

Ref. No. Priests/GR/43/2015

Dated 28 May 2015

Dear Fathers and Brothers,

Fraternal greetings from Valdocco, Turin, Italy! From 21-25 May, I attended the Salesian Bishops' Conference. On the occasion of the Bi-centenary of the birth of Don Bosco, the Rector Major of the Salesians of Don Bosco convoked the meeting of all the Salesian Bishops of the world. At present, there are 120 Salesians who are Cardinals, Archbishops or Bishops serving the Church in various capacities. Of these, 95 of them attended the Conference. From India, of 12 Salesian Bishops, 9 were present. From Tamil Nadu, of 5 Salesian Bishops, 4 were present. It was a good experience for all of us to re-live the Salesian fraternal life and to come to realize the universality of the Catholic Church.

During my visit to Rome, I met all the Fathers and Brothers of our Diocese, who are studying in Rome on 20 May 2015. We had a family gathering at the Salesian University. Rev. Sr Cecelia FCC along with her Sisters who are working in Europe too joined the gathering. It was a moment of great joy and sharing of experiences from Thuckalay. Unfortunately Fr. Josy from Germany could not be present but fondly we remembered him. Under the leaderships of Rev. Fr Santhosh and Rev. Fr Jinu Jacob, supper was prepared for all. I thank our Fathers residing overseas, especially in Italy, for organizing this great experience.

DEVOTION TO SACRED HEART OF JESUS

We are about to enter the month of June – a month dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, quoting Pope Pius XII's beautiful encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* (1956) states, "Jesus has loved us all with a human heart. For this reason, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced by our sins and for our salvation, is quite rightly considered the chief sign and symbol of that... love with which the divine Redeemer continually loves the eternal Father and all human beings without exception."

To appreciate this rich symbolism of the heart, we must remember in that Judaism the word heart represented the core of the person. While recognized as the principle life organ, the heart was also considered the centre of all spiritual activity. Here was the seat of all emotion, especially love. As the psalms express, God speaks to a person in his heart and there probes him. This notion of the heart is clear when we read the words of Deuteronomy 6:5-6: "Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today."

The heart has even greater depth when contemplated in light of the Incarnation. We believe that Jesus Christ, second person of the Holy Trinity and consubstantial with the Father, entered this world taking on our human flesh; true God became also true

man. While Jesus' heart obviously served a physiological function, spiritually His Sacred Heart represents love: the divine love our Lord shares with the Father and Holy Spirit in the Trinity; the perfect, divine love which God has for us; and the genuine human love Christ felt in His human nature.

I think one of the most beautiful passages of the Gospels is our Lord saying, "Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon your shoulders and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart. Your souls will rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden light" (Mt 11:28-30). Therefore, while meditating on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we are called to share in the love of the Lord and strive to express our own genuine love for God, for ourselves and for our neighbours.

Throughout the Gospel, we see the outpouring of Jesus' love from his heart, whether in miracle stories, the reconciliation of sinners, or the compassion for the grieving. Even on the cross, our Lord poured out His love for us: there the soldier's lance pierced His side and out flowed blood and water (Jn 19:34). St Bonaventure is of the opinion that the Church was born from the wounded side of the Lord with the blood and water representing the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and baptism.

The early Church Fathers clearly cherished this meaning of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. St Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* wrote: "We the Christians are the true Israel which springs from Christ, for we are carved out of his heart as from a rock." Likewise, St Irenaeus of Lyons said: "The Church is the fountain of the living water that flows to us from the Heart of Christ." Paulinus of Nola added: "John, who rested blissfully on the breast of our Lord, was inebriated with the Holy Spirit, from the Heart of all creating Wisdom he quaffed an understanding which transcends that of any creature." Although these are just a few brief examples from the times of the early Church, we find a profound respect for the Sacred Heart of Jesus as a font of his love, which gave birth to the Church and continues to nourish its members.

The devotion continued to grow during the Middle Ages and in 1353 Pope Innocent VI instituted a Mass honouring the mystery of the Sacred Heart. During the age of the Protestant movement, devotion to the Sacred Heart was practised in hope of restoring peace to a world shattered by political and religious persecution.

Shortly thereafter, the devotion escalated due to the fervour surrounding the apparitions of our Lord to St Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-90). For example, on 27 December 1673, Jesus revealed to her: "My Divine Heart is so passionately inflamed with love... that, not being able any longer to contain within Itself the flames of Its ardent charity, It must let them spread abroad through your means, and manifest Itself to man, that they may be enriched with Its precious treasures which I unfold to you, and which contain the sanctifying and salutary graces that are necessary to hold them back from the abyss of ruin." The four apparitions provided the catalyst for the promotion of the devotion to the Sacred Heart: a feast day in honour of the Sacred Heart and the offering of Jesus' saving grace and friendship if the individual attended Mass and received holy Communion on nine consecutive first Fridays of the month.

In 1899, Pope Leo XIII consecrated the world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Since then, his successors have exhorted the faithful to turn to the Sacred Heart and make acts of personal consecration. They have also begged the faithful to offer prayers and penances to the Sacred Heart in reparation for the many sins of the world.

Considering our present day and age, the temptations and sins of this world, the growing apathy and secularism, we too should turn again in loving devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and ask him to pour forth his grace. We must strive to make our hearts like his own, for he said: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God" (Mt 5:8).

Let us meaningfully spend this month by promoting devotion to the Sacred of Jesus among our people. I invite you, dear Fathers and Brothers, to be creative in inculcating this devotion in our Parishes. Kindly plan well in advance the various practices of piety that you want to organise during this month and execute them with great precision for the spiritual nourishment of our people. No doubt, our Blessed Lord will reward us richly for all the efforts that we take in honouring his Sacred Heart.

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESE

Conclusion of Golden Jubilee Celebrations

The concluding ceremony of the golden Jubilee celebration of Holy Family Church, Mukoottukal took place on 3 May 2015. The celebration began with a solemn Eucharistic celebration, which I presided over. During the public meeting that followed, Most Rev. Jerome Dhas Varuvel sdb, Bishop of Kuzhithurai, was the special guest of honour. The pioneering missionaries along with the Sisters who worked in the Diocese were invited and honoured during the meeting. It was indeed a great jubilation of the faithful of Mukoottukal. Rev. Fr Jacob Ayamathra prepared the people for a year spiritually by conducting various renewal programmes and retreats. I am grateful to the Parish Priest and the members of the organising committee for the smooth conduct of the celebrations.

Pastoral Council

The meeting of the Pastoral Council was held on 4 May 2015 at Sangamam. Due to rain and other unforeseen events, many of the members could not attend the meeting. However, nearly 50 members were present. After the presentation of the group reports, the members were seriously involved in deliberating on the main theme of the meeting, namely, the catechism department. The members were divided into four groups for discussing threadbare on the theme. During reporting after the group discussions, many points were brought upon how to strengthen the catechism department, how to avoid unhealthy competition among children and how to give quality training to the catechism teachers. These suggestions were discussed at the Priests' Conference held on 12 May 2015 and a final report is prepared. A copy of the report is attached with this circular for information and necessary action at the Parish level activities. I am grateful to Rev. Fr Mijo, Pastoral Council Secretary, and Mr John from Vailankarai for preparing the Pastoral Council meeting.

Transfers 2015

This year, I have made some transfers, which will take effect from 24 May 2015. I am grateful to all the Fathers for accepting the transfers in a spirit of love and obedience for the good of the Diocese. I know it is not always easy to leave the place where you worked and the people whom you loved dearly. In a special way, I wish to thank Rev. Fr Jose Muttathupadam for accepting the additional responsibilities as Parish Priests

of Vailankarai and Cheeniviali, besides being the Vicar General of the Diocese. I have attached a copy of the transfer list for your information.

Internal Auditing and Checking of Land Documents

As Rev Fr Mathew Mullangaserry, Financial Officer of the Diocese informed you during the Priests' Conference, we shall be carrying out the internal auditing and checking of all the land documents of our Parishes and Institutions from June onwards. I entreat every one to take this exercise very seriously as they involve legal issues. I request all the Fathers of the Diocese to cooperate with Fr Mathew in this task. He will pass on to you well in advance, the date and time, when the personnel will visit your Parish or Institution for this exercise. It is recommended that every Parish or Institution bear the expenses involved.

Language Course

As you are aware, a dedicated team of Sisters are engaged in Home Mission Programme in our Diocese since two years and they have completed the Foranes of Padanthalumoodu, Nithravilai, Arukani and Mukootukal. The faithful in the Parishes have welcomed and appreciated this spiritual exercise. From their experience, the Sisters felt the need for mastering the Tamil language in order to give a quality service to the faithful. Keeping this in mind, under the leadership of Rev. Fr Christudas, Sr. Lysa FCC, Sr. Mariet CMC, Sr. Dorethi SH, Sr. Anni Jameson SH, Sr. Alphy ASMI, Sr. Lincy FCC and Sr. Leema Rose FCC attended an intensive language course for two weeks. It is through language that we are able to reach out to the people and to resolve their problems. I am sure this exercise has helped our Sisters in continuing their mission effectively. From 3 June 2015, the Sisters will resume the Home Mission in Malaicode Parish. Soosaiapuram and Thuckalay-Plankalai Foranes will have the Home Mission after this. I am grateful to Rev. Fr Christudas for organizing the programme and to all the Sisters for going through this tedious training.

Data Collection

Every year, the Diocese is expected to furnish information to Propaganda Fide, Rome. It requires up-to-date data. Keeping this in mind, the Diocese will collect the data from every Parish and Institution every year in the month of January. The collected information will be sent to Propaganda Fide in the month of March. To this end, a form will be sent to you in advance and you are expected to fill it as accurately as possible. This can be easily carried if you regularly update the files that are in the Parish and Institution archives.

Secondary and Higher Secondary Results 2015

The Tamil Nadu Board released the results of Secondary and Higher secondary examinations held in 2015. All our schools have performed exceptionally well in the examinations. The results reflect the hard work and dedication of the staff, the students and the administration. I congratulate all the Fathers and Sisters for taking the educational ministry seriously and helping our young people to pass with flying colours. I would like to make special mention of St Alphonsa School and Sacred Heart schools for securing State level Ranks in the SSLC examinations. The results of our Schools are given below:

HSSLC Results 2015

No.	SCHOOL	APPEARED	CLEAR	FAILED	H.MARK	RANK
1	S.H. School	104	103	1	1155	
2	APJM, School	53	53		1105	
3	HolyFamilyMukkoottukal	103	101	2	1064	
4	CMC Kanyakumari	49	49		1121	
5	St Alphonsa	274	274		1186 1183 1181 1180 (2 students)	Dist. First Dist. Second Dist. Third Dist. Fourth
6	CMI Kalial	180	173	7	1119	
7	MCBS Sengottai	50	50		1142	

SSLC Results 2015

No.	SCHOOLS	APPEAR	CLEAR	FAILED	H. MARK	RANK
1	S.H. Padanthalumoodu	143	143		497	State III Rank State First Rank (Malayalam 99)
2	APJM, Soosaipuram	60	60		493 (2 students)	
3	Mukkoottukal	116	116		480	
4	CMC Kanyakumari	77	77		490	
5	St Alphonsa, Nagarcoil	207	207		498 497 496	State II Rank for 3 students State III Rank for 2 students Dist Third Rank
6	CMI Plankalai	76	73	3	476	
7	CMI Kalial	143	136	3	485	
8	MCBS Sengottai	98	98		493 (3 students)	
9	Holy Family Arukani	35	35		486	
10	Varuthattu	77	76		477	
11	St James Mankarai	124	124		480	
12	CMC Kulachal	17	17		495	
13	CMC Muzhukode	44	44		495	
14	FCC Kattathurai	48	48		496	Dist Third Rank 2 students

New Priests' Day

The seven new Priests are God's gift to the Diocese and their first mass was held in the Diocese on 12 May 2015 soon after the Priests' Conference at Malaicode Parish. The solemn Eucharistic celebration began at 5.30 pm. Rev.Fr Shoji presided over it and other new Priests concelebrated. Rev. Fr Joseph Nedumpuram, the Parish Priest welcomed all the Fathers, Sisters and Faithful. Besides the parishioners of Malaicode, some representatives from the Parishes where the new Priests did their Diaconate ministry were also present. It was a moment for all of us to thank God for giving these Priests to our Diocese. For one year, all the seven new Priests are

assigned to various Parishes in the Archdiocese of Changanacherry. Their places of appointment are given below:

Sl No	Name	Parish
1.	Fr Abraham Puthenpurackal (Shoji)	St. Mary's Kudamaloor
2.	Fr Thomas Attiyil (Ajeesh)	St. George Church, Edathua
3.	Fr Jose Vayalil	Poonthoppu
4.	Fr Joseph Kurias (Printo)	Manimala
5.	Fr Thomas Poovathummottil (Abin)	Thrikkodithanam
6.	Fr George Valliyamthadathil (Sumesh)	Athirampuzha
7.	Fr James Kanakalil (Vinod)	Thathampally

Vacational Bible School (VBS)

Summer vacation of the students always ends with VBS in all our Parishes. This year the VBS programme for our children was something different and memorable. It is because of its content. The VBS books of the Archdiocese of Changanacherry were translated into Tamil. The books were colourful and given attractive look so that the children would love them. The students were guided through various activities to enter into the main theme, which was easy and simple to follow. Prior to the VBS held at Parish level, the representative from all the Parishes were given training on 24 and 25 April 2015 at Kalluvilai by a team of dedicated Fathers and Brothers. Rev. Fr Justin with the help of catechism department and other Fathers organised the entire VBS programme- the training as well as the Parish level execution – with great dedication and competence. I would like to thank all those who made this programme a success.

Blessing of Kudukachivilai Mission

The people of Soosapuram Parish can thank God for the gift of another mission station within their territory. The Parish bought a plot of land at Kudukachivilai, two kilometres away from the Parish. With the help of some generous benefactors, a small building is put up. I blessed the mission station on 11 May 2015 in the presence of Rev. Fr Jose Muttathupadam, Vicar General, Fr. Antony Jose, the Parish Priest, Fathers, Sisters and faithful. This building will be used to conduct nursery classes for the children of the locality during the weekdays and on Sundays it will become the place of worship for the people of the area. Words are insufficient to thank and appreciate Rev. Fr Antony Jose for taking steps to initiate this mission station at Kudukachivilai.

INFORMATION

- Rev. Sr Nithu Anns CMC made her first religious profession in the CMC Congregation on 6 May 2015. She belongs to the CMC Vice-province of Thuckalay. We congratulate her for saying yes to God's call and wish her God's blessings.
- Rev. Sr Anni SABS is appointed as procurator and in-charge of hospitality at the Bishop's House from 11 May 2015. We welcome her whole-heartedly to the Bishop's House and thank her Superiors for generously giving her to serve the Diocese.

- Rev. Sr Benet FCC is appointed as Campus Minister and Rev. Sr. Maria Mathew CMC as accountant of St Alphonsa College. As we welcome them, we wish them well in their respective ministries.
- After serving three years as the Principal of Sacred Heart Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Rev. Sr Rose Tom CMC has returned to her Province at Bhopal. During her tenure as the Principal, the school marked tremendous growth and development. Her dedication and hard work will be remembered for generations to come. The Diocese is grateful to her and to her superiors for the great sacrifice they made in sending her to Thuckalay. Thank you dear Sr Rose Tom.
- We are grateful to Rev. Sr Clairlet CMC for being the Principal of Pulari Matriculation School for one year and to Rev. Sr Mariet CMC for serving in the Bishop's House for two years. They have been a great support to the Diocese and I want to place on record our gratitude for their selfless work. Rev. Sr Clairlet is appointed Principal of Carmal Matha Higher Secondary School, Kanyakumari and Rev. Sr Mariet CMC is involved in the Home Mission in the place of Rev. Sr Blessy CMC who has gone for her Higher studies to Bangalore. We wish them the blessings of God in their ministry
- Rev. Sr. Alphonse Jose CMC is appointed Principal of Pulari Matriculation School, Senkottai. We welcome her and wish her all the best.
- Rev. Fr Tony and Rev. Fr Kochumon will be attending a renewal and updating programme at Nanital from 1 June to 2 August 2015. We wish them all the best.
- Rev. Fr Joseph Thannipara MST has come back to the Diocese after a brief absence of four years. He is appointed Parish Priest of Arukani and Anumugam. We welcome him and wish him all the best.
- We have this year, eight Brothers to begin their Philosophical studies. They are sent to the following places for studies: Ujjain, Dharmaram, Bangalore, Mary Matha, Thrissur, Warangal, Kunnoth and Vadavadoor. We wish them well in their studies.
- Rev. Deacon Ritto Thoombunkal has begun his Diaconate ministry at KKSSS and on weekends, he will be at Malaicode Parish. We wish him God's blessings.
- Rev. Br Abhilash has completed his one-month Italian course at Chennai and will be leaving for Italy on 30 July 2015 to begin his theological studies at the University of Santa Croce, Rome.
- Rev. Fr Toji has completed his MA English studies at the Christian College, Marthandam. It was hard work and toil for two years, which I am sure, will bear much fruit in the educational ministry of Fr Toji. We wish him all the best in his ministry at St Alphonsa College.
- Rev. Fr. Sanal and Rev. Fr John Paul are doing their MA/M.Sc Studies privately and are writing their examinations these days. We shall keep them in our prayers.
- Rev. Fr Sathianesan was in the Diocese for a month for his holidays and has gone back to Rome to continue his Doctoral studies
- Rev. Fr Dency has come to the Diocese for holidays and to begin his project work. He is doing his project work at Chetipuzha Hospital.
- Rev. Fr. Jimmy is attending coaching classes in Italian and English in the coming three months. This is also a requirement for his licentiate studies at CANA.
- Rev. Fr Josy Puthenpurackal from Germany and Rev. Fr Joshy Kulathumkal from Rome will be in the Diocese for their holidays in June. We welcome them wholeheartedly and wish them happy stay with their dear ones and friends in the Diocese.
- We would like to thank all the Brothers pursuing their theological and philosophical studies at various major seminaries for assisting in all the

programmes of the Diocese during their holidays. They were actively involved in the VBS programme in the Parishes. May God bless them as they go back to their respective seminaries to continue their formation!

- Rev. Fr Felix Arul Nathan will be leaving for the USA on 4 June 2015 in order to take part in the Salesian Mission appeal programme. He will be doing it on behalf of the Diocese. We wish him happy journey and promise him our prayers for the success of his mission.
- Admissions in St Alphonsa College are going on these days. Kindly promote more students from your Parishes to the College.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- The consecration of the newly built Church at Kristurajapuram will be held on 30 May 2015 at 4.30 pm. I request as many Fathers and Sisters as possible to be present for the occasion and encourage the people. We congratulate and wish God's blessing on Rev. Fr Mijo and his parishioners for their hard work.
- The Inter-Diocesan Meeting will be held at KKSSS on 28 May 2015. The Bishops and Department heads from Changanacherry, Palai and Kanijrapally Dioceses will be taking part in the meeting. I invite all the Directors of various Departments and Pious Associations to attend the meeting without fail. Others are most welcome to join us for lunch at 1.00 pm.

CONCLUSION

The summer holidays for our students are coming to an end. Soon they will be getting ready for the new academic year. Kindly pray over all the students of your respective Parishes and wish them well as they begin their academic studies. I would like to personally wish all of you, especially those are directly involved in the educational ministry, for the successful inauguration of the new academic year in your respective institutions.

The month of May is coming to an end. It is the month, which the piety of the faithful has especially dedicated to Our Blessed Lady and it is the occasion for a moving tribute of faith and love, which Catholics in every part of the world express to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. I am sure you have spent this month with great devotion worthy of our Blessed Mother. I suggest that you chalk out some programmes at the Parish level to conclude this month in a fitting manner. May the Mother of God, who interceded for the young couple at Cana, be your intercessor in your Priestly ministry!

With God's blessings!

Yours faithfully in the Lord,

+George Rajendran sdb
Bishop of Thuckalay

Enclosed: Transfer list and Pastoral Report on Catechism