

**FROM THE APOSTOLIC SEE OF MALANKARA
METROPOLITAN DR. JOSEPH MAR THOMA**

Circular No. 267

*Blessings to you all the Vicars, Resident Clergy, Trustees
and Members of all the Parishes under our authority.*

Beloved in Christ,

With the availability and fatal influence of intoxicating drugs on the increase these days, the Church is deeply committed to a vigorous mission of liberation from narcotic abuse. Mar Thoma Church began temperance activities as a creative response to social problems like narcotic addiction. In an earlier meeting of the Maramon Convention, there is a history of people burying narcotic substances underground on the sandy riverbed, with a change of heart upon listening to exhortation against narcotic abuse. Wednesday afternoon sessions of the Maramon convention have been dedicated to exhortation against social evils. Each year in January the second Sunday is separated as De-addiction day.

The *Social Awareness Campaign Committee*, constituted in the previous years to work in the field of narcotic liberation, could conduct workshops for 480 people in eight Dioceses in Kerala, awareness classes for youth and children, organize street plays, family gatherings of liberated addicts, and fellowship of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (AA), and publish a Malayalam handbook entitled *Lahariyil Ninnu Vimochanam*.

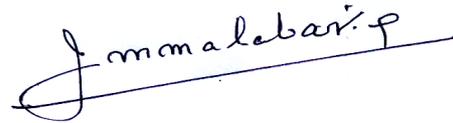
In order to enlarge the scope for similar programs initiated by the Church we intend to constitute a 'Forum for Narcotic Liberation (*Lahari Vimochana Samithi*)' with the supervision of Diocesan Episcopa at the Diocesan level and clergy at the regional Centre level.

The Sabha Council decided to augment the campaign by constituting a Forum for Narcotic Liberation (*Lahari Vimochana Samithi*) in 60 Centres and constituent parishes of the Church to commemorate my 60th Jubilee of Priestly Ordination. The goal of the Forum will be to empower the parishes through programs such as de-addiction awareness and counseling for individuals and families and coordinate programs at the Centre-Diocesan-Central levels. Diocesan Episcopas and Clergy are alerted to initiate the Forum by organizing those who are equipped for voluntary service in and through workshops.

Thus with participation of the faith community at the regional level let us make a creative influence on society by organizing a *Forum for Narcotic Liberation* to coordinate De-addiction and narcotic liberation programs.

Grace be with you all.

Dated September 26th, 2016 from Poolatheen, Tiruvalla



Dr. Joseph Mar Thoma Metropolitan