

DIOCESE OF THUCKALAY

# THUCKALAY TIDINGS

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**"Heaven touched earth on that holy night,  
and love became flesh in Bethlehem's light"**





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## THUCKALAY TIDINGS

December 2024 | Vol. 4 | Issue 12

A Monthly online newsletter of Diocese of Thuckalay

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## Message

Dear Friends and Benefactors,  
Greetings and prayerful wishes, Bishop's House, Thuckalay!

As we celebrate this sacred season of Christmas, we are reminded that joy is much more than a fleeting emotion. It is a profound and spiritual gift that flows from the realization of God's presence and action in our lives. The birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, is the ultimate manifestation of God's love—a moment that fills our hearts with gratitude and rejoicing. This joy is not merely about experiencing something delightful; it is about seeing the hand of God at work in the world and in our lives. When we reflect on His many blessings, His guidance, and His love, our hearts are lifted, and we are filled with strength and energy. This joy is contagious—it uplifts us and those around us, giving us renewed hope and purpose as we strive to fulfill His will each day. During this holy season, I encourage you to take time to see and



celebrate the ways God is at work in your life. Let the joy of His presence fill your heart and inspire you to share that joy with others, especially those in need of hope and encouragement. I also take this opportunity to thank all the benefactors and faithful of our diocese for your generosity, prayers, and dedication throughout the year. Your support has enabled us to continue our mission of spreading the Gospel and serving our communities. May the light of Christ's birth bring you peace, joy, and abundant blessings this Christmas and throughout the coming year. Together, let us walk in His love and be strengthened by the joy that only He can give. Wishing you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year. Yours in Christ,



+ **George Rajendran sdb**  
*Bishop of Thuckalay*



## Celebrating 28 Years of Faith: A Diocesan Journey Rooted in Grace

The Diocese celebrated its 28th Diocesan Day on Sunday, 10 November 2024, in commemoration of its Foundation Day on 11 November. For the first time, the celebration was held at the parish level, ensuring the participation of the entire faithful. In preparation, chain adoration was conducted in all parishes and convents, fostering spiritual renewal among the faithful. On 10 November, each parish observed the Diocesan Day with the solemn celebration of the Holy Qurbana. The liturgy included a special introduction on the significance of the day, a symbolic offertory procession, and the lighting of

lamps by representatives. Additional prayers were offered during the Karosoosa. Following the Holy Qurbana, public meetings were held in parishes where the Diocesan annual report, prepared by the Chancellor, Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, was presented in video, audio, or reading format. Cultural performances by students highlighted the theme, "The Role of the Diocese in Fostering Parish Communities and Strengthening the Faith." The celebrations concluded with meals or refreshments provided by each parish.





## Fostering Faith and Mission: Insights from the Pastoral Council

The second meeting of the seventh Pastoral Council was held at Sangamam on 1 November 2024, beginning at 9:45 AM with a prayer. Mrs. Juliet, the Joint Secretary, welcomed the members, and Mr. Shonic Regan, the Joint Secretary, presented the report of the previous meeting. Rev. Bishop presided over the meeting. The resource person, Mr. Eugin, President of the Legion of Mary of the Diocese of Kottar, addressed the council on "The Role of the Laity in Building up the Local Church—the Diocese." Drawing from Church documents and

the Bible, he emphasized the rights and duties of the laity and the significance of fostering Christian families rooted in sacramental grace. Council members were divided into seven groups focusing on Liturgy, Catechism, Youth Apostolate, Evangelization, Education, Public Welfare, and Family Apostolate. In the afternoon, the groups discussed questions related to the three topics and presented their findings in the common forum, followed by a collective discussion. The meeting concluded at 3:30 PM with a vote of thanks by Mr. John, the Secretary.





## Brushing Dreams: 9th Varnam Unites Young Artists

The 9th edition of Varnam, an inter-district painting and drawing competition organized by KKSSS, was held on 8 November 2024, in celebration of National and International Children's Day. Students from 35 schools in Kanyakumari district participated in two categories: Drawing (Grades IV-VI) and Painting (Grades VII-X), showcasing remarkable artistic talents.

The event began with an inaugural address by Rev. Fr. Michael Arokiyaswamy SDB, who emphasized the importance of creativity. Rev. Fr. Nelson conducted an enlightening session on the dangers of addiction. The concluding ceremony was graced by Mrs. Jenusha Ajith, President of Mulagumoodu Panchayat, who congratulated the winners and commended the event's positive impact. Prizes and shields were awarded, making the event a celebration of creativity and social awareness.



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## From Pots to Plates: Kitchen Gardening Made Simple



On 8 November 2024, KKSSS organized a workshop on “Kitchen Garden” at Pilankarai to promote organic food cultivation among women. The session, led by Mrs. Hemalata, an Agriculture Consultant from Nagercoil, highlighted the growing trend of urban kitchen gardening, particularly in apartments using pots. The workshop, attended by 53 participants, offered practical guidance on starting and maintaining vegetable gardens in limited spaces, encouraging sustainable and healthy living.





## **A Legacy Rekindled: Cardinal Alencherry's Memorable Visit**

Cardinal Mar George Alencherry expressed his joy and gratitude for the warm reception he received across the Diocese. He witnessed the flourishing fruits of the seeds he had sown during his tenure as the first bishop of the Diocese. For the faithful, it was a God-given opportunity to spend cherished moments with their beloved shepherd. Heartfelt gratitude is extended to the Curia members for their meticulous coordination and to all priests and sisters for their wholehearted cooperation in making the Cardinal's visit a memorable and grand success.







## Celebrating the Call: Priests and Religious Reflect at Sangamam

On 16 November 2024, the priests and religious of the Diocese gathered at Sangamam to express gratitude to Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, Major Archbishop Emeritus of the Syro-Malabar Church, and to extend a warm welcome.

The program began at 10:30 AM with a prayer service led by Fr. Sajan Nettaponghu and his team, followed by a public meeting at 11:15 AM. A heartfelt welcome video, prepared by Fr. Robins Kuzhikodil, was presented in honour of the Cardinal. Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General, officially welcomed all participants. Felicitation speeches were delivered by Fr. Jimmy Thekkekadumathil and Sr. Tessa Maria SH, representing the priests and religious, respectively. A felicitation song by Fr. Martin Kandamparampil and anthems by the CMC and SABS sisters added vibrancy to the event.

During his presidential address, Rev. Bishop shared the collective joy and honour of the Diocese in welcoming the Cardinal. In response, Cardinal Alencherry fondly recalled memories from his tenure and expressed his happiness in being among the faithful once again.





## From Foundation to Glory: Christ the King Church's Consecration Day

The Christ the King Church in Paraicode, established on 17 June 1973 by the CMI Fathers with just 26 parishioners, marked a significant milestone with the consecration of its newly constructed church on 16 November 2024. Over the years, the parish community has grown to 73 families with 278 members.

The first church building, constructed on 12 December 1982 under the leadership of Fr. Thomas Kodiyakkarayil CMI, was handed over to the Diocese of Thuckalay on 28 November 2004. The foundation stone for the new church was blessed by Mar George Cardinal Alencherry on 22 July 2018, with Rev. Bishop laying the stone on 19 August 2018.

The consecration ceremony began at 2:30 PM with a solemn liturgical reception for the celebrants. The Major Archbishop Emeritus of the Syro-Malabar Church, Mar George Cardinal Alencherry, consecrated the church in the presence of Rev. Bishop. Before the ceremony, Rev. Bishop blessed the *kodimaram*. The concelebrants included Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, Rev. Fr. Joshy Kulathumkal, and Rev. Fr. Antony Elamthottam CMI, Provincial of the Trivandrum CMI Province.



# Fires of Faith: CML Mission Rally 2024 Ignites Souls



The annual CML Mission Rally was held on 17 November 2024, starting from Holy Trinity Cathedral Church, Thiruthuvapuram, and concluding at Sacred Heart Forane Church, Padanthalumoodu. The rally was flagged off at 2:00 PM by Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General. Children from each forane participated in an orderly manner, marching behind their respective banners or flex boards.

The event concluded with a public meeting at Padanthalumoodu, where Mr. Aju Thomas, the Eparchial CML President, hoisted the flag. Mar George Cardinal Alencherry graced the occasion and delivered an inspiring message. Rev. Bishop participated in the rally from start to finish and addressed the missionaries during the meeting.

CML members from all parishes, along with priests, sisters, teachers, and parents, actively participated in the rally. Prizes were awarded for the best plot and the most active participation.



# A Vision for the Future: SMYM Forane Executive Discussions



The SMYM Youth Central Team organized three Forane Executive meetings in November 2024 to enhance collaboration and strengthen youth leadership across the Diocese.

**3 November:** Held at Manjalumoodu for the Manjalumoodu, Kaliyal, and Arukani Foranes.

**10 November:** Conducted at Pilankalai for the Thuckalay-Pilankalai and Soosaipuram Foranes.

**24 November:** Organized at Padanthalumoodu for the Nithiravilai and Padanthalumoodu Foranes.



## New Foundations in Faith: Blessing of Ambur Presbytery and Mission Meet

The Tenkasi Mission meeting was held at Ambur Mission on 25 November 2024, presided over by Rev. Bishop and graced by the presence of Rev. Fr. Thomas Powathuparampil, the Vicar General. The gathering brought together all the priests and religious actively involved in the Tenkasi Mission. The event began at 5:30 PM with the blessing of a rented house at Alwarkurichy near Ambur, now serving as the priest's residence. This marked a significant milestone for the mission. Fr. Thomas Koippuram, who had been residing in a facility provided by the CMC Sisters at Ambur for over a year, transitioned to the newly blessed presbytery. Following the blessing, the missionaries shared updates and experiences of their mission work, fostering a spirit of collaboration and commitment. The meeting concluded with a fellowship meal, leaving the participants inspired and united in their mission endeavors.



## A Spiritual Feast: Diocesan Bible Convention 2024 at Padanthalumoodu



The Eparchial Bible Convention was held from 29 November to 1 December 2024 at the Sacred Heart Forane Church campus, Padanthalumoodu. This year, the convention was scheduled in the evening on the first two days, with a full-day programme on Sunday, the final day, to facilitate greater participation from the faithful. The retreat, designed for both elders and CML students, was led by the team from Carmel Retreat Centre, Dharmapuri, with Rev. Fr. Stephen Thachil CMI as the main preacher. Each day commenced with the celebration of the Holy Qurbana. The first two days were presided over by the newly ordained priests and Forane Vicars, while Rev. Bishop presided over the concelebrated Holy Qurbana on the final day. A special retreat for CML students was conducted simultaneously on Saturday and Sunday at the parish premises, and a retreat for the children of Kuzhanthai Isso Iyakkam was organized by Fr. Toji Sebastian and the CMC Sisters at the SDS Convent Hostel.



## **Together in Prayer and Care:** *Gathering for Bedridden Patients at KKSSS*



On 02 November 2024, the Health Commission organized a special gathering for bedridden patients and their caregivers at the KKSSS campus, Kalluvilai. This meaningful event brought together 16 bedridden patients along with their caregivers, providing them a space for companionship, care, and spiritual support. The gathering was inaugurated by Rev. Bishop, who expressed heartfelt concern for the well-being of the patients and acknowledged the important role of caregivers in supporting those who are ill or unable to care for themselves. The event was designed to offer not just medical care, but emotional and spiritual healing, reinforcing the community's commitment to supporting the most vulnerable members of society. Through this initiative, the Health Commission aimed to provide a sense of belonging and solidarity,



reminding the bedridden patients that they are valued and loved by the community. The caregivers, who often carry the heavy burden of day-to-day care, were also offered encouragement and support, recognizing their dedication and selflessness.





## A New Era of Leadership: FCC San Joe Province's Provincial Team Elected

On 19 November 2024, a new Provincial Team was elected for the FCC San Joe Province, Thuckalay. The newly appointed team members are as follows:

- Rev. Sr. Celia FCC – Provincial Superior
- Sr. Alphy FCC – Assistant Provincial
- Sr. Ann Grace FCC – Councillor
- Sr. Ancilin FCC – Councillor
- Sr. Jaisy FCC – Councillor
- Sr. Cicy Maria FCC – Provincial Treasurer
- Sr. Amala FCC – Provincial Secretary

This newly elected team will guide and oversee the spiritual and pastoral activities of the province, focusing on strengthening the mission and fostering community engagement. Their leadership brings hope and commitment to the province's ongoing work, ensuring that the community continues to grow and flourish under their guidance.





## Unlocking Potential: Tenkasi's Entrepreneurship Development by Pulari



On 20 November 2024, Pulari Social Service Society, Tenkasi, conducted an Entrepreneurship Development Programme aimed at empowering individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to start and manage their own businesses. The programme was designed to encourage entrepreneurship, particularly among local communities, and to provide participants with practical insights into business planning, management, and sustainable practices.

The event featured expert sessions on various aspects of entrepreneurship, including market research, financial management, and the importance of innovation. Attendees were equipped with tools and resources to help them successfully launch and grow their enterprises, fostering economic growth and self-sufficiency within the community.

The initiative was a step toward promoting economic empowerment and creating opportunities for individuals to become self-reliant and contribute to the local economy. The successful organization of the programme is a testament to Pulari Social Service Society's commitment to community development and its ongoing efforts to uplift and empower the people of Tenkasi.





## Healing Hands: Free Medical Camp at St. Mary's Mission Church



A free medical camp was organized at St. Mary's Mission Church, Madurai, providing essential healthcare services to the local community. The initiative aimed to ensure access to medical care for individuals who might otherwise face challenges in availing treatment. The camp included general health check-ups and consultations by a team of dedicated doctors and healthcare professionals. Services such as blood pressure monitoring, diabetes screening, and basic medical advice were offered. Medications were also distributed free of charge to those in need.





**Mr. K.A. Thomas (74),**  
the brother-in-law of Fr. Antony Chundelikkatt



**Mr. Kurian (93),**  
Father of Sr. Ancy SDS



**Mrs. Elikutty John (85),**  
Grandmother of Fr. Aby



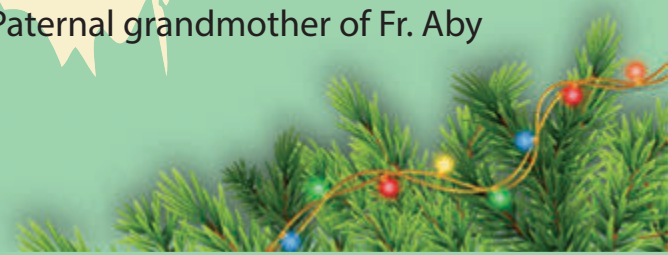
**Mrs. Thressiamma Michael (91),**  
Mother of Fr. Mathew Chandrankunnel



**Mr. Mathew (99)**  
Father of Sr. Ann Mathew SH



**Mrs. Rosamma Thomas (95)**  
Paternal grandmother of Fr. Aby





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**Christmas**  
greetings and wishes to  
**Cardinal Mar George Koovakkad**

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