



**Most Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph, D.C.L., Rome.
Bishop of Mannar, Bishop's House, Mannar, Sri Lanka.**

Tel: 023-2232503; 2232710 Fax: 023-2232709
E-mail : bpjoseph@sitnet.lk or jrayappu@yahoo.com

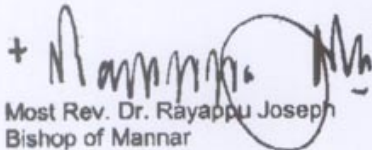
Tuesday 22nd July 2008.

PRESS RELEASE: THE SACRED STATUE OF OUR LADY OF MADHU

Due to the escalation of war in the un-cleared area of Madhu and Manthai West during the past months in District of Mannar, thousands of families have been displaced several times and had moved into Vellankulam –Thevanpiddy area. The plight of these displaced people is very pathetic and their sufferings beyond description.

These displaced people from the above area, numbering over 21,000 who were being sheltered in Thevanpiddy and Vellankulam have again come under threat and due to heavy shellings in these areas they have again deserted these places and are on their way to possible interim locations. Most of these people at the moment are living under trees along the road and in the nearby jungles and their situation is heart rending.

The priests who were residing in the church at Thevanpiddy where the Sacred Statue of Our Lady of Madhu was temporarily enshrined also had to leave this area due to this volatile situation. We wish to inform our dear people and all the devotees of Our Lady of Madhu that the Sacred Statue of Our Lady of Madhu has been temporarily brought by us to the Bishop's House, Mannar today the 22nd of July 2008. The Sacred Statue will be taken back to its original abode Madhu, when the situation becomes conducive after due penitential services according to the tradition and practice of the Catholic Church. We appeal to all our people to earnestly pray for peace in our dear land and for the day when we all can get together as one family at the feet of our dear Mother, Our Lady of Madhu.

+  - 22-07-2008

Most Rev. Dr. Rayappu Joseph
Bishop of Mannar

