Justin Cheruvilil** thanks everyone for praying for his dad, who was serious sick. He is now out of ICU and his health is improving.
- ❖ **Congratulations to Rev. Fr Lijo Thekkel** for completing his MA in Sociology through correspondence. He has scored first division. We congratulate him for this great achievement.
- ❖ All our **Regency Brothers** will complete the first part of regency by 15 October and they will resume the second part of their regency on 20 October 2018. I am grateful to all the Fathers who are in-charge of these Brothers. Thank you for taking care of them. Rev. Fr Joshy, Rector, will give the Assessment Forms to the respective Fathers. Kindly spare some time to fill them.
- ❖ **Holy Land Visit:** Mr Maria Robin Edathua of Thirunelveli mission is sponsoring the expenses of three Fathers and three Sisters of our Eparchy for a pilgrimage to Holy Land. Rev. Fr Ginoy, Rev. Fr Toji, Rev. Fr Alex Puthettu, Rev. Sr Mercita SH, Rev. Sr Lissy Jose FCC and Rev. Sr Flowerlet ASMI are selected for the pilgrimage. They will be leaving for Holy Land on 17 October 2018 and will return on 27 October 2018. We wish them a faith-filled experience and a happy journey. The Eparchy is grateful to Mr Maria Robin and his family for giving this opportunity to our Fathers and Sisters.
- ❖ **Kindly take note that** the Annual Bible Convention will be held from 30 November to 2 December 2018.

- ❖ **News from Rome:** Rev. Br Shijo, who is doing his licentiate in Moral Theology has come back to Rome after spending two months of summer vacation in the UK with Rev. Fr Sajan. Rev. Fr Jimmy and Rev. Fr Justin Cheruvilil are now on a vacation in Germany. They will be returning to Rome to resume their classes on 3 October 2018.
- ❖ **Visit to Europe:** I will be away from the Eparchy from 22 October 22 to 8 November 2018. I have a two week-end mission appeals in Germany. I will also visit our Fathers in Rome. I request your prayers for the success of my mission.
- ❖ **Prayers are requested** for our Fathers who are undergoing medical treatment these days for various illnesses. Let us keep them in our prayers especially Fr Mathew Mulangasseril.

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMMES

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 01-05 October 2018 | - Annual Retreat for Priests at Sangamam |
| 05 October 2018 | - Priests' Conference |
| 07 October 2018 | - CML Rally from Thiruthuapuram to Padanthalumoodu |
| 17 October 2018 | - Inter-Departmental Meeting at Bishop's House |
| 20 October 2018 | - Vestition of FCC Sisters at Pilankalai |
| 21 October 2018 | - Mission Sunday & Chain Rosaries in Families |
| 28 October 2018 | - Rosary Rally from Mankarai to Killiyoor |

Priests' Annual Retreat will be held at Sangamam. It begins at **6.00 pm on 30 September 2018** and ends with adoration and Priests' Conference on **5 October 2018**. Rev. Fr Anil Dev IMS from Varanasi will animate the retreat. You are requested to arrive on 30 September by 5.30 pm at Sangamam. The retreat is mandatory for all the Diocesan and MST priests. The religious priests are welcome to attend. Kindly bring your Mass Account Books.

CONCLUSION

Dear Fathers, we are already in the month of October, which is dear to every Catholic. It is definitely a beautiful month in which we manifest our devotion to Mother Mary, in a special way, by praying the Rosary. It is also a grace-filled time for receiving the showers of blessings from our heavenly Mother. Just like the blooming roses which beautify our gardens and refresh the air with their sweet fragrance, the presence of our blessed Mother beautifies our parish communities, removes every element of evil and spreads the fragrance of her maternal love, peace, serenity and harmony. Our Blessed Lord wants the heart of every priest to be a home of Mother Mary, where she is the mother, guide and help. Let us give her the rightful place and honour her with profound love and devotion especially on the feast of the Holy Rosary.

With my prayers and blessings,

Yours in Christ Jesus,



+ **George Rajendran SDB**
Bishop of Thuckalay

