



Mag. Dr. Ägidius J. Zsifkovics

Diözesanbischof Dijecezanski Biškup Megyéspüspök

Z: 66715/3, 66716/3

Eisenstadt, January 28, 2020

Your Lordships!

My dear brother Bishop Mar Matthew! Arackal Pithave!

My dear brother Bishop Mar Jose! Pulickal Pithave!

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

It is a great honor to be here with you today. And I will, first of all, have to say two words on this special occasion: "Thank you" and "congratulation". My thanks go to Mar Mathew Arackal - for his brotherly love and deep friendship with the Diocese of Eisenstadt and the diocesan partnership we have. And my congratulations go to Mar Jose Pulickal who today is making an important step in his life.

The act of inauguration of a new bishop is a very special moment in the life of a diocese. It is the moment in which the pastor steps beside his herd to assume full responsibility. It is the moment to say, with the words of Pope Francis, to one's brothers and sisters: *From now on I will dedicate my life to everyone of you. I will go ahead of you to lead your way. I will walk beside you to protect you. And I will walk behind you in order to have an eye on those who lag behind - to encourage them and to softly gather those who have lost their way.*

The act of inauguration is the moment in which God – in the very sense of the word – „settles down“ among his people. Like Jesus called himself the good shepherd, it is now the new bishop's mission to imitate this divine sample - calling all the faithful to come, to listen to God's divine word, to open their hearts to Him as to men's best friend, and, finally, to have real communion with Him through the sacrament, through their lives, words, and deeds.

When the new bishop of Kanjirapally today is going to solemnly assume commitment, he actually will find a strong herd waiting for him. He will find it, metaphorically spoken, on meadows green and fruitful. He will be able to guide his people on spiritual paths that have been cautiously prepared by his predecessor after so many years of full devotion and boundless dedication. Bishop Mar Matthew Arackal, with a strong heart and a strong and skillful hand, has not only dedicated himself to the well-being of this diocese but has also gained outstanding achievements in strengthening relations with friends and partners in the

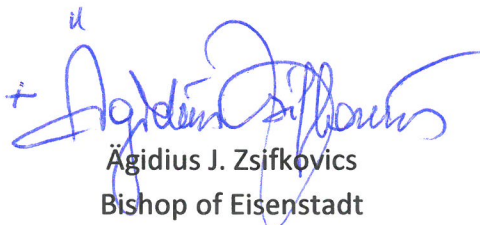
diocese of Eisenstadt. His many ideas, projects, and visits helped to widen and to deepen a partnership that had been begun by Archbishop Powathil and Bishop Stefan László, first bishop of our diocese, and carried forward by Mar Mathew Vattakuzhy and Bishop Paul Iby. I am deeply convinced that Bishop Mar Jose Pulickal, with his very own talents and charisma will carry forward not only the Eparchy of Kanjirapally but also our fruitful partnership strengthening it especially on the spiritual level.

Your Excellencies! Brothers and Sisters! My very special blessings and greetings on behalf of the Diocese of Eisenstadt are with you in this very precious moment, as well as the hearts and thoughts of the people of my diocese. What can we give to our beloved Eparchy of Kanjirapally and to her new bishop Mar Jose Pulickal to express our joy and pride?

This casket contains the relic of Ladislaus Batthyány-Strattmann, the first blessed of the diocese of Eisenstadt. It consists of a piece of the hand and of the heart of the Blessed. Ladislaus was also known as a "doctor of the poor", and the poor flocked to him for assistance and advice. He treated them free of charge, and as well as the physical health of his patients, Ladislaus was also concerned with their spiritual health. As a doctor, husband, and family father blessed Ladislaus was convinced that as the medical surgery was his domain, he was still an instrument in God's hands, and that the healing itself was a gift of God.

May our gift, the relic of Blessed Ladislaus, express our joy and our pride to be with you on this very special occasion. May our gift be seen as a further sign of brotherly love and deep friendship between the Diocese of Kanjirapally and the Diocese of Eisenstadt, and between their bishops. And may it always remind us, as Christians, what it takes to be a true follower of our Lord – a strong hand for shaping the world, but at the same time a strong heart opening for God and His plans. It would be a wonderful expression of our spiritual relationship if the relics could find a suitable place in Kanjirapally's cathedral.

Invoking the Lord's blessings upon your new service, Pulickal Pithave, upon your new period of life, Arackal Pithave, and upon you all, I shall say „Thank you!“ and „All the best!“



Ägidius J. Zsifkovics
Bishop of Eisenstadt

Proclaimed 3rd of February in Kanjirapally cathedral