



Salem Diocese

“To Listen to Him”



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Bishop's Message - July 2026

FROM THE BISHOP’S PEN – JULY, 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings of peace, joy, and hope in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

As we step into July, we are invited by our Holy Father, Pope Leo, to pray deeply for a profound intention: the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognizing it as a gift from God. In a world that often measures the worth of a human being by utility, productivity, or social standing, Christ reminds us that every single life—from inception to its natural end—is sacred, irreplaceable, and stamped with divine dignity. As a diocesan community, let us be vibrant witnesses to this truth. Let our families, parishes, and institutions be sanctuaries where life is protected, nourished, and cherished, especially for the vulnerable, the sick, the elderly, and the forgotten.

Our Root of Faith: St. Thomas, the Apostle of India

At the very dawn of this month, on July 3rd, our entire nation and diocesan family will celebrate with immense joy the Solemnity of St. Thomas, the Apostle. He is the foundational father of our faith in this great land, reaching the shores of India in AD 52 to sow the seeds of the Gospel. While history remembers his initial doubt, his ultimate surrender—crying out, "My Lord and my God!"—stands as the bedrock of our Christian identity. We are the direct fruits of his apostolic labour and ultimate martyrdom. Let this solemnity be a time for each of us to move beyond a faith of convenience, deeply encounter the living Christ, and rekindle our own missionary zeal to bring His love to our neighborhoods, villages, and institutions.

With this shared spirit of renewal, spiritual heritage, and pastoral responsibility, I ask you to take note of the following guidelines and events for our diocese this month:

1. Feast of St. Mary Magdalene: The Feast of St. Mary Magdalene will be celebrated, as usual, in Mathiyampatti on 22.07.2026. As one of the diocesan shrines, all Parish Priests are earnestly requested to encourage the faithful to undertake a pilgrimage to Mathiyampatti. The priests from the Tiruchengode Vicariate and other priests from the diocese are requested to be available for confessions and blessing of the pilgrims on the eve of the feast and on the feast day.

2. Peter’s Pence Collection: A special collection is to be taken in all parishes of the Salem Diocese on Sunday, 05 July 2026, the Sunday following the Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul. Kindly remit the proceeds to the Diocesan Procurator at the earliest for onward transmission to Rome. Let us encourage the faithful to participate generously in this universal act of charity and communion with the Holy Father.

3. Mass Intentions: All who receive Mass Intentions from the Diocesan Procurator are required to return the Mass Exoneration Slips, duly signed and dated, to the Diocesan Procurator after the Masses have been exonerated. This is necessary for auditing purposes and to ensure the fulfilment of the canonical obligation of celebrating all the Masses for which intentions were received. Kindly adhere to this regulation, as it involves a matter of conscience and carries canonical implications.

Parish Priests are requested to observe the following guidelines regarding Mass Intentions received from the faithful:

- Parish Priests of parishes where more Mass Intentions are received than can be exonerated locally shall:
- i. **Not** give these Mass Intentions to any priest within or outside our diocese.

ii. **Not** be permitted to give Mass Intentions to any priest as a form of remuneration.

iii. Hand over any surplus Mass Intentions, along with the corresponding stipend, to the Diocesan Procurator, so that all Masses may be exonerated individually by our priests during the year.

iv. Ensure that all Mass Intentions received in parishes and shrines are recorded in order in a register or in the counterfoil of the receipt book, clearly mentioning the name and address of the donor, the intention(s) for which the Mass is to be offered, the number of Masses, and the stipend amount.

5. Monthly Recollection (August): The next Monthly Clergy Recollection will be held on Tuesday, 04.08.2026, in the Bishop’s House, Salem. Further details of the program will be communicated later.

Most Rev. Dr. Arulselvam Rayappan
Bishop of Salem

About Us



The Diocese of Salem comprises of civil districts of Salem and Namakkal. In 1623 Southern Kongunadu, part of Salem District, under Madurai Nayakkars accepted Christianity.

In 1687, the Mysore Mission laboured in the entire area of the present diocese. Fr. De Cunha died in 1711 at Kapiganathi near Hosur.

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Location

