



MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE

Deepti Bhavan, Melampara - 686 578, Kottayam Dt. Kerala, India

CIRCULAR: XI/7/2023-2028

March 31, 2024

Your Excellencies, Reverend Fathers and Brothers,

Warmest Greetings of the Season and the Joy of the Feast of Resurrection!

1. Erection of German Co-ordination

A new administrative unit of the MST is envisaged in C&D 77.1-2 of the *Constitutions and Directives*. Accordingly, in consultation with the members working in Germany and with the consent of the General Council of MST, the **CO-ORDINATION for GERMANY** of the Missionary Society of St Thomas the Apostle (MST) will be erected formally on April 2, 2024. This Coordination shall be known after St Thomas the Apostle and it will be an administrative unit of the MST, comprising the members of the society engaged in apostolic activities in the Federal Republic of Germany. Rev.Fr Mathew (Biju) Nellikunnel is appointed the First Co-ordinator of St Thomas Co-Ordination, Germany from the panel elected by the members working in Germany. We wish all the best for the new Co-ordination and felicitate Rev.Fr Mathew Nellikunnel on his new assignment. Hope the new administrative unit of MST will help the members of the Co-ordination to strengthen the bond of unity and fraternity among them.

2. Visit to Africa

I visited the African Mission from March 1 to 19 and visited all five MST priests and their apostolate in their Parishes viz. *Madela* parish of Fr Pullapillil and Fr Robin Manianchira in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, *Chengena* parish of Fr Shaiju Kizhakkekureethadathil and Ahkil Thottappallil in the Archdiocese of Songea, and Kung'ombe parish of Fr Zacharias in the diocese of Bunda. I also met the Archbishops and the bishop of these dioceses. And they have very high opinion about the service of MST Fathers. Congratulations to all the MST priests in Tanzania! There are lots of scope for primary evangelisation and planting of ecclesial communities.

3. Closing of Santhome Seminary, Thamarassery

There is a sudden drop of vocations to priesthood in all the dioceses and religious Institutes in the recent years. Thus we are also facing severe shortage of candidates to fill our two seminaries. In the light of the discussions in the General Assembly regarding the future of Santhome seminary we had consultation with the staff of both the minor seminaries regarding feasibility of maintaining two minor seminaries with a few students. Ruminating over their responses and the opinion of the members of the society in general, the General Council of MST decided to close down temporarily Santhome seminary, Thamarassery by the end of the academic year 2023-2024.

5. The Future of Santhome Thamarassery

The General Council of MST has decided to use the seminary building and its facilities mainly for two following purposes: a) for conducting Biblical and Missiological courses and seminars for lay people, sisters and priests and b) as home for the retired and senior priests. The facilities could be also used for occasional mission animation programmes, on-going formation programmes etc.

6. Visiting Members in Europe

From April 1 to 30, I am visiting Europe to meet our fathers and to participate in the formal erection of the St Thomas Co-ordination, Germany.

Fr Vincent Kadalikattilputhenpura
Director General, MST



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