

KERALA CATHOLIC BISHOPS' COUNCIL

July 5, 2026 – Youth Day: KCBC Youth Commission Circular

Beloved in Jesus Christ,

Youth Day is a special occasion set aside by the Church to lovingly embrace our young people, who are the life and hope of the Church. The Kerala Church observes Youth Day on the Sunday following the third day of July. Accordingly, this year on July 5th, joining with the Catholic Church in India, we are celebrating Youth Day in a grand manner.

Our main objective during these days is the coordination and mutual fellowship of various youth organizations within the Catholic Church. This observance should pave the way for us to embrace various youth movements operating in dioceses and parishes, uniting them with one mind in the evangelical mission of the Church.

It is a necessity of this era that youth organizations be empowered through proper training and deep fellowships. Standing close to the Church, our youth must become more vibrant and efficient in making constructive contributions to the nation and the global community.

Youth must take care to align themselves fully with the teachings of the Catholic Church and maintain ecclesial communion without falling into the temptations of opposing ideologies. They should be ready to participate with greater enthusiasm and vigor in organizational activities at the parish level.

The youth must not lag behind in gaining a deep understanding of various contemporary issues. With the mindset of Christ, the clear stances and reactions of the youth, grounded in peace, fellowship, justice, and morality, represent the voice of the world's conscience. Like the Good Samaritan in the Gospel, the youth can overcome growing attitudes of apathy and alienation through acts of care and love.

This year, the global Catholic Church is observing the "Franciscan Year," keeping in mind the spiritual ethos of St. Francis of Assisi. As part of this observance, the Holy Father Pope Leo XIV calls upon our youth to draw closer to nature and become guardians of this earth. Shifting away from the selfishness that exploits nature, the younger generation must step forward to become protectors of creation and future generations. The Franciscan Year reminds our youth to become messengers of peace and prophets of justice in society. In a modern world where unrest and hatred spread, our youth must be able to become sowers of Christ's peace and prophetic voices raising awareness for the rights of the marginalized.

We must view seriously the teachings imparted by the Holy Father Pope Leo XIV in his latest encyclical regarding the modern world-astonishing technology of "Artificial Intelligence" (AI). While welcoming technological progress, the Holy Father reminds us that it should not be degraded in a way that destroys human moral values and the soul. Without becoming slaves to technology, our youth must possess the spiritual wisdom to prudently utilize artificial intelligence for the good of humanity and the proclamation of the Gospel.

Understanding more deeply the contributions made by the Church toward nation-building, youth organizations must come forward to work harder for justice, equality, and the

upliftment of the marginalized. Alongside this, the youth, together with Church leadership, must remain vigilant to ensure that minority rights and benefits guaranteed by the Constitution to the Church and its members are properly received in our country. Youth organizations must step forward to take constructive action without remaining passive in the face of challenges confronting the Indian Church, such as our emptying homes, lack of representation in socio-political spheres, denied constitutional rights, and rising religious intolerance, discrimination, and attacks against Christians.

We need to make continuous efforts to have the recommendations of the esteemed Justice J.B. Koshiy Commission Report—which studied the socio-economic backwardness of Christians in Kerala—implemented. Our youth organizations must sincerely strive to win the rights related to this report and ensure that minority scholarships and other benefits reach deserving youth.

Christian life vision always encompasses noble ideals. In past years, our youth have been engaged in strong struggles against drug abuse. Along with continuing such struggles vigorously, youth organizations should lead initiatives to bring youth together in the fields of arts and sports. Instead of worldly addictions that lead to destruction, the Church desires that a single "spiritual addiction" based on Christ and His Gospel take root in everyone. The joy of following Christ is the true addiction of youth. The enthusiasm to do good based on love must conquer us.

This year's KCBC state-level Youth Day celebrations and observances are hosted by the Diocese of Idukki at Pavanathma College, Murickassery. Let us pray and cooperate together for the success of this state-level gathering taking place on July 5th.

Please ensure that July 5th, Youth Day, is specially commemorated in all dioceses and parishes across Kerala. You will surely take care to arrange special prayers for them and celebrate this day wonderfully at the parish and diocesan levels by providing opportunities for youth to showcase their talents.

The special thanksgiving offerings taken in our churches in connection with Youth Day should be contributed toward the activities of the KCBC Youth Commission, which works for the upliftment of youth in the Kerala Church. We lovingly remind you to send this thanksgiving offering, as usual, to POC (The Pastoral Orientation Center), the central office of the KCBC, to strengthen projects for the spiritual and social growth of our younger generation.

May our younger generation become the light of the world and the salt of the earth. May the intercession of Blessed Carlo Acutis—who lived in holiness amidst the cyber temptations of the modern era—and our Blessed Mother always be a guard to our youth.

Bishop Mar Joy Nellikunnel

(Chairman, KCBC Youth Commission)

Bishop Dr. Dennis Kuruppassery

Bishop Yohanos Mar Alexios

(Vice Chairmen, KCBC Youth Commission)

POC (Palarivattom), Headquarters of the Kerala Catholic Church, Kochi 682 025

NB: On Sunday, July 5, 2026, this circular must be read, or its concepts explained to the people, in all churches and institutions where Holy Mass is celebrated within the Syro-Malabar, Latin, and Syro-Malankara Catholic Churches in Kerala.