

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP OF LANCASTER



**9 October 2017**

*Your Excellency, Archbishop Kurian Vayalunkal - Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea & the Solomon Islands*

*Your Excellency, Mar Joseph Srampickal - Bishop of this Eparchy*

*Reverend Fathers,*

*Reverend Sisters,*

*Brothers and sisters in the Lord, members of the Syro-Malabar Church here in Great Britain,*

As you gather today for this first anniversary celebration of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy here in Great Britain allow me to share your joy in the name of the Diocese of Lancaster. Today, is a beautiful occasion in your splendid Cathedral of St Alphonsa of the Immaculate Conception here in Preston to gather with friends and families to celebrate our shared faith and common friendship as Catholics – but especially in your own distinctive and noble tradition of the Syro-Malabar Church.

As my time, as Bishop of Lancaster, draws to its close and although I cannot be with you personally today, I offer thanks, glory and praise to Almighty God for the care-filled work leading to the foundation of your own Eparchy – together with the Episcopal Ordination of your own Bishop. The Ordination of a Bishop and a foundation of a diocese of your own by the Holy See – was the ‘work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.’

I am aware that already much work is going on at local level and more centrally with the foundation and development of the women’s forums, Saturday schools, youth programmes, pilgrimages to Fatima and Walsingham (and to the Holy Land next year), adult formation courses as well as the propaedeutic seminary soon to be established. Please God, your Eparchy will continue to grow from strength to strength. In the fullness of time, incardinated clergy - and religious assigned to it - will provide you with great strength and graces so as to fortify the people for living and working in an increasingly secular Britain. Soon, will surely come more buildings of your own and the establishment of your own stable parishes.

Dear faithful of the Eparchy – represented in all – or at least most - of your missions/chaplaincies today, the Church values your steadfast presence in these lands and the courageous living out of the Christian apostolate in your local areas; the assistance so many of you give to local latin-rite parishes, your work and unique contribution to the NHS and in nursing homes is especially precious to us.

Because you have a deep and joyful faith: be proud of it, be united together and be missionaries here in Britain. We need you – we love you!

With an assurance of my prayerful support and best wishes,

As ever in Christ our Lord,

+Michael G Campbell OSA  
**Bishop of Lancaster**