



SYNODAL NEWS

BULLETIN OF THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH

XXIX SYNOD (2021) SESSION I & II

SPEECHES

REPORTS

DECISIONS

DECREES

DOCUMENTS

CIRCULARS

PASTORAL LETTERS

SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA



SYNODAL NEWS

BULLETIN OF THE SYRO-MALABAR MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CHURCH

Vol. 29

December 2021

MOUNT ST. THOMAS, KAKKANAD

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EDITORIAL

The widespread Covid-19 pandemic has practically changed the world and every aspect of human life is radically affected. It has literally changed the life of every single individual and community around the globe. No section of the society and no dimension of life are left untouched. When the customary means of communications were locked down by the pandemic, the digital forum emerged building bridges among the scattered and isolated human being, families, parishes and societies. The Church too, naturally adapted to the new situations. The online celebration of sacraments and prayer sessions gave comfort to those who suffered by the closing down of the churches and the prohibition of the religious gatherings. The humanity as a whole is gradually getting accustomed to the new life style in the Covid and post-Covid period.

Both the Sessions of XXIX Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church were convened online following the guidelines given by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, in the context of the pandemic. The First Session of the XXIX Synod was held from 11 to 16 January 2021. This Session of the Synod discussed in detail various topics. The Synod decided to revise the Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church and entrusted the work to the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal. The Synod approved the list of the grades of feasts to be celebrated in the Syro-Malabar Church *ad experimentum* for one year. The Synod Fathers discussed with due importance the practical measures to be taken to strengthen the *Catholica Congress* and SMYM in all the eparchies. The functioning

of the Major Seminaries and the formation of the seminarians were other topics of importance.

The Second Session of the XXIX Synod convened online from 16 to 27 August 2021 captured special attention of the entire Syro-Malabar Church as well as others for the decision on the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*. Before the beginning of the Synod, the background was already set by the Apostolic See for the discussions on the celebration of Holy *Qurbana*. The Congregation for the Eastern Churches, granting *recognitio* to the revised *Malayalam Raza Qurbana Taksa* gave directives for implementing the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* as already decided by the Synod in 1999, together with the inauguration of the revised text. Holy Father Pope Francis in his historic letter to the Syro-Malabar Church dated 03 July 2021 confided to the Syro-Malabar Church: "I willingly take the occasion of the recognition of the new *Raza Qurbana Taksa* to exhort the clergy, religious and lay faithful to proceed to a prompt implementation in the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, for the greater good and unity of your Church". Those were words of the paternal solicitude of the Holy Father to our Church.

The Synod Fathers after intense moments of prayer and reflection spent sufficient time to discuss on the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* and the necessity and importance of implementing its uniform mode of celebration in the Church. The new Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli addressed the Synod. Looking back to the history, evaluating the current reality and ardently desiring for unity of the Syro-Malabar Church in the future, the Synod unanimously accepted the exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in all eparchies in the Syro-Malabar Church as decided by the November 1999 Synod and reiterated by the Synodal Sessions in 2020 and approved by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches together with the implementation of the revised text of Holy *Qurbana* from the First Sunday (28 November)

of the Season of Annunciation 2021. May the unity that flows from the Altar be spread everywhere and revitalize every aspect of the life and ministry of all members of the Syro-Malabar Church!

The Father and Head of the Syro-Malabar Church Major Archbishop Cardinal Mar George Alencherry has entered into the Silver Jubilee Year of his Episcopal Ordination on 2 February 2021 and the Golden Jubilee Year of his Priestly Ordination on 18 December 2021. We gratefully remember the fruitful leadership he is giving to our Church through his life of dedication and submission to God's Will especially in the vexing situations. We wish him God's abundant blessings to continue to lead our Church *ad maiorem Dei gloriam et bonum Ecclesiae*.

This issue of Synodal News (Vol.29, December 2021) brings to you the report and decisions of the Sessions of the Synod, as well as the pastoral letters, circulars and decrees and other documents. This edition will keep the readers informed of the major events and discussions in the Syro-Malabar Church in 2021.

XXIX SYNOD (2021)
SESSION I {ONLINE}
11 - 16 JANUARY 2021

XXIX SYNOD (2021) SESSION I (ONLINE)
11-16 JANUARY 2021

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

We have celebrated the annual great Feast of Christmas, respecting the Covid-19 protocol. I wish you all the joy and peace of Christmas that has already brought us to the Feast of *Denha*. The solar cycle of time has entered A.D. 2021. May the New Year be a time that relieves us from the grips of the devastating corona virus and provides us new blessings from the Lord! It is a matter of joy for us that during the course of the year 2020-2021, our Church is blessed with 235 New Priests (97 for Eparchies and 138 for Religious Institutes). 17 Deacons are yet to be ordained in the coming months.

We are constrained to conduct one more online Session of our Synod because of the Covid- 19 pandemic. Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop has already indicated to you the modalities of participating in this virtual Synod. Let me cordially welcome you all to the First Session of XXIX Synod.

With great appreciation I observe that during the Covid -19 situation, the pastoral and evangelization drives of our Church have not only kept up its vitality but also initiated new ways of pastoral and missionary projects and programmes. The activities of the Eparchies, Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Associations and other communitarian activities are being successfully carried out in digital forum. Celebrations of feasts, baptisms, solemn first communion services, marriages

and funerals have also regained their ecclesial ambience, of course observing the Covid-19 regulations given by the governments. Let us hope that by the introduction of vaccination, we may be able to get over gradually the onslaught of this dangerous virus. All the same we have to give continued instructions to our priests towards the missionary and pastoral orientations they have to adopt during the Covid-19 situation.

Holy Father Pope Francis has charismatically risen to the occasion and has made timely interventions to respond positively to the crisis situations in the Universal Church. His attempts for the reorganization and renewal of the Curial administration of the Church have begun to bear fruits. The measures he adopted to reassure the integrity and sanctity of the clergy are well appreciated within the Church and in the general public. It is by facing the opposing currents that the Holy Father presently navigates the barque of Peter. Let us pray for his intentions so that the Lord may strengthen him to strengthen others in turn. His recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* has gained universal acceptance and it will have positive results in creating greater harmony among the nations of the world. The declaration of the Year of St Joseph by the Holy Father will surely give a new impetus for the life of Christian families and will create greater spirit of communion in the Church.

It was on 6 September 2020 that Bishop Paul Chittilapilly left us for eternal life. All of us know very well the exemplary life of Bishop Paul Chittilapilly both as a priest and a Bishop. His Episcopal service in Kalyan and Thamarassery has contributed much to the common witness of our Church in India. As Chairman of the Commission for Particular Law of our Church and the Commission for Liturgy, he has rendered a historical contribution through the publication of the Code of Particular Law and the texts of the Pontifical, Sacraments and *Propria* of the Holy *Qurbana* of our Church.

Bishop Paul Chittilapilly was a man of prayer with a deep spirituality who never failed to recite the Liturgy of the Hours all throughout

his pastoral ministry. Both Kalyan and Thamarassery venerate him as their Father who gave a strong leadership in their ecclesial life. As the first Bishop, he was the architect of the Eparchy of Kalyan, successfully surmounting all the initial difficulties in organizing the migrant community into an Eparchy. In the previous August Synod, as you might remember, Bishop Chittilapilly had made valuable interventions emphasizing in particular, the need of prayer in our Church. His death was unexpected by a massive heart attack and it was very painful to all of us. I appreciate very much Bishop Remigio Inchananiyil and the presbyterium of Thamarassery in giving a solemn *adieu* to our beloved Bishop by a well organized funeral service. Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS also organized an appropriate memorial service for his immediate predecessor in Kalyan. Let us commend once again Bishop Paul Chittilapilly to the merciful Lord, who must have granted him eternal reward!

Archbishop Joseph Chennoth, belonging to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and Apostolic Nuncio to Japan also left us for heaven on 8 September 2020. He served as Apostolic Nuncio to the Central African Republic, Chad, Tanzania and Japan. His sad demise happened during his service in Japan. Before becoming Nuncio he served in a few Nunciatures of African countries, in Belgium and Spain as counselor to the Nuncios. As Nuncio he added a spiritual flavor to the diplomatic service. With calm and quiet behavior he tried to be at the service of everybody concerned. After his death Msgr Veceslav Tumir, First Counselor in the Nunciature of Japan, wrote to me: "He was a warm, kind and pious person, noted for his Marian devotion. He met everyone with a smile and words of encouragement. He will be greatly missed". He received a posthumous honour from the Government of Japan, named *Order of the Rising Sun*, which is the second greatest honorary title the Japanese government confers to important personalities who have made distinguished achievements in international relations. Let us be grateful to Archbishop Joseph Chennoth who has favourably acted towards our Church as and when occasions arose. Let us commend his soul to the merciful Lord!

Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro, concluding his nearly four years of service as the Apostolic Nuncio to India, has left us for his new assignment as Apostolic Nuncio to Brazil, which has the Episcopal Conference with the highest number of Bishops in the Church. I would like to recall here the online meeting with him to express our thanks and say farewell to him. The Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church expresses our sincere gratitude to His Excellency Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro for the fruitful service he has rendered to our Eparchies and Institutes of Consecrated Life during his tenure in India. The promptness in his correspondences and his availability for the needs of our Church have to be highly appreciated. He visited three Synodal Sessions of our Church and two times he met all the Bishops individually. This was an exceptional gesture from his part and an encouragement for the Bishops in exercising their pastoral ministry. In writing to the Bishops, informing of his transfer from India, Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro recalled the numerous opportunities of his meeting with the Synod. Before leaving India, in a personal letter he wrote to me: "As I had the opportunity to express several times, I have a particular gratitude and admiration for the Syro-Malabar Church which is entrusted to your pastoral zeal". Let us keep him in our prayers.

Although Bishop Geevarghese Mar Aprem, the new Auxiliary Bishop of Kottayam, does not belong to our Synod, let us felicitate him in his appointment. The Oriental Congregation has stipulated that, being the Auxiliary Bishop of Kottayam for the Malankara Knanaya Community, Bishop Geevarghese Mar Aprem will be a member of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malankara Church and his participation in our Synod will be limited to matters concerning the Knanaya faithful and other sittings as they deem appropriate. May his ministry be in every way helpful for the growth of the Archeparchy of Kottayam!

Bishop Mathew Arackal and Bishop Bosco Puthur are completing their Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee in the month of March, this year. Let us felicitate them for their exemplary and successful ministry so far in the Church and Society.

Certain incidents and events in the Church during the past few years have created a great concern regarding the future mission of the Church. There have been incidents of moral failures and indiscipline from the clergy and consecrated persons which call attention for greater vigilance and more careful pastoral guidance from the part of Bishops. We Bishops also have to be more attentive to safeguard the integrity of our priests and their discipline with remedial measures and pastoral judgments. Priests and seminarians are not to be considered servants or dependents moving around the person of the Bishop. All have to move around our Lord Jesus Christ in communion and accomplishing various participatory roles in the Church.

The economic and political situation in India and abroad also raises concerns that need our immediate attention. Many of our people have difficulties in meeting their material needs of life, the education of their children and the difficulties of a migrated situation. It is our prime duty now to alleviate the sufferings of our people in this regard by finding new ways and means to tackle them in cooperation with the governments concerned. Agriculture has to gain a new impetus under the guidance of parish priests and major superiors of religious congregations. The Church in Kerala has to take particular projects through associations of laity especially Catholic Congress. In the confused situation of politics in India, we may have to give appropriate guidance to the people taking into consideration democratic values of equality, religious freedom, and opportunity of development for all people.

I invoke God's blessings upon all of us to have a fruitful Synodal Session. May Mary, Mother of Christ, St. Thomas, our Father in faith and all our Saints and Blesseds intercede for us!

With these words I declare the First Session of the XXIX Synod 2021 open.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

REPORT

The XXIX Synod (2021), Session I convened online through zoom video conferencing, hosted from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, began at 05pm IST on 11 January 2021.

The Formal Inauguration of the Synod

The formal sitting of the Synod began with a prayer and the lighting of the lamp by the Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry. Then proceeding with the inaugural address, the Major Archbishop made a reference to the great Feast of Christmas and entry into 2021 and thanked God for the blessings bestowed on the Syro-Malabar Church. So far this year, 235 Deacons from the eparchies and various religious congregations have been ordained priests. The Major Archbishop particularly commended the services rendered by the Eparchies and Institutes of Consecrated Life through their active presence in the digital forum and actual presence in the pastoral care, despite the crises of the Covid period. The Major Archbishop made a special reference to the leadership of the Holy Father Pope Francis. His recent Encyclical *Fratelli tutti* has gained universal acceptance and it will have positive results in creating greater harmony among the nations of the world. The Major Archbishop invited the members to pray for the Holy Father so that the Lord may strengthen him to strengthen others in turn.

Commemorating late Bishop Paul Chittilapilly, the Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Thamarassery, the Major Archbishop said that he was a man of prayer with a deep spirituality who never failed to recite the Liturgy of the Hours all throughout his pastoral ministry. Both Kalyan and Thamarassery venerate him as their

Father who had given a strong leadership in their ecclesial life. As Chairman of the Commission for Particular Law of our Church and the Commission for Liturgy, he had rendered a historical contribution through the publication of the Code of Particular Law and the texts of the Pontifical, Sacraments and *Propria* of the Holy *Qurbana* of our Church. The Major Archbishop appreciated Bishop Remigio Inchananiyil and the presbyterium of Thamarassery in giving a solemn *adieu* to Bishop Chittilapilly and to Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS for organizing an appropriate memorial service in the Eparchy of Kalyan.

Remembering the late Archbishop Joseph Chennoth, the former Apostolic Nuncio to Japan, the Major Archbishop said that as Nuncio he added a spiritual flavor to the diplomatic service. With calm and quiet behavior he tried to be at the service of everybody concerned. Archbishop Joseph Chennoth received a posthumous honour from the Government of Japan, named *Order of the Rising Sun*, which is the second greatest honorary title the Japanese government confers to important personalities who have made distinguished achievements in international relations. The Major Archbishop gratefully remembered that Archbishop Joseph Chennoth was a person who favourably acted towards our Church, as and when occasions arose.

Referring to the transfer of our Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro, the Major Archbishop thanked him for the fruitful service he has rendered to our Eparchies and Institutes of Consecrated Life during his tenure in India. The promptness in his correspondences and his availability for the needs of our Church have to be highly appreciated. He visited three Synodal Sessions of our Church and two times he met all the Bishops individually. The Major Archbishop wished him every success in his new assignment as Apostolic Nuncio in Brazil.

The Major Archbishop congratulated Bishop Mathew Arackal, former Bishop of the Eparchy of Kanjirapally and Bishop Bosco Puthur, the Bishop of Melbourne on the occasion of their Sacerdotal

Golden Jubilee. He also wished Geevarghese Mar Aprem, newly consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Kottayam for the Malankara Knanaya Community all success in his ministry.

He asked the bishops to be more vigilant in maintaining the sanctity and discipline of the clergy. He reminded the priests, religious and seminarians to live a Christ-centered life and not to lose sight of this spiritual insight in their services to the Church. The Major Archbishop said the political and economic situations in the country are worrying, adding that the Church's primary priority should be to provide relief to the suffering people.

Recalling the fact that every Synodal Session is an ecclesial act guided by the Holy Spirit and invoking blessings of God, the Major Archbishop declared the First Session of XXIX Synod 2021 open.

Participants

The following members were present for the current online Session of the Synod: Major Archbishop George Alencherry, Abp. Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Kottayam), Abp. Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Abp. Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Abp. George Njaralakatt (Tellicherry), Abp. Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (Faridabad), Abp. Antony Kariyil CMI (Vicar of the Major Archbishop for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bp. Jacob Manathodath (Palghat), Bp. Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Bp. Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Bp. Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Bp. Jacob Angadiath (Chicago), Bp. Sebastian Adayanthrath (Mandya), Bp. Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Bp. Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Bp. Thomas Thuruthimattam CST (Gorakhpur), Bp. Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam), Bp. Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Bhadravathi), Bp. Bosco Puthur (Melbourne), Bp. Remigiose Inchananiyil (Thamarassery), Bp. Raphael Thattil (Shamshabad), Bp. Paul Alappatt (Ramanathapuram), Bp. Pauly Kannookadan (Irinjalakuda), Bp. Jose Chittooparambil CMI (Rajkot), Bp. George Rajendran SDB (Thuckalay), Bp. Jacob Muricken (Auxiliary, Palai), Bp. George Madathikandathil (Kothamangalam), Bp. Joseph Kollamparampil CMI (Jagdalpur),

Bp. Jose Puthenveetil (Auxiliary, Faridabad), Bp. Joy Alappatt (Auxiliary, Chicago), Bp. Ephrem Nariculam (Chanda), Bp. Joseph Kodakallil (Satna), Bp. Jose Kalluvellil (Mississauga), Bp. Prince Antony Panengadan (Adilabad), Bp. Jose Pulickal (Kanjirapally), Bp. Joseph Srampickal (Great Britain), Bp. Stephen Chirappanath (Apostolic Visitor, Europe), Bp. Thomas Tharayil (Auxiliary, Changanacherry), Bp. Joseph Pamplany (Auxiliary, Tellicherry), Bp. Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Curia Bishop), Bp. Tony Neelankavil (Auxiliary, Trichur), Bp. Sebastian Pozholiparambil (Hosur), Bp. John Nellikunnel (Idukki), Bp. James Athikalam MST (Sagar), Bp. Vincent Nellaiparampil (Bijnor), Bp. Peter Kochupurackal (Auxiliary, Palghat), Bp. Joseph Pallikkaparampil (Emeritus, Palai), Bp. Gratian Mundadan CMI (Emeritus, Bijnor), Abp. Joseph Powathil (Emeritus Changanacherry), Bp. Gregory Karotemprel CMI (Emeritus, Rajkot), Bp. Thomas Chakiath (Emeritus Auxiliary, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bp. George Punnakottil (Emeritus, Kothamangalam), Bp. Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI (Emeritus, Chanda), Bp. Joseph Pastor Neelankavil (Emeritus, Sagar), Bp. Mathew Vaniakizhake V.C. (Emeritus, Satna), Abp. George Valiamattam (Emeritus, Tellicherry), Bp. Joseph Kunnath CMI (Emeritus Adilabad), Bp. Anthony Chirayath (Emeritus, Sagar) Bp. John Vadakel CMI (Emeritus, Bijnor) and Bp. Mathew Arackal (Emeritus, Kanjirapally).

Procedure of the Sitting

Every day, the sitting was scheduled from 5 pm to 7 pm IST. At the beginning of each sitting, one Bishop sang a prayer song and another Bishop recited the prayer for all. The minutes of each day was read out by the Secretary of the Synod at the beginning of the sitting on the following day. The minutes were displayed to the participants through screen sharing.

Office Bearers for the Present Session of the Synod

The Synod approved the designation of the following persons to the various offices and committees for the conduct of the present Session:

Moderators

Bishop Raphael Thattil (Convener) and Bishop Remigiose Inchananiyil moderated the sittings of the Synod.

Committee for the Circular

The Media Commission - Bishop Joseph Pamplany (Chairman), Bishop Pauly Kannokadan (Member) and Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Member) - was entrusted with the responsibility of drafting the Circular after the Synod.

Review of the Decisions of the Previous Synod

Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI, the Secretary of the Synod, read out the decisions of the previous Synod held in August 2020. Bp. Sebastian Vaniyapurackal informed the Synod of the follow up on the decisions. The Synod reviewed the implementation of the decisions.

Finalization of the Agenda

Bishop Raphael Thattil moderated the sitting. Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI read out the proposed agenda approved by the Permanent Synod. Some members made some new proposals to be included in the agenda. After a brief discussion the Agenda was finalized with a few additions. The finalized agenda consists of the following items:

1. Extension of the term of the Rector of St Ephrem's Theological College, Satna for one more year
2. Extension of the term of Seminary Commission, Satna
3. Further extension of the term of the Seminary Commission for Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnoth
4. Formation in the seminaries and the ongoing formation of priests.
5. Deacon Ministry in *Maria Mater Ecclesiae* Seminary Rome
6. Request to raise St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, in the Eparchy of Kothamangalam to the status of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre

7. Revision of the Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church
8. Request of Bp Jose Porunnedom for an Auxiliary/Coadjutor Bishop for the Eparchy of Mananthavady
9. Transfer of Money from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia to the Eparchy of Shamshabad
10. The implementation of SMYM in the proper territory, the challenges and solutions
11. Text of prayer service before cremation
12. Regarding the position of the hymn '*Pulariyil Nidrayunarnage*' in the *Sapra kramam*
13. Complaint regarding the augmented rate of Mass intention for the feasts
14. Concerns regarding the demographic decline of Christians in Kerala
15. Regarding the scandalous article against the canonization of St John Paul II in Sathyadeepam by Fr Paul Thelakatt
16. Police Report in Land Deal cases in Ernakulam & Police Charge Sheet in Forged Document Cases and the need for our Introspection
17. Indiscipline in the Church and inaction on the part of authorities
18. Growth of extremist or fundamentalist groups which provoke reactions on the other side
19. EWS, Justice Koshy Commission & Discrimination for Christians in Minority Privileges
20. Present Political Situation in Kerala
21. Financial Situation of Mangalapuzha Seminary
22. *Sabhadinam* Collection for the support of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia
23. Deepika
24. Position statement regarding the inherited property at the time of erection of the Mission Eparchies

25. Study by LRC on the historicity of the arrival of St. Thomas in India
26. Organization of the Fifth Major Archiepiscopal Assembly
27. The formation of an apologetic wing in the Church to be undertaken jointly by the Commission for Doctrine and the Public Affairs Commission and Family Apostolate.
28. Pertinent rules and regulations regarding the Trust and Societies
29. Guidelines for the selection and appointment of Staff of Synodal Major Seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Church
30. Second Set of Liturgical Readings
31. Syro-Malabar Social Ministry Award
32. Connecting the prospective job seekers who lost job due to the lockdown with entrepreneurs
33. Syro-Malabar Church Response on Farmers' Agitations in Delhi
34. DSSS Directors' meeting in the Syro Malabar Church
35. New orientations for the pastoral ministry during Covid-19 period

Information by the Major Archbishop

- The Major Archbishop informed the Synod that many members of our Church have been elected in the recently concluded local body elections. He wished them all success in exercising their participatory role in the governance.
- He also informed of a special meeting of the three Cardinals of India with the Prime Minister at his invitation in Delhi on 19 January 2021. He invited the members to share their views to be incorporated in the discussion with the Prime Minister.
- The Synodal News of the year 2020 is ready for distribution.
- Fr. Luis Chalackal of the Archeparchy of Trichur, died of Covid -19. The Synod expressed prayerful condolences on the demise of the priest.

- Mother Smitha, the former Superior General of SD congregation is seriously ill due to Covid-19 and requested prayers for her recovery.

Leave of Absence

The Synod granted leave of absence to Bishop Prince Panengadan from the sitting of 14 January.

Extension of the term of the Rector of St. Ephrem's Theological College, Satna

Bishop Joseph Kodakallil, the Chairman of the Commission for St Ephrem's Theological College, presenting the topic, informed the Synod that the term of Fr. Joseph Ottapurackal as Rector will conclude in March 2021. In the situation of the Covid restrictions, as it is difficult to find a new rector and to effect the transfer, the Commission unanimously suggested the extension of his term for one more year. After a brief discussion, it was decided to extend the term of term of the Rector of St Ephrem's Theological College, Satna for one more year.

Extension of the term of Seminary Commission, Satna

The Major Archbishop introduced the topic. The term of the Commission for the St. Ephrem's Theological College, Satna will get over on 12 January 2021. Since conducting election of the new commission in the virtual Synod is not advisable, he proposed that the term of the Commission could be extended till the next actual Synod. After a brief discussion, it was decided to give extension to the Seminary Commission, Satna till the next actual Synod.

Further extension of the term of the Seminary Commission for Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnoth

Presenting the topic, the Major Archbishop informed the synod that the term of the Seminary Commission for Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kunnoth was extended until January 2021, as per the decision of the last Synod. Now, as the virtual Synod is not conducive to conduct elections, he sought the mind of the Synod regarding its further extension. After discussion that followed,

it was decided to give extension to the Seminary Commission, Kunnoth till the next actual Synod.

Financial Situation of the Major Seminaries

The Rectors of the Synodal Seminaries: Fr. Sebastian Palamoottil (Mangalapuzha), Fr. Scaria Kanniyakonil (Vadavathoor), Fr. Jacob Chanikuzhy (Kunnoth) and Fr. Joseph Ottapurackal (Satna) were invited to this part of the sitting. The Major Archbishop welcomed them. The moderator invited the Rectors to present briefly the financial situation in the Seminaries. In all the seminaries, the main sources of income are contribution from the Eparchies, the annual fees from the seminarians, contribution from the benefactors and grants from the agencies. Now, generally the income from almost all the sources is on a steady decline with the result that all the seminaries are facing financial constraints. The Rectors proposed to enhance the contribution per seminarian from the Eparchies.

In the discussion that followed, several Bishops shared the concern expressed by the Rectors. The Synod needs to think of ensuring a stable income for the seminaries so that the formators are not preoccupied with finding funds for maintaining the seminaries. As an immediate relief measure to help the seminaries, the annual contribution from the eparchies per seminarian could be increased from Rs. 25000/- to Rs. 35000/-. It was also proposed that the Seminary Commissions make a detailed study of the financial situation of each seminary and give concrete suggestions to tide over the financial crisis. At the end of the discussion, it was decided to increase the annual contribution to the Synodal seminaries from the Eparchies from Rs. 25000/- to Rs. 35000/- per seminarian, from the current academic year 2020-2021. It was also decided to request the Seminary Commissions to make a detailed study of the financial situation of each Seminary and give concrete suggestions to tide over the financial crisis and to present the same in the August Synod 2021.

Conferring the Title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha in the Eparchy of Kothamangalam

Bishop Pauly Kannookadan presented the request of Bishop George Madathikandathil to confer the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, in the Eparchy of Kothamangalam. After a brief discussion, the Synod decided to confer the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, in the Eparchy of Kothamangalam.

Revision of the Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church

Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, the General Moderator for the Administration of Justice, presented the topic. The Code of the Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church was published in the year 2013. It contained all the laws promulgated until 2013. There are only 30 books available for sale at present. Hence it is time to reprint the book. He suggested that it would be advisable to make a revision of the text, adding the particular norms promulgated after 2013 and including the relevant additions. In the discussion that followed, several Bishops participated. At the end of the discussion, it was decided to revise the Code of Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church and to entrust the work of revision to the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal.

Demise of Fr. Shabu Kachapilly

Bishop Jose Chittooparambil CMI informed the Synod of the sad demise of Fr. Shabu Kachapilly of the Eparchy of Rajkot at the age of 46 and requested prayers for the repose of his soul. The Major Archbishop expressed heartfelt condolences and assured the prayers of the Synod for the deceased.

SMYM: Challenges and Solutions

Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril, the Chairman of the Commission for Youth presented the topic. The SMYM is functioning in many of our Eparchies. After its inception, the awareness of the need for having this youth movement for our Church was inculcated among the youth to a great extent. Through the SMYM, our youth could

attain remarkable achievements on various levels like participating in the Pre-Youth Synodal Meeting held in Rome and in the online World Youth Day consultation meeting. These events have boosted the spirit of the youth and the SMYM is getting organized amidst many challenges.

The main challenge the SMYM faces today is the resistance from the part of the youth themselves in some of our Eparchies, as they are emotionally attached to KCYM and the like organizations. Many a times, they are not ready to accept the relevance and need for a separate youth movement for the Syro-Malabar Church. A few Eparchies have fully accepted this youth movement of our Church, while a few others have partially accepted it and a few other Eparchies are yet to accept this reality. Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril thanked Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt for having made the service of Fr. Joseph Alencherry available, who served the Secretary of the Commission for Youth and the Director the SMYM with passion and commitment. He thanked also Archbishop Joseph Perumthottam for making the service of Fr. Jacob Chakkathara available as the new Director of SMYM and Secretary of the Youth Commission

In the discussion that followed the presentation, many Bishops intervened. They affirmed the relevance of the SMYM in our Church, at the same time shared many practical difficulties they face in introducing this movement in their Eparchies. As a practical solution, they suggested that the KCYM and the SMYM could go hand in hand, at least for some more time, as a result of which the SMYM will gradually be established in all our Eparchies. There was also a discussion about the age limit for the membership in the SMYM. The Chairman of the Commission clarified that it had been decided definitively that the eligibility of membership in SMYM will be for the 15-30 age group.

Making an intervention, the Major Archbishop proposed an action plan to maintain ICYM as the Confederation of the Youth Movements of three Churches *sui iuris*, convince our youth about

the need and relevance of SMYM and incorporate the youth in the age group of 30-35 to the *Catholica Congress*. In this connection, the Synod approved the proposal of the Commission for Family, Life and Laity to enroll the youth of the age group 30-35 in the *Catholica Congress*, making sure that they are given sufficient representation in the governance of the organization.

At the end of the discussion, it was decided to: a) to request the Major Archbishop to authorize the Chairman of the Commission for Youth to write to CBCI, in the name of the Synod, emphasizing the need to keep ICYM as the confederation of the youth movement of the three Churches *sui iuris*; b) to request the Major Archbishop to authorize the Chairman of the Commission for Youth to write a letter to all Bishops to establish the SMYM in all our Eparchies; and c) to request the Major Archbishop to authorize the Bishop Legate to take steps to enroll the youth of 30-35 age group as members of *Catholica Congress*, ensuring their due representation in its organizational structures.

Prayer Service before Cremation

Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, presented the topic. The Commission for Liturgy, sensing the need of the time, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, prepared a text of the prayer service to be conducted before cremation. This text, which was finalized by the Central Liturgical Committee, was presented in the Synod for its approval. Fr. Francis Pittapillil, the Secretary of the Commission, was specially invited for the discussion. In the discussion that followed, several Bishops participated. Based on their suggestions and clarifications, the text was fine tuned. Concluding the discussion, it was decided to approve the text of prayer service to be conducted before cremation and to use it in our Eparchies.

Second Set of Readings of Holy Qurbana

Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, presenting the topic, said that the Commission for

Liturgy has prepared a second set of readings for the liturgical celebrations. This set of readings is prepared by the Commission with the help of experts of various disciplines and finalized in Central Liturgical Committee. He sought the permission of the Synod to use this set of readings *ad experimentum* for one year, starting from the Season of Annunciation in 2021. After a few clarifications, it was decided to use the second set of readings in the liturgical celebrations *ad experimentum* for one year starting from the Season of Annunciation in 2021.

Table of the Grades of Feasts

Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, informed the Synod that the Commission for Liturgy, in consultation with the Central Liturgical Committee and the Special Committee, has prepared a list of different grades of feasts to be celebrated in our Church. He said that the feasts could be printed in the liturgical calendar, if the Synod approved the grading of various feasts. The list of the feasts could be finalized, taking into account the evaluation after one year. Finally, it was decided to approve the list of the grades of feasts to be celebrated in the Syro-Malabar Church *ad experimentum* for one year.

The Hymn *Pulariyil Nidrayunarnnage* in the *Sapra kramam*

Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy introduced the topic. While discussing on the revision of Liturgy of Hours, there arose a need for clarification regarding the place of the hymn *Pulariyil Nidrayunarnnage* in the *Sapra kramam*. Now, in the draft text of the Liturgy of Hours, the hymn is given in the beginning. There was a suggestion that instead of keeping this hymn in the beginning, it could be given together with the hymn *pulari prabhayil karthaave*, giving the option to sing any one of them. In the discussion that followed, several members who intervened were in favour of keeping it in the beginning of the *Sapra kramam* itself. At the end of the discussion, it was decided to keep the *Pulariyil Nidrayunarnnage* in the beginning of *Sapra kramam* as an introductory hymn, with a foot note specifying that

when this hymn is sung at the beginning, the hymn *pulari prabhayil karthaave* could be omitted.

Uniformity in the Celebration of Liturgy

This topic emerged during the discussion of indiscipline in the Church. Many members intervened to affirm that the disunity in the matters related to the Liturgy is the cornerstone of disunity and division in the Church. Once the Synod arrives at common decision on the uniform celebration of Holy *Qurbana*, all other problems in the Church will subside or could be solved. At this point, it was observed that there is already a decision for the uniform celebration of Holy *Qurbana* in 1999. What is needed is to implement that decision of the Synod in all Eparchies. Some Bishops expressed the desire that the Synod could make an exhortation to implement the Synodal decision of 1999 from 03 July 2021 onwards, in all eparchies without imposing. On the other hand, some other members reminded the proposal in January 2020 Synod in this regard and that a uniform decision could be arrived at, once we get the *recognitio* for the revised text of the Holy *Qurbana* from Rome. Making an intervention, upholding the continuity of the Synod, the Major Archbishop suggested that we need not take a decision on the uniform mode of celebration until we get the *recognitio* for the *Qurbana* text.

Some members, on the other hand, expressed their view that disunity in the Liturgy is not the cause of all problems in the Church. The problems are to be dealt with separately in their uniqueness. Unity is not uniformity. We need to endorse our decisions and not impose. Imposing a decision on the uniform celebration would not be that easy to be executed in all eparchies. The Permanent Synod should listen to those Bishops in whose Eparchies the decision for the uniform celebration could not be implemented. Some Bishops opined that the decisions in liturgical matters should not be taken in haste. But, it was pointed out that the synod has waited too long to implement the decision of 1999.

It was a general feeling that any new innovation in the liturgy and related matters should be introduced as result of a collective decision in the Synod. Any individual initiative implemented in an Eparchy without common decision in the Synod will practically weaken the efforts for unity. The use of hand crosses by Bishops, special attire for the sacramentals, the position of stole while vesting for liturgical celebrations etc were pointed out as examples. At this point, Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop made an intervention to state that the use of Hand Cross by Bishops is permitted for those who wish to use it for blessing the faithful in liturgical and paraliturgical services as recorded in the minutes of the July Synod in 2002.

During the discussions, the importance of maintaining the sacred nature of the Synod of Bishops was underlined. The Synod should act without fear and other considerations. All should obey the decisions of the Synod without further personal reasoning. It was a generally expressed feeling that the dignity and sacred nature of the Synod are to be kept intact. The confidentiality of the Synodal discussions is sometimes lost, by leakage of information. This would destroy the freedom to speak openly in the Synod. The general feeling of the Synod was that all should take maximum care to keep the confidentiality of the Synod.

The Augmented Rate of Mass Intention for the Feasts

Presenting the topic, the Major Archbishop drew the attention of the Synod about the existing practice of charging augmented rate for Holy *Qurbana* on special occasions in some parts of Kerala. A special rate is charged for the celebration of Holy *Qurbana* during the feasts of the saints. Many a time, the publication of these rates through various means invites criticism from the faithful. In the brief discussion that followed, Bishops suggested that the rate of the intention of Holy *Qurbana* should not be altered to cover various other expenses in connection with the feasts. The additional expenses could be collected separately, as per the need. There was a proposal to have a uniform rate for Mass intentions

for the whole Syro-Malabar Church. But it was clarified that the rate of mass intention is decided by the Regional Conferences of Bishops. At the end of the discussion, it was decided to request the Major Archbishop to write to all our Bishops directing them to keep the rate of Mass intention, fixed by the Regional Conferences of Bishops, unaltered in their Eparchies and not to charge an augmented rate to cover other related expenses.

Growth of Ecclesiastical Extremism

Archbishop Andrews Thazhath presented the topic. During the Covid pandemic period, extremists have been very active, especially in social media, pretending that they are the true adherents of Catholicism. The important fractions of these divergent groups are extreme charismatics, liberationists and extreme liturgicists. The extreme charismatics have dared to give authoritative opinion in all matters of the Church and society, pretending that they are the leaders of the community. The liberalists project a Church of their idealism, giving priority to the way and means for their intellectual satisfaction. The so called 'liturgical experts', taking some part of their findings suited for a particular time in history, try to mesmerize their adherents stating that the true identity of our Church is only what they say. Some of them even say that the Synod is not sufficiently orthodox. He cautioned that the innovations regarding clerical dress and liturgical practices without proper discussions and decisions in Synod will only create division in our Church. He requested the Synod Fathers to be cautious about these extremist groups so that we should not be prey to such extremist groups. He reiterated the need to take firm stand against those who claim more catholic than the Catholic Church, having in mind the unity and growth of our Church.

During the discussion on the topic the members brought in many examples which point to the fact of growing extremism in the Church. The extremists in the charismatic movements and liturgy and the liberationists are to be controlled. There should be a collective mind in introducing new things in the Church life.

It was observed that the extreme positions have always been detrimentally opposed to the urge for unity in the Church. Both the Synod and the Bishops should pay attention to put a block to the extremist tendencies in the Church.

Major Archiepiscopal Assembly

Bishop Pauly Kannokadan, the Convenor of the Committee for Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, presented the topic. Taking into account the uncertainty prevailing due to the Covid-19, the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly, decided to be held in January 2022 could be postponed to August 2022. After a brief discussion, it was decided to postpone the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly from January 2022 to August 2022 in the context of Covid-19 and request the Major Archbishop to write to all the Bishops inviting proposals for the theme of the Assembly.

Persecutions against Christians

Bishop Jacob Manethodath presented the topic. It is a matter of agony that our fellow Christians in certain parts of the world undergo severe persecutions. Statistics show that 13 Christians are killed every day in the world on account of their faith. The Synod expressed great sorrow in the fact that 750 Christians were killed in Ethiopia by the military on 15 December 2020. After a brief discussion, it was decided to issue a press statement expressing grief at the massacre of Christians in Ethiopia and anxiety at the increasing persecution of Christians in several parts of the world.

Response on Farmers' Agitations in Delhi

The Synod evaluated the ongoing strike of farmers in the capital of the country which has completed 50 consecutive days, protesting on the Farm Laws introduced by the central government. There have been interventions from the Supreme Court and various other corners to settle the issue. As these have not yet yielded any result, the agitation is still going on. At the end of the discussion, the Synod decided to issue a press statement expressing the solidarity of the Synod with the farmers and requesting the central government to settle the issue amicably.

Scrutiny of the Decisions of XXIX Synod (2021) Session I

The Major Archbishop informed the Synod that, due to lack of time, the scrutiny of the decisions of XXIX Synod (2021) Session I will be done by the Permanent Synod.

Conclusion of the Synod

At the conclusion of the sitting of the Synod on 16 January 2021, the Major Archbishop sought the permission of the Synod to conclude the present Session and gave the concluding address highlighting the important events. In his speech, he thanked God for His powerful presence and action with us during the current Session of the Synod. Many topics concerning our ecclesial life and ministry as well as the society were discussed. We could listen to the Rectors of our four Synodal Seminaries regarding the financial difficulties they are facing and suggest measures to tide over them. We could evaluate and approve the second set of readings in the liturgical celebrations and the list of the grades of feasts celebrated in our Church *ad experimentum* for one year.

Highlighting the need to promote the SMYM in all our Eparchies, the Major Archbishop said that we have to accelerate the growth of competent and faith-filled young people by helping them to live as the disciples of Jesus Christ and empowering them to serve others. Evaluating the demographic decline of Christians, he stressed the need to conscientise our faithful regarding this issue and expressed hope that the proposed in-depth study by the Commission for Family, Laity and Life, will make concrete proposals for the betterment of our community.

The Major Archbishop exhorted the Synod to continue to stand firm to defend the rights of our farmers who are passing through serious crisis. He expressed grief at the massacre of Christians in Ethiopia and anxiety at the increasing persecution of Christians in several parts of the world. He affirmed that the authorities concerned need to restrain the words and deeds of some priests, religious and lay persons, which disturb the Church and the simple faith of our people, who are disheartened, demoralized and even

scandalized by their actions. The Major Archbishop concluded his message thanking all those who helped in one way or other for the efficient conducting of the online Synod.

Invoking God's blessings upon the Syro-Malabar Church and entrusting the Synod, the priests, the religious and the lay faithful to the protection of Mary, the Mother of the Church, St. Joseph, the Protector of the Church, St. Thomas, our Father in faith, all the Saints and Blesseds of our Church, the Major Archbishop declared the Session I of XXIX (2021) Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI

Secretary, Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Vincent Cheruvathoor
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

DECISIONS

1. To extend the term of the Rector of St Ephrem's Theological College, Satna for one more year.
2. To give extension to the Seminary Commission, Satna till the next actual Synod.
3. To give extension to the Seminary Commission, Kunnoth till the next actual Synod.
4. To confer the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, in the Eparchy of Kothamangalam.
5. To revise the Code of Particular Laws of the Syro-Malabar Church and to entrust the work of revision to the Major Archiepiscopal Ordinary Tribunal.
6. To request the Major Archbishop to authorize the Chairman of the Commission for Youth to write to CBCI, emphasizing the need to keep ICYM as the confederation of the youth movement of the three Churches *sui iuris*.
7. To request the Major Archbishop to authorize the Chairman of the Commission for Youth to write a letter to all Bishops to establish the SMYM in all our Eparchies
8. To request the Major Archbishop to authorize the Bishop Legate to take steps to enroll the youth of 30-35 age group as members of *Catholica Congress*, ensuring their due representation in its organizational structures.
9. To approve the text of prayer service to be conducted before cremation and to use it in our Eparchies.
10. To increase the annual contribution to the Synodal seminaries from the Eparchies from Rs. 25000/- to Rs. 35000/- per seminarian, from the current academic year 2020-2021.

11. To request the Seminary Commissions to make a detailed study of the financial situation of each Seminary and give concrete suggestions to tide over the financial crisis and to present the same in the August Synod 2021.
12. To use the second set of readings in the liturgical celebrations *ad experimentum* for one year starting from the Season of Annunciation in 2021.
13. To approve the list of the grades of feasts to be celebrated in the Syro-Malabar Church *ad experimentum* for one year.
14. To keep the *Pulariyil Nidrayunarnnange* in the beginning of *Sapra kramam* as an introductory hymn, with a foot note specifying that when this hymn is sung at the beginning, the hymn *pulari prabhayil karthaave* could be omitted.
15. To request the Major Archbishop to write to all our Bishops directing them to keep the rate of Mass intention, fixed by the Regional Conferences of Bishops, unaltered in their Eparchies and not to charge an augmented rate to cover other related expenses.
16. To request the Bishops concerned to take appropriate action against those who indulge in acts of indiscipline against the hierarchy and the teachings of the Church.
17. To postpone the Major Archiepiscopal Assembly from January 2022 to August 2022 in the context of Covid-19 and request the Major Archbishop to write to all the Bishops inviting proposals for the theme of the Assembly.
18. To issue a press statement expressing grief at the massacre of Christians in Ethiopia and anxiety at the increasing persecution of Christians in several parts of the world.
19. To issue a press statement expressing the solidarity of the Synod with the farmers and requesting the central government to settle the issue amicably.

Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI

Secretary, Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Vincent Cheruvathoor
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,
Praise be to Jesus Christ!

The current Session of the Synod, being attended by 59 Bishops out of 63, is coming to a close. During these twelve hours long virtual Synod we have been experiencing God's powerful presence and action with us. Even though we could not take up every item proposed in the agenda due to shortage of time, I would say that we had very fruitful discussions and deliberations on many topics concerning our ecclesial life and ministry as well as the society in which we live and work.

I gratefully acknowledge the fact that all the Bishops are giving due care and attention to the formation of our future priests in the seminaries. We could listen to the Rectors of our four Synodal Seminaries, and discuss the financial difficulties that they are facing in the running of these centres of priestly formation. Though we have decided to increase the amount of the annual contribution from our Eparchies to the Seminaries in order to tide over the present financial crisis, we may have to adopt new measures in this regard. I hope that the decision of the Synod to make a detailed study on the financial situation of each Seminary by the respective Seminary Commissions will provide us with more concrete suggestions.

We could evaluate and approve the second set of readings in the liturgical celebrations and the list of the grades of feasts celebrated in our Church *ad experimentum* for one year starting from the Season of Annunciation in 2021.

The youth ministry has to gain higher priority in our Church. We have to accelerate the growth of competent and faith-filled young people by helping them to live as the disciples of Jesus Christ and empowering them to serve others. The SMYM, our global youth organization is in its first stage of growth, facing a lot of challenges. Therefore, we have to guide them and extend all our helps in sorting out the problems which it faces.

We have also spent enough time in presenting and evaluating the current issues in our Christian community. One of the main concerns that we discussed was the demographic decline of Christians. Because of the lack of awareness in this sphere about the gravity of the situation, we need to take prudent steps to conscientise our faithful regarding this issue. We could identify a few practical measures to face the challenging situation of the steady decline of the Christian population and its negative impacts. Let us hope that an in-depth study will be made by the Commission for Family, Laity and Life, making concrete proposals for the betterment of our community. We have to continue to stand firm to defend the rights of our farmers who are passing through serious crisis.

It is also a matter of agony that our fellow Christians in certain parts of the world undergo severe persecutions. Statistics show that 13 Christians are killed every day in the world on account of their faith. It is greatly alarming that 750 Christians were killed in Ethiopia by the military of this country on 15 December 2020.

Some internal issues which disturb our Church were also discussed in the Synod. We all are aware that many of our simple faithful are disheartened, demoralized and even scandalized by certain actions from the part of some priests, religious and lay persons. Let us be aware of the challenges and be prompt and prudent in restraining them.

It is now one year since the world has come under the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic and we conducted two virtual Sessions of our Synod. But let us hope and pray that we will be able to be physically

present at Mount St Thomas, Kakkanad for the next Session of the Synod scheduled to be held from 16 to 27 August 2021.

I take this occasion to express my thanks to Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI, the Secretary of the Synod, Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, Fr Vincent Cheruvathoor, the Chancellor and Fr Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Vice Chancellor who master minded the preparation of the minutes of each day and made all other technical arrangements for the successful conduct of the Synod. I express my deep felt thanks to Bishop Raphael Thattil and Bishop Remigiose Inchananiyil for moderating efficiently the sittings of this Session.

Thanking each and every one of you for your love and concern you show towards me and the wholehearted cooperation and active participation for the fruitful conduct of this Synodal Session I entrust our Synod, the priests, the religious and the lay faithful of our Church to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, St. Thomas, our Father in faith, all the Saints and Blesseds of our Church.

With these words I formally declare the First Session of the XXIX Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Cardinal George Alencherry
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

**XXIX SYNOD (2021)
SESSION II {ONLINE}
16-27 AUGUST 2021**

XXIX SYNOD (2021) SESSION II (ONLINE)
16-27 AUGUST 2021

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

We have just celebrated the Independence Day of our motherland together with the Feast of the Assumption of our beloved Mother, Mary. Independence Day celebrations remind us of the struggles of the great leaders of our nation to obtain political freedom from the colonial power. While remembering the pioneers of the freedom struggle with gratitude, let us commit ourselves to be ambassadors of freedom in our times. The Church and the society stand in need of freedom from the clutches of bondage which are being experienced at various levels. The Feast of the Assumption inspires us to find the true meaning of freedom in the model of Mother Mary, who by being docile to the Spirit and liberated from personal ambitions and projects, could commit herself totally to the salvific plan. Salvation guaranteed to us by Jesus in his total surrender to the will of the Father on the Cross invites us to surrender ourselves completely and unconditionally to God's will. *Fiat* is the password to true freedom. That means, to live the freedom of the children of God, we need to say *fiat* to the will of God, when we are asked to sacrifice our personal likes and dislikes.

The humanity is still tormented by the Covid-19 pandemic. The situation in India is worse than in almost all other countries. Kerala is not in any way better. In this situation, the Church has to continue to take remedial and preventive measures to be protected from the pandemic, gathering all the resources possible and in earnest cooperation with the governments concerned. Let us also give

special attention to keeping up the pastoral and spiritual life of our people during the Covid situation. The pastors should accompany the faithful in this great time of need for spiritual assistance.

Millions of people died in the pandemic. The number of deaths was on a steady increase in India, especially in the State of Kerala, during the second wave. The situation is not still under control. Let us commend all those who lost their lives to our Merciful Father. May the Lord console the dear and near ones who mourn the death of their beloved! Hundreds of priests and the religious in India left for their eternal destiny. Many of them were in the forefront of anti Covid campaign to ensure protection for others. The Church in India bade farewell also to four Bishops who passed away due to the virus infection. May their souls rest in peace!

The death of Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil, the Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Sagar, due to Covid-19 on 17 February 2021 was totally unexpected. As we know, his body was cremated and ashes were taken to Sagar after the solemn farewell given to him at Aranattukara, his home parish on 19 February. The ashes were buried in the cathedral of Sagar on 23 February 2021. Bishop James Athikalam, Bishop Antony Chirayath and the eparchy of Sagar organized everything with great love and respect for the departed Bishop, in spite of the stringent Covid restrictions.

Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil was the second Bishop of the Eparchy of Sagar, who worked hard for the development of this mission Eparchy, of which the foundation was laid by Bishop Clemens Thottungal CMI, the first Bishop. Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil was a Bishop who loved the Church and gave priority to the ecclesial life and development of the people over and above any institution or movement within the Church. He had to undergo many trials and tribulations over a period, resulting from this pastoral vision and his strictness in obeying the dictates of his conscience. During his formation as a CMI priest and the pastoral ministry he did afterwards, Bishop Pastor had already built up an authentic spiritual vision of life and ministry in the Church. It is

on the basis of this spirituality that he continued his episcopal ministry. He strongly believed that God was always guiding him and raising him to one Office or another, culminating in the episcopal ministry. He was thankful to the Lord all throughout his life who raised his life to successful heights. All throughout his life, he kept up a filial devotion to St. Joseph. Like the Apostles and saints in the Church, Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil lived a life of strict discipline, commitment to the Church and to the people with great attachment to the Eucharistic Lord. His earnest desire was to become a saint. May God grant him the fulfillment of his wish!

We are starting a Session of the Synod which is going to be recorded in the annals of the Syro-Malabar Church for its outcome. This Synod is spotlighted before the society, both religious and secular, for the decision regarding the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. This Synod has the bounden duty to decide the date of implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* that coincides with the promulgation of the revised Text of our Holy *Qurbana*.

Holy Father Pope Francis through his letter dated 3 July 2021, addressed to the Bishops, Clergy, the Religious and the Laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, affirmed the unanimous agreement of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church in 1999 for a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, repeatedly endorsed in subsequent years, and exhorted for its prompt implementation on the occasion of recognition of the new *Raza Qurbana Taksa*, for the greater good and unity of our Church. I take this opportunity to place on record our gratitude for the paternal solicitude the Holy Father has expressed through this letter. The Synod has the sacred duty to give a filial obedience to the exhortation of the Holy Father.

The Congregation for the Oriental Churches has made its first intervention through Apostolic Nuncio on 04 May 2020 regarding the necessity of having a uniform mode of celebration in the

context of the live streaming of the Holy *Qurbana* in a wide range of ways giving impression that there exists no discipline in this regard. The letter warned us not to export the division existing in the celebration of Holy *Qurbana* to the communities formed abroad. Subsequently, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches made another decisive communication on 09 November 2020, at the time of submission of the revised *Taksa* for *recognitio*, inviting the Synod to reflect seriously certain themes that would necessarily lead to the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*. The Cardinal Prefect emphasized the need of cohesive commitment from the part of the Synod, both collegially and from every Bishop individually in this regard. The clear and unambiguous instruction regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of the Holy *Qurbana* from the Congregation was given on 09 June 2021, granting *recognitio* to the revised *Taksa* of the Holy *Qurbana*.

The Syro-Malabar Church has always been docile to the instruction of the Holy Father and the Apostolic See. That is the strength of our Church. The autonomy of an individual Church *sui iuris* is manifested clearly and exercised concretely always in the wide spectrum of the Universal Church. As we distance ourselves from this understanding of the autonomy, we begin to miss the focal point of being a Church *sui iuris*. Therefore, my dear Archbishops and Bishops, let us participate in the Synod, having in mind the expectations and prayers of our faithful around the world who ardently desire for a uniform mode of celebration of our Holy *Qurbana*, for greater good and unity of our Church, as Pope Francis has pointed out in his letter.

It is a matter of joy that Holy Father Pope Francis has granted the request of our Synod to extend the jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne. The jurisdiction of the Eparchy of Melbourne is extended to New Zealand and the whole of Oceania with effect from 29 March 2021. We shall be grateful to the Lord for this great blessing on our Church. Our gratitude goes also to the Holy Father Pope Francis

and Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. I take this opportunity to appreciate Bishop Bosco Puthur for his constant follow-up to obtain this extension of jurisdiction for the Eparchy of Melbourne.

We are happy that His Excellency Most Rev. Leopoldo Girelli has taken charge as the new Apostolic Nuncio to India. Although I had the opportunity to welcome him through video conferencing of the three Cardinals of India, I extend to him once again our hearty welcome in the name of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church. I am sure that with his experience as Counselor in many Nunciatures and as Apostolic Nuncio to Indonesia, East Timor, Singapore, Israel, Cyprus, Vietnam and Apostolic Delegate to Malaysia, Brunei, Jerusalem and Palestine, will surely help him to carry out his responsibilities in our country, as the representative of the Holy Father, with great confidence. Tomorrow Archbishop Girelli will be addressing us online from Delhi. You may recall that we bade *adieu* to His Excellency Bishop Giambattista Diquattro, the former Nuncio on digital platform before his departure for Brazil.

A few Bishops are celebrating the Golden and Silver Jubilees of their priestly and Episcopal Ordinations. Archbishop Joseph Powathil and Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS are in the Golden and Silver Jubilee of their Episcopal Ordination respectively. While Bishop Jacob Angadiath and Bishop Joseph Kunnath CMI have entered into the Golden Jubilee of their Priestly Ordination, Bishop Jacob Manethodath and Bishop Mathew Vaniakizhakeel VC will enter into the same in the month of November and December respectively this year. Archbishop George Njaralakatt is completing his Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee in the month of December, this year. Let us felicitate all of them for their exemplary and fruitful ministry exercised in the Church and Society and pray for God's abundant blessings on them and their ministry.

It is a matter of joy for the Syro-Malabar Church that His Holiness Pope Francis has appointed Fr. Siby Mathew Peedikayil, a member

of the Congregation of Heralds of Good News as the bishop of the diocese of Aitape, in Papua New Guinea, on 13 May 2021. The Bishop-elect hails from the parish of Azhangad near Peruvanthanam in the Eparchy of Kanjirappally. I wish him God's blessings in his challenging episcopal ministry in the mission area.

I would like to inform you of a few appointments in the Major Archiepiscopal Curia made in the recent past. Fr. Sebastian Chalackal, a priest of the Archeparchy of Trichur and currently a Professor of theology at Paurastya Vidyapitham Vadavathoor, is appointed the new Secretary of the Commission for Doctrine. Fr. Francis Pittapillil is relieved from this Office due to the increased work load in the Commission for Liturgy. An Assistant Secretary to the Commission for Liturgy is appointed in the person of Fr. Anish Kizhakkevedu, of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry. Fr. James Kokkavayalil of the Archeparchy of Changanacherry is appointed the Assistant Secretary of the Public Affairs Commission. Mr. Tony Chittilapilly is appointed the Secretary of the Laity Forum in the Commission for the Family, Laity and Life. Adv. Jose Vithayathil, who was the Secretary of the Laity Forum was called to his eternal rest on 16 April 2021. While praying for the eternal repose of his soul, I remember with gratitude his commitment and dedication. Although not very recently, Fr. Jacob Mavunkal and Fr. Jacob Chakkathara were appointed Chief Coordinator of SPANDAN and Secretary of the Commission for Youth respectively. We owe gratitude to Fr. Michael Vettikkatt and Fr. Roby Alencherry, who were holding these Offices.

I invoke God's blessings upon all of us to have a fruitful Synodal Session. Let us open ourselves unconditionally to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. May Holy Mary, Mother of Christ, St. Thomas, our Father in Faith and all our Saints and Blesseds intercede for us!

With these words I declare the Second Session of the XXIX Synod 2021 open.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

XXIX SYNOD (2021), SESSION II (ONLINE)
16-27 August 2021

REPORT

The XXIX Synod (2021), Session II convened online through zoom video conferencing, hosted from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, began at 05pm IST on 16 August 2021.

Procedure of the Sitting

Every day, the sitting was scheduled from 5pm to 7pm IST taking into account the convenience of all Bishops participating in the Synod from different time zones. At the beginning of each sitting, one Bishop sang a prayer song and another Bishop recited the prayer for all. The minutes of each day was read out by the Secretary of the Synod at the beginning of the sitting on the following day. The minutes were displayed to the participants through screen sharing.

Recollection in Preparation for the Synod

Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry welcomed Archbishop Thomas Mar Koorilos, the Metropolitan Archbishop of Thiruvalla of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. Archbishop Koorilos began his talk calling attention of the Bishops to the importance of the virtue of obedience. He said only if we obey our legitimate superiors we will get the moral courage to command obedience from others who are subject to us.

Reading a passage from the Gospel of St. John where Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved Him more than everyone else (Jn. 21: 15-19), the preacher invited the Bishops to examine their love relationship with Jesus, the Lord and Master. As Shepherds in the Church, the Bishops have the primary duty to pasture the

sheep entrusted to them. Jesus, before entrusting Peter with the responsibility of pasturing His sheep, made sure that he loved Him above everyone. Even when Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him, He made him the Head of Apostles. Peter who denied Jesus three times repented and wept bitterly at the merciful gaze of his Master. The repentant Peter was given the special mission of strengthening his brothers. The preacher reminded that God has called us because He knew that we will abide with Him. He now asks us to strengthen our faithful in faith, even when we are weak with human frailty.

The Synod is an institution guided by the Holy Spirit. In the Jerusalem Council, the Apostles underlined this truth. In the Council's letter to gentile believers, the Apostles wrote that "it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements" (Acts 15:28). It is the Holy Spirit that guides the Synod. As successors of Apostles, the Bishops gather in the Synod, not simply on their own accord but because they are called by God. *Ecclesia* means 'the gathering of those summoned'. The preacher emphasized the fact that the Bishops are not mere administrators but pastors who touch and see the wounds and the scars of the people. Just as Thomas, the Apostle, wanted to touch and see the wounds of Jesus to believe in Him, Archbishop Koorilos challenged the Bishops to intensify their pastoral zeal by becoming more and more close to the wounded and marginalized people in the society. Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt OSB thanked the preacher. Then there was a short break for personal reflection.

The Formal Inauguration of the Synod

The formal sitting of the Synod began with a prayer and the lighting of the lamp by the Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry. Then proceeding with the inaugural address, the Major Archbishop made a reference to the relevance of Independence Day celebrations and the Feast of Assumption of our Mother Mary. The Church and the society stand in need of freedom from the

clutches of bondage which are being experienced at various levels. The Feast of the Assumption tells that *Fiat* is the password to true freedom. We need to say *fiat* to the will of God, when we are asked to sacrifice our personal likes and dislikes, to live the freedom of the children of God. As the intensity of the pandemic is not subsided, the Major Archbishop exhorted the Bishops to continue to take remedial and preventive measures to be protected from the pandemic, gathering all the resources possible and in earnest cooperation with the governments concerned. He paid homage to the victims of the pandemic who left for their eternal destiny, including Bishops, priests and religious.

Major Archbishop offered special tribute to late Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil CMI who died due to Covid-19 on 17 February 2021. He appreciated Bishop James Athikalam MST, Bishop Antony Chirayath and the Eparchy of Sagar for having organized the funeral of Bishop Joseph Pastor Neelankavil CMI with great love, in spite of the stringent Covid restrictions. He remembered the late Bishop as one who loved the Church and gave priority to the ecclesial life and development of the people over and above any institution or movement within the Church. He had to undergo many trials and tribulations over a period, resulting from this pastoral vision and his strictness in obeying the dictates of his conscience. Bishop Pastor lived a life of strict discipline, commitment to the Church and to the people with great attachment to the Eucharistic Lord.

Referring to the importance of the current Session of the Synod, the Major Archbishop said that it is going to be recorded in the annals of the Syro-Malabar Church for its outcome. He added that this Synod has the bounden duty to decide the date of implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* that coincides with the promulgation of the revised Text of our Holy *Qurbana*. He made a reference to the letter of the Holy Father Pope Francis dated 3 July 2021, addressed to the Bishops, Clergy, the Religious and the Laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, affirming the unanimous agreement of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church in 1999 for a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, repeatedly endorsed

in subsequent years, and exhorting for its prompt implementation on the occasion of recognition of the new *Raza Qurbana Taksa*, for the greater good and unity of our Church. The Major Archbishop expressed gratitude for the paternal solicitude the Holy Father has expressed through this letter. The Synod has the sacred duty to give a filial obedience to the exhortation of the Holy Father. Making a reference to the letters from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, which demanded a cohesive commitment from the part of the Synod, both collegially and from every Bishop individually for the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*, the Major Archbishop invited the members to participate in the Synod, having in mind the expectations and prayers of our faithful around the world who ardently desire for a uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, for greater good and unity of our Church, as Pope Francis has pointed out in his letter.

The Major Archbishop expressed his joy over the extension of the jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne to New Zealand and the whole of Oceania with effect from 29 March 2021. He appreciated Bishop Bosco Puthur for his constant follow-up to obtain this extension of jurisdiction for the Eparchy of Melbourne. He extended a special welcome to the new Apostolic Nuncio to India, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli. He felicitated Archbishop Joseph Powathil and Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS who are in the Golden and Silver Jubilee of their Episcopal Ordination respectively. He also congratulated Bishop Jacob Angadiath and Bishop Joseph Kunnath CMI, who have entered into the Golden Jubilee of their Priestly Ordination, and Bishop Jacob Manethodath and Bishop Mathew Vaniakizhakeel VC who will enter into the same in the month of November and December respectively this year. He also congratulated Archbishop George Njaralakatt who is completing his Sacerdotal Golden Jubilee in the month of December, this year. The Major Archbishop expressed his joy on the appointment of Fr. Siby Mathew Peedikayil HGN, hailing from the Eparchy of Kanjirapally, as the bishop of the diocese of Aitape, in Papua New Guinea.

Inviting all the members to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and seeking the intercession of the Holy Mary, St. Thomas, the Saints and the Blesseds of the Syro-Malabar Church, the Major Archbishop declared the Second Session of XXIX Synod 2021 open.

Participants

The following members were present for the current online session of the Synod: Major Archbishop George Alencherry, Abp. Mathew Moolakkatt OSB (Kottayam), Abp. Andrews Thazhath (Trichur), Abp. Joseph Perumthottam (Changanacherry), Abp. George Njaralakatt (Tellicherry), Abp. Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (Faridabad), Abp. Antony Kariyil CMI (Vicar of the Major Archbishop for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bp. Jacob Manethodath (Palghat), Bp. Thomas Elavanal MCBS (Kalyan), Bp. Sebastian Vadakel MST (Ujjain), Bp. Lawrence Mukkuzhy (Belthangady), Bp. Jacob Angadiath (Chicago), Bp. Sebastian Adayanthrath (Mandya), Bp. Joseph Kallarangatt (Palai), Bp. Jose Porunnedom (Mananthavady), Bp. Thomas Thuruthimattam CST (Gorakhpur), Bp. Joseph Pandarasseril (Auxiliary, Kottayam), Bp. Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Bhadravathi), Bp. Bosco Puthur (Melbourne), Bp. Remigiose Inchananiyil (Thamarassery), Bp. Raphael Thattil (Shamshabad), Bp. Paul Alappatt (Ramanathapuram), Bp. Pauly Kannookadan (Irinjalakuda), Bp. Jose Chittooparambil CMI (Rajkot), Bp. George Rajendran SDB (Thuckalay), Bp. Jacob Muricken (Auxiliary, Palai), Bp. George Madathikandathil (Kothamangalam), Bp. Joseph Kollamparampil CMI (Jagdapur), Bp. Jose Puthenveetil (Auxiliary, Faridabad), Bp. Joy Alappatt (Auxiliary, Chicago), Bp. Ephrem Nariculam (Chanda), Bp. Joseph Kodakallil (Satna), Bp. Jose Kalluvelil (Mississauga), Bp. Prince Antony Panengadan (Adilabad), Bp. Jose Pulickal (Kanjirapally), Bp. Joseph Srampickal (Great Britain), Bp. Stephen Chirappanath (Apostolic Visitator, Europe), Bp. Thomas Tharayil (Auxiliary, Changanacherry), Bp. Joseph Pamplany (Auxiliary, Tellicherry), Bp. Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (Curia Bishop), Bp. Tony Neelankavil (Auxiliary, Trichur), Bp. Sebastian Pozholiparambil (Hosur),

Bp. John Nellikunnel (Idukki), Bp. James Athikalam MST (Sagar), Bp. Vincent Nellaiparampil (Bijnor), Bp. Peter Kochupurackal (Auxiliary, Palghat), Bp. Joseph Pallikparampil (Emeritus, Palai), Bp. Gratian Mundadan CMI (Emeritus, Bijnor), Bp. Gregory Karotemprel CMI (Emeritus, Rajkot), Bp. Thomas Chakiath (Emeritus Auxiliary, Ernakulam-Angamaly), Bp. George Punnakottil (Emeritus, Kothamangalam), Bp. Vijay Anand Nedumpuram CMI (Emeritus, Chanda), Bp. Mathew Vaniakizhakel VC (Emeritus, Satna), Abp. George Valiamattam (Emeritus, Tellicherry), Bp. Joseph Kunnath CMI (Emeritus Adilabad), Bp. Anthony Chirayath (Emeritus, Sagar) Bp. John Vadakel CMI (Emeritus, Bijnor) and Bp. Mathew Arackal (Emeritus, Kanjirapally).

Office Bearers for the Present Session of the Synod: The Synod approved the designation of the following Bishops to the various Offices for the conduct of the present Session:

Moderators: Bishop Raphael Thattil (Convener) and Bishop Remigiose Inchananiyil.

Committee for the Circular: The Media Commission: Bishop Joseph Pamplany (Chairman), Bishop Pauly Kannookadan (member) and Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal (member).

Review of the Decisions of the Previous Synod: Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI, the Secretary of the Synod, read out the decisions of First Session of the XXIX Synod held online in January 2021. Bp. Sebastian Vaniyapurackal informed the Synod of the follow ups done on the decisions. Several Bishops also intervened to inform the Synod of the progress of the decisions pertaining to their Commissions. The Synod reviewed the implementation of the decisions.

Jubilee Greetings to the Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry

Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI, the Synodal Secretary, congratulated the Major Archbishop on the occasion of his Sacerdotal and Episcopal Jubilees. The Major Archbishop has

entered into the Silver Jubilee of his Episcopal Ordination on 2 February and he will enter into the Golden Jubilee of his Priestly Ordination on 18 December this year. Archbishop Kariyil appreciated the fruitful leadership that the Major Archbishop is giving to the Church and wished him God's blessings to continue to lead our Church with courage and dedication.

Information by the Major Archbishop

The Major Archbishop made a few announcements regarding the resignation of Bishop Jacob Angadiath, Bishop Bosco Puthur, Archbishop George Njaralakatt and Bishop Jacob Manathodath from the Office of Bishop of Chicago, Melbourne, Tellicherry and Palghat respectively. The procedure for the election of their successors is progressing.

He also informed the members of the request presented by Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI to be relieved from the Office of Secretary of the Synod on completion of his term this year. The Major Archbishop said that he has requested Archbishop Kariyil to continue in Office till the next Synod in actual form, since the new Secretary is to be elected by the Synod.

He brought to the attention of Bishops a letter from the Apostolic Nunciature in India regarding the preliminary investigation for the Cause of Beatification given from the Congregation for the Cause of Saints. He said that the content of the letter should be given due importance in deciding while taking up a Cause in the eparchies.

Address of the Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli

On the second day of the Synod, 17 August 2021, right in the beginning of the sitting, Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry welcomed Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli in the name of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church. He wished God's abundant blessings to the new Apostolic Nuncio in his assignment and congratulated him as he officially assumed the Office by submitting his credentials to the Government. Then the Major Archbishop invited the Apostolic Nuncio to address the Synod.

Right in the beginning, the Apostolic Nuncio communicated the message of fraternal closeness of the Holy Father Pope Francis, who is particularly aware of the suffering due to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic and recognized the heroic way in which the communities responded to the challenge, offering assistance to those in greatest need. Archbishop Girelli applauded the Syro-Malabar Church's mission in areas such as education, evangelization and health, and in the charitable services offered by the numerous institutions. In a very special way, he congratulated His Beatitude Cardinal George Alencherry, who completed ten years of pastoral leadership as Major Archbishop in May 2021. He praised the Syro-Malabar Church for being resplendent in her liturgy and tradition; greatly respected for her institutions and way of life. He added that the ancient presence of the Syro-Malabar Church in this Subcontinent, in Kerala and beyond, is a blessing for all who encounter her. He wished that the Syro-Malabar Church might remain true to her noble roots and, under the pastoral governance of Bishops and in full communion of life with the other Churches *sui iuris*, be an ever-present force for good in India.

The Apostolic Nuncio developed his ideas centering around the themes on Synodality – the theme of the forthcoming Synod of Bishops, on communion and unity, on the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* - source and sign of that unity and on Church renewal and evangelization.

Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, elaborating his ideas stated that the Church is Synodal because it is communion. The Synod of Bishops is the most evident manifestation of dynamism of communion which inspires all ecclesial decisions. Indeed, Synodality is the form that realizes the participation of all the people of God in mission. Presenting Church as sacrament of unity and communion, he said that it is the challenge and responsibility of the Bishops to make the Church home and the school of communion. The greatest manifestation of this communion is the Holy Eucharist. He said that being immersed in the experience of God as intimate

communion, we draw strength from the communion experienced in the liturgy to be artisans of unity in the world around us.

Making reference to the Letter of the Holy Father Pope Francis, the Apostolic Nuncio affirmed that the desire of the Holy Father for a *prompt implementation of the uniform mode of celebrating* is an appeal to unity and not to cause division and this needs to be contextualized. He exhorted the Synod to judiciously evaluate the time frame for prudent process of implementation in order to safeguard unity in the Church. He exhorted the Synod to move forward together, heeding the spirit of the Holy Father's words, in such a manner as to conserve the communion of which Bishops are the custodians. While proposing the uniform mode of celebration as a primary objective to be achieved at once in all the eparchies of the diaspora and in shrines and major seminaries, he stressed the need of giving formation and awareness in places of pilgrimage and in major and inter-diocesan seminaries, which would make it possible to welcome the decision for uniform mode of celebration without pain or injury.

Archbishop Girelli said that the Congregation for the Eastern Churches has, over the years, repeatedly endorsed the Synod's decision for a uniform mode of celebration considering it a vital step towards increased stability and ecclesial communion within the whole body of the Syro-Malabar Church. He wished that new text be promptly adopted by all the communities and the uniformity promoted in the manner of celebrating. He invited the Bishops in the Synod to encourage all the clergy humbly to accept the decision of the Holy Synod on liturgical unity, so clearly endorsed by the Holy Father Francis, precisely to avoid unnecessary conflict and preserve communion in the Church.

Affirming the need for constant Church renewal, personal renewal and healing, while referring to the issues connected with the land deal, he said that the inner peace of the Syro-Malabar Church was wounded. In this context, making a reference to the letter of Cardinal Leonardo Sandri written to Archbishop Antony Kariyil,

he said that Congregation has explicitly endorsed the Permanent Synod's proposal regarding the sale of land and it wished to see these provisions duly implemented. In this regard, he clarified that 'restitution' is not asked of the Major Archbishop personally, but rather in his official capacity. As necessary step on the path of reconciliation, he stressed the need of reaffirmation of the hierarchical precedence and prerogatives of the Synod, as well as the effective competencies and responsibilities of the canonical bodies in the Church. He warned in clear terms that militating for unrest within the Church is unacceptable. The scandals which scar the Church at the moment – and are grotesquely magnified by the media – truly disfigure the public face of the Church. He evaluated that this has done great harm to all: to the faithful, to society and, indeed, to the world. He cautioned that it need not be so in the Church.

Making a reference to the Indian context, where the Catholic community is constituted in three ritual Churches, the Apostolic Nuncio said that on the ground, life can sometimes be complicated. He invited the Synod to work together, ensuring a fruitful and harmonious cooperation between Catholic Bishops of the different Churches *sui iuris* within the same territory, as exhorted by the Holy Father Pope Francis in his letter addressed to Bishops of India on 9 October 2017.

The Apostolic Nuncio announced that the Congregation for the Eastern Churches has recognized the competence of the Major Archbishop and Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church to make provisions for the reorganisation of the Eparchy of Shamshabad. However, he added that the current *status quo* should be preserved, till the end of the pandemic.

After the address of the Apostolic Nuncio, there was a short time for interaction. A few Bishops including the Major Archbishop intervened to make some clarifications regarding the points he mentioned in his address. It was clarified by the Apostolic Nuncio that the appeal for implementation of the uniform mode

of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* is made to the whole Church. It could be implemented in the diaspora communities on a priority basis. The Holy Father has made the appeal, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches has invited and the Nunciature has urged the Syro-Malabar Church to implement the uniform mode of celebration. The Nuncio stated that the challenge of the Synod is to decide as to how to proceed with the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration without affecting unity in the Church in the present context. The Major Archbishop said that this has been done at the diaspora level. What we need today is to bring unity in the whole Church. After the interventions, Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI, the Secretary of the Synod thanked the Apostolic Nuncio for his encouraging presence and strengthening words as the representative of the Holy Father. The Nuncio left the meeting, assuring his prayers for the success of the Synod.

Then the Secretary read out the minutes of the previous day and the Synod approved it with a few minor modifications and additions. Bishop Raphael Thattil moderated the sitting of the day.

Finalization of the Agenda

Archbishop Antony Kariyil read out the provisional agenda approved by the Permanent Synod. Some members made some new proposals to be included in the agenda. After a brief discussion, the Agenda was finalized with a few additions. The finalized agenda consists of the following items:

1. Implementation of the Uniform Mode of Celebration of Holy *Qurbana*
2. Matters on Liturgy:
 - a) Regarding the *Raza*, Solemn and Simple forms of the *Qurbana Taksa* in Malayalam
 - b) The new set of the *Panchangam* 2021-2022
 - c) Insertion of the titles of *Pathinombu* in *Panchangam*
 - d) Briefing on the Liturgy of Hours
 - e) The Book of Sunday Homilies according to the second set of readings

3. Regarding innovations in Liturgy
4. Covid related matters
5. *Guidelines on Pastoral Ministry to the Faithful of Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches sui iuris in India* prepared by CCBI
6. A Statement on the demolition of Church in Delhi
7. Approval of the amendments to the approved Statutes of *Paurastya Vidyapitham*
8. Establishment of a Mission Oriented Formation Centre
9. Introducing the system of internal auditing in the Major Seminaries for a better financial discipline
10. Teachers' Bank for the Synodal Major Seminaries.
11. Supervisory role of the Clergy Commission over the formation in minor seminaries
12. Request to declare St. Mariam Thresia and St Kuriakose Elias Chavara *Patron Saints of Families*
13. Request to elevate St. Joseph's Church, Peravoor of the Archeparchy of Tellicherry to the status of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre
14. Request to grant the title of *Malpan* to Rev. Fr. Michael Karimattam of the Archeparchy of Tellicherry
15. The new web portal of Syro-Malabar Vision
16. Presentation of Commission Reports
17. The mode of conduct of January 2022 Synod, online or offline.
18. Formation in the seminaries and the ongoing formation of priests
19. Briefing on EWS, Justice Koshy Commission & Discrimination for Christians in Minority Privileges
20. *Sabhadinam* Collection for the support of the Major Archiepiscopal Curia
21. Deepika
22. Study by LRC on the historicity of the arrival of St. Thomas in India

23. The formation of an apologetic wing in the Church to be undertaken jointly by the Commission for Doctrine and the Public Affairs Commission and Family Apostolate
24. Position statement regarding the inherited property at the time of erection of the Mission Eparchies
25. Syro-Malabar Social Ministry Award
26. DSSS Directors' meeting in the Syro Malabar Church
27. Request for an Auxiliary Bishop for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly
28. Forthcoming Major Archiepiscopal Assembly
29. The follow up to the procedures undertaken by the Doctrinal Commission to correct the doctrinal errors of Mr Martin Panjikkaran and his movement, called *Vimalahrudayathin Makkal*
30. The Publication of the study of the Doctrinal Commission on Secrets of Fatima: Facts and Controversies
31. Mission in South Africa
32. The 1950th anniversary celebration of the Martyrdom of Apostle Thomas at Mylappore
33. The centenary of the reestablishment of the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy (1923-2023)
34. The Farmers' strike in Delhi
35. Updates on the issue of assault on Mr. T. J. Joseph, former professor in the Newman College, Thodupuzha
36. Briefing on present state the land deal issue in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly

Revised *Qurbana Taksa* with *recognitio* of the Apostolic See

Bishop Raphael Thattil, the moderator, invited Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, the Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy, to start the discussion. Major Archbishop suggested that the information on the approved text of the Holy *Qurbana* by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches could be given to the members of the

Synod, before starting the discussion. To the query regarding the approved text of the *Qurbana*, Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS said that the *Raza Qurbana Taksa*, which was submitted for *recognitio* to the Congregation, was approved without any modification. He said that a few minor linguistic corrections were done in the approved text by the Special Committee for Liturgy, in the presence of the Major Archbishop. He informed the members that in the new text, the two *anaphoras* of Theodore and of Nestorius will also be included. Pointing out a previous understanding to give corresponding Malayalam words whenever Syriac words are used in the *taksa*, there was a request to make sure that it is done. Making a reference to the letter from the Congregation for the Oriental Churches (Prot. N. 248/2004, dated 09 November 2020) one member pointed out that clear rubrical instruction should certainly be included in the new liturgical book, regarding the uniform mode of celebration. Therefore, it was decided to include clear rubrical instruction regarding the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*: the celebrant shall face the faithful at the *Bema* during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar - in the same direction that the faithful are facing- for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful during the concluding rites after Holy Communion. When a few other proposals were made which would require changes in the approved text, the Major Archbishop said that no changes would be introduced to the text approved by the Apostolic See.

There was a question regarding the changes introduced in the approved *taksa* presented in the Synod. Therefore, a list of changes in the new *taksa*, prepared by the Commission for Liturgy was read out at the instruction of the Major Archbishop. It was suggested in the discussion that the Commission could print the changes in separate pages and be given together with the new *taksa* for an easy reference and catechesis to the faithful. To another query, Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS clarified that the four volumes of *propria* are not included in the *taksa*. He added that those four volumes are under the process of revision and will be published as the

revision works get over. A request was made to the Commission for Liturgy to ensure the quality of the paper used for printing the *taksa*.

Another topic of discussion was regarding the time frame of the new *Qurbana taksa*. Bishop Elavanal said that the texts for the use of the celebrants and the faithful could be made available before 31 October 2021 in all eparchies in Kerala. He said that more time is required to make the printed texts available to the eparchies outside Kerala in India and abroad. A few members suggested that since there were not many changes in the new *taksa*, it was also possible to mark the changes in the existing text and use them until the availability of the new texts. This suggestion was not that welcomed in general, since it was not becoming to the nature of the *taksa* of Holy *Qurbana*.

Another point that came up in the discussion was the date of implementing the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* which would coincide with the date of promulgation of the revised *taksa*. Although many dates were proposed in the discussion, an accepted date was the First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation, marking the new liturgical year, which falls on 28 November 2021. Some members suggested that the date of implementation of the uniform mode could be decided only after due discussion on the topic.

At this point, several Bishops raised their difficulty in having the Malayalam text of the Holy *Qurbana* translated into various languages like Hindi, Kannada, Telugu, Gujarati etc. Bishops from these regions said that they need more time to implement the revised text. It was also proposed that the texts translated into other Indian languages could be used *ad experimentum* for one year before getting the approval of the Commission for Liturgy. Bishops from the Eparchies outside India also demanded more time to make the revised texts available to all parishes. At the end of the discussion it was decided to give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to print the revised *Qurbana taksa*, which was granted *recognitio* by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. It was also

decided to request the Major Archbishop to grant, in consultation with the Commission for Liturgy, an extended time for translation of the revised text of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Eparchies where the text is used in languages other than Malayalam. The revised text of the Holy *Qurbana* will be implemented in these Eparchies by using Malayalam text on the same date as everywhere in the Church.

Inclusion of Rubrical Instructions of the Uniform Mode

Bishop Thomas Elavanal MCBS, Chairman of the Commission for Liturgy made an intervention to know the mind of the Synod regarding the inclusion of the rubrical instructions also in the general instructions given in the initial pages of the *taksa*. He informed the members that the rubrical instructions are already included in the text as per the decision of the Synod. The members were in favour of the inclusion of the rubrics in the general instructions also. Therefore, it was decided to include the rubrical instructions regarding the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the general instructions given in the initial pages of the *taksa*.

Implementation of the Uniform Mode of Celebration of Holy *Qurbana*

a) Presentation of the Major Archbishop

The Major Archbishop made a chronological and systematic presentation of the important phases in the history of the Syro-Malabar Church about the development of the text of Holy *Qurbana* and its mode of celebration. Starting from the first approval of the text of the Order of Syro-Malabar *Qurbana* by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches on 19 December 1985 and its formal inauguration on 8 February 1986 by Pope John Paul II, on the occasion of the Beatification of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara and St. Alphonsa at Kottayam, the Major Archbishop highlighted the milestones in the efforts for a uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. He explained how the three modes of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* were recognized, until reaching a consensus on the uniform mode of celebration.

The first Major Archiepiscopal Assembly held in 1998 cautioned that should these three forms of the mode of celebration continue for long, the intended unity would never be attained. Therefore, the Assembly categorically stated that there should be time bound action plan to implement the uniform mode of celebration. In 1999, after much prayer, reflections, discussions and deliberations the Synod unanimously decided to have the uniform mode of celebration and a joint pastoral letter was issued in this regard. However, this uniformity was not actualized as expected and the different forms of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* continued. Without losing hope the Synod went on making continuous attempts to arrive at uniformity in the mode of celebrating *Qurbana*.

The Major Archbishop made special reference to the January Synod in 2012, August Synod in 2017, August Synod in 2019, January Synod in 2020 and January Synod in 2021. In all these years, the desire for the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* was echoed in the Synod hall. In a special way, in the January Synod of 2020 the Bishops observed once again that the decision regarding uniformity had already been taken in 1999 and that decision was still in force. Therefore, the Synod said that there was no need to take another decision in this regard. It decided to exhort each Bishop to implement the decision of the Synod of 1999 regarding the uniformity in the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in his Archeparchy/Eparchy.

During the presentation, the Major Archbishop made reference to four letters from the Apostolic See. Three of them were eventually read by Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop. The first letter was that of the then Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro, dated 04 May 2020, communicating the mind of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches regarding the urgent need of ensuring unity in our Church when different and contrasting appeals had reached the Apostolic See manifesting more discrepancies in the praxis of liturgical celebrations particularly when they were live broadcasted in the Covid pandemic period. The second letter was from the Congregation

for the Eastern Churches, dated 9 November 2020, when the Malayalam *Raza Qurbana Taksa* was submitted for the *recognitio*. In that letter, Cardinal Sandri mentioned two important points for the reflection of the Synod of Bishops, both of them were pointing to the need of uniformity in liturgical celebrations.

The third letter was also from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, dated 09 June 2021, granting the *recognitio* for the Malayalam *Raza Qurbana Taksa*. In that letter, the Cardinal Prefect categorically affirmed the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of *Qurbana* as unanimously decided by the Synod of Bishops in November 1999 and recently reconfirmed in January 2020, the celebrant shall face the faithful at the Bema during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar- in the same direction that the faithful are facing- for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful during the concluding rites after Holy Communion. Finally, the Major Archbishop presented the letter from Holy Father Pope Francis, dated 3 July 2021, addressed to the Bishops, Clergy, Religious and Laity of the Syro-Malabar Church exhorting to a prompt implementation of the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, for the greater good and unity of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Concluding his presentation, the Major Archbishop made it clear that there was no other choice for anyone than to obey the Supreme Pontiff. He said that the Holy Father has in fact ratified the unanimous decision taken by the Synod of Bishops. He added that the time has come to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the *Qurbana*. He invited all the Bishops in the Synod to listen to the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of unity and love so that He will enkindle the fire of His love and give the power of discernment.

b) Modality of Discussion

The Moderator, Bishop Raphael Thattil proposed a modality of discussion on the topic *Implementation of the Uniform Mode of celebration of the Holy Qurbana*. The Moderator invited the Bishops to give their names to participate in the discussion. The names

were noted down. It was proposed that all Bishops could be given time to intervene. That proposal was accepted. However, for a better coordination of the discussion, it was agreed that the Bishops who wanted to make intervention should give their names and they would be invited in the order as they gave their names. The discussion on the topic continued for almost seven days.

Bishop Raphael Thattil, the moderator, inviting for discussion on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* reminded the members of the observation of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, communicated through the former Apostolic Nuncio, that the liturgical disunity would become an adverse factor in granting an Apostolic Exarchate for the Syro-Malabar faithful in the Arabic Peninsula. He said that what is to be done by the Synod is to determine a date of implementing the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the whole Syro-Malabar Church, in the spirit of obedience to the Holy Father. He invited the members for the discussion on the topic. Almost all Bishops participated in the discussion.

c) Favourable Interventions for Implementing the Uniform mode of Celebration

- The Synod has no option other than to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, in obedience to the Holy Father. Pope Francis has made a clear exhortation to implement the uniform mode of celebration promptly. So what is required is to fix a date for the implementation.
- 28 November 2021, the First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation, could be an apt date to implement the uniform mode of the Holy *Qurbana* in the whole Syro-Malabar Church.
- The ordained ministers and the consecrated persons of the Church themselves are the protagonists in all issues, including the protest against the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*, which make the Church laughing stock

before the public. The faithful and all people of some moral sense have been aghast at the way the ordained ministers of the Church, in spite of their solemn oath of faithfulness and obedience are going with such activities. The earlier we put an end to the liturgy dispute, the more are the chances for the survival of our Church.

- Recently there have been a flow of emails and other messages from a few eparchies. It is more than evident that it is a manipulated move to make the Synod and the public misunderstand that the whole Church is against the implementation of the decision. Those who send the emails and memoranda are only a minuscule minority in the total number of faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church. It is to be kept in mind that others refrain from sending any email or whatsapp message against this campaign because they have faith in the Magisterium, in the Synod and the individual bishops that they will not go against the exhortation of the Holy Father.
- The whole world is looking at the Synod to see how we obey Holy Father by implementing the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*.
- We must strive to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* without sacrificing unity and communion.
- The exhortation of the Holy Father to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* needs to be executed without unnecessary delay. 28 November 2021 could be an apt date.
- The date of implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* should be the same for the whole Church. However, the Eparchies, where an immediate full implementation is not pastorally feasible, could start the uniform mode of celebration at the Cathedral, pilgrim centres, all possible parishes, formation houses and religious communities on

the date of implementation itself. The remaining parishes may take the time for vigilant and intensive preparation and implement the decision for uniform mode of celebration peacefully within one year.

- The obedience to the Holy Father is not an option, but a binding duty of all. So the Synod must implement the uniform mode of celebration, as exhorted by the Holy Father. It is sad that we could not do it even after 22 years.
- The limitations of space and the projected pastoral problems in the implementation of the uniform mode could be overcome by the spirit of obedience and desire for unity in the Church.
- In the celebration of the three forms of Holy *Qurbana*: simple, solemn and most solemn (*Raza*), a mixing up is seen in the Church. A simple celebration is well defined by its rubrics, while the rubrics and the characteristic elements for solemn and most solemn forms are also well defined. It is better to remain confined to one form of celebration at a time, than to mix up the various forms and elements of other forms in a single celebration.
- The Synodal process is to be given importance. The Bishops listen to the people, bring it to the Synod, make deliberations and listen to the Spirit and arrive at a final decision. Even the discussion is a Synodal process. We have to hold on to the decision of the Holy Father. Thus the precedence of the Synod needs to be emphasized.
- The implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* should be seen as a Synodal process far beyond the likes and dislikes of individuals. Nobody wins and nobody loses.
- The Holy Father has given the entire Syro-Malabar Church a very clear exhortation to implement the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* promptly. The tendency to

dilute the content of the letter of the Holy Father, projecting too much the letter of Apostolic Nuncio, is not a fair thing from our part. The most important question is whether we are ready to obey the Holy Father. All Bishops are bound to obey the Pope and the Apostolic See. There is no point in saying that the custom practiced for 60 years is difficult to be changed. Other eparchies which shared the same custom of facing the people implemented the Synodal decision in 1999 itself. The religious are ready to follow whatever is followed in each eparchy. Bishops should not discourage priests from celebrating the Synodal form of the *Qurbana*. So the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana* is to be implemented in the whole Church on 28 November 2021.

- The argument for an extended time for catechesis and awareness regarding the Synodal form of the *Qurbana* is not genuine. The Synodal form of Holy *Qurbana* is not alien to the priests ordained in the last few decades because this form of *Qurbana* began to be celebrated in the major seminaries even before the decision in 1999 Synod in this regard. Those eparchies which sincerely wanted to implement the Synodal decision gave catechesis and there are fruits. Those who never wanted to implement this decision have never done anything in this regard. It is not true that the laity was not consulted. In the Major Archiepiscopal Assemblies and in the meeting of the Secretaries of the Pastoral Council, the demand for the uniform mode of celebration always came up as their strong desire for the good of the Church.
- The difficulty we face for the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* is to be approached as a creative possibility than a crisis. This is the time to say *fiat* to the intervention of the Holy Father, which will eventually lead to the *magnificat* for the whole Church. The emotional reactions of the organized groups in a few eparchies should not make us lose sight of the vast majority of faithful who

ardently desire for the implementation of the uniform mode of the Holy *Qurbana*. If the Synod doesn't take a decision and implement it, its authority will be weakened, which would lead to long lasting indiscipline in the Church.

- We need to address the issue than covering it up. The uniform mode of celebration should be implemented on 28 November 2021. It should be done in all three forms, and not only for *Raza*. For those who need more time for a full implementation, it could be permitted under the condition that on 28 November the uniform mode of celebration should be started in the Cathedrals, shrines, formation houses etc. in their eparchies. There should be a specified time limit for the full implementation of the decision, in these cases.
- It is irrelevant to discuss the decision of the Pope who has exhorted for a prompt implementation of the uniform mode of the *Qurbana*. If this decision is not implemented this time, the Synod would be causing an irreparable grave scandal with long lasting repercussions. There is no point in highlighting the fact that celebrating Holy *Qurbana* facing the people has become a custom of 60 years and hence it cannot be changed. In fact the Apostolic See has never favoured the celebration *versus populum* in our Church. The permission given in 1999 was a special one for establishing unity in our Church when the Synod unanimously decided so and requested for its approval.
- In fact, the liturgical renewal was not done in haste. The process was actually started in 1934 when the Syro-Malabar Bishops requested Pope Pius XI the permission to translate the Latin liturgy into Syriac language to use it for the Syro-Malabar faithful, which the Pope did not grant. After the 1999 Synod, 21 years have already passed, during which all priests, religious and laity have got the opportunity in various ways to come to know about the liturgical renewal in our Church.

- The time has come for the implementation of the Synodal formula of the *Hoy Qurbana*. We have been trying for this since many years. It is not fair to say that we have wasted the last 25 years. We could achieve a lot: we revised the text of the sacraments, pontifical, the text of the Holy *Qurbana* etc. The letter of the Holy Father is the culminating intervention in this process of renewal. Obedience to the Holy Father and the Synod is the fundamental principle to be followed. All Bishops should be ready to obey the Pope. Small failures or shortcomings in the implementation of this fundamental principle would be tolerated.
- The two expressions in the letter of the Holy Father are worth reflecting. Walking together is *sentire cum ecclesia*. It doesn't mean accommodating the dissenting voices in the Church. It rather means to listen to the Spirit, listen to the Holy Father and listen to the communion of Bishops like that of Synod. The expression *time is greater than space* means the hope in the gradualness. Space hardens processes, where time propels towards the future and encourages us to forward in hope. It means a time bound approach in the execution of something that needs time. Some misinterpret this expression of the Holy Father to leave everything connected to the implementation of the uniform mode undetermined for the future, without any sincere commitment.
- The tendency to misinterpret the exhortation of the Holy Father is not proper to us. It should not be treated as a dispensable appendix. The Holy Father has owned our decision. By confirming the decision of the Synod, the Holy Father has upheld the middle position. It should be seen as the *Petrine strengthening* of his brothers. We should be able to replace *self disclosing* with *ecclesiological disclosing*. We need to liberate ourselves from the *ecclesiological introvertedness*.

- Church is greater than any of her member. When we act against this greatness of the Church, we become morally bankrupt. We are called to become *alter Christus* as well as *altera ecclesia*. The Bishops and priests have the utmost responsibility to uphold the dignity of the Church and of the Synod. Implementing the decision of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* should be seen from this point of view.
- The unity in the Church is important. It is true that we should implement the uniform of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. Now it is in the implementation stage. There is no point in making many arguments now. The uniformity in liturgy alone will not bring unity in the Church. We should collectively discourage the extremist views on both sides.
- In order to implement the uniform mode, Bishops have to think generously. In some circumstances, it may take more time to implement it. The protests and the signature campaign in some eparchies are the deliberate attempts of self justification intended not to implement the decision. This kind of approach is unfortunate.
- The credibility of the Synod will be lost if it fails to implement promptly the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* as exhorted by the Holy Father. All are waiting for the outcome of the Synod. We should not refrain from doing what is right only because some are protesting. If so, it will be a historic blunder from the part of the Synod and we will be accused throughout the history of our Church.
- All Bishops should obey the exhortation of the Holy Father. Actually we have no freedom to do otherwise. The Synod should decide for a prompt implementation of the uniform mode of the Holy *Qurbana*.
- The mind of the Apostolic See is evident from the letters of Pope Francis and the Congregation of the Eastern Churches:

the Syro-Malabar Church has to maintain unity and at the same time implement uniformity in the mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The Apostolic See has clearly stated that it will not be helpful for our Church to continue the different modes of celebration. We have to obey the Holy Father in humility and instruct our priests and people to do the same, though it may be painful for some. We must make sacrifices to arrive at a common decision. The difficulties, problems and challenges can be surpassed, aiming at the lasting unity and peace in the years to come. Ultimately it is for the good of our Church. It is a question of credibility of the Synod whether we will be able to make a definitive decision in this matter.

- The letter of Pope Francis has to be respected to arrive at a decision in this Synod. We have to remember that the letter of Pope Francis dated 09 October 2017 was our strength at the time of erection of the Eparchy of Shamshabad. The Latin Bishops accepted the provision since the Pope had written the letter. Some of the Latin Bishops told in some meetings that even though they had several reservations, since Pope had written the letter, they accepted it without questioning. We have to follow this model of obedience in our case also.
- The Synod has only one option, that is, to obey the Holy Father. We have to take a decision regarding the implementation of the uniform mode and we should never go back. The history of the Church shows that she had overcome many difficult situations. Of course ours is not an easy situation. But, we have to face it and overcome. The Bishops have to give this strong message to the priests and laity and they will obey in the good spirit. Those who face more difficulties in their eparchies should speak in the Synod and other members have to strengthen them to implement the decision.
- We should have an optimistic reading of the history of our Church. In the past two decades, we could attain many

things as a Church: we got four Saints, Blesseds etc, we got all India pastoral jurisdiction, we got eparchies outside India, all these are really blessings to our Church. We should realize unity in the Church. That is what is required to continue the challenging mission in our modern times. The uniformity in the celebration of liturgy is a determined step towards this unity.

- The present approved text of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana too may not be the ideal or the perfect one. It is the fruit of the organic development of our liturgy, taking into consideration our contemporary ecclesial reality. We held adequate consultations with our priests, religious and laity, in the very first Major Archiepiscopal Assembly in 1998 and in the subsequent Assemblies. On several occasions the Synod had consulted Secretaries of the Eparchial Pastoral and Presbyteral Councils and the Major Superiors of the Religious Communities. Beyond and above our personal likes or dislikes, especially with our pastoral experiences as the Bishops of eparchies, we should endorse the implementation of the uniform mode of the celebration of the Holy Qurbana on the First Sunday of Annunciation, with the Bishops celebrating it in their respective Cathedrals, and requesting their priests, parishes, and religious communities to implement it on the same day, with adequate catechetical preparation.
- Before we conclude the present Session of the Synod, we have to make it clear to the public that our Synod is a harmonious body of Bishops, and we honour our own unanimous decision and obey the exhortation of the Holy Father. We have to give a message that we support and encourage each other and walk together as a Church. We should see to it that none of us feels being discriminated against, isolated, or attacked. Any sort of false news, and slanderous propaganda, from one side or the other, has to be avoided by all means. We shall strive to avoid every

sort of polarization, liturgical or otherwise. As Bishops, we should not cause any public dissent to the unanimous decision of the Synod. That would be catastrophic to the unity and survival of our Church. The words of Cardinal Achille Silvestrini to the Syro-Malabar Synod in Rome in 1996 are worth mentioning: "If winners and losers emerge from an encounter among parties in the Church, then it is the Church that loses and in such a situation there are, in fact, no winners."

- The decision of the 1999 Synod was evolved to avoid a possible division in the Church on the basis of liturgy. It was the result of a compromise for the good of the Church. The Church is of Jesus and we are only stewards. We have to bear this in mind while we are in the process of a decision making which would determine the future of the Church.
- The central point of the message of the Apostolic See is that we have to ensure unity in the Church by resorting to uniformity in the mode of celebration. The path to unity is not that easy. We have to note that the Congregation for the Eastern Churches in its letter speaks of correcting those culpable gently but firmly, as a requirement for safeguarding the unity and common witness of the whole Church *sui iuris*.
- We have to remember gratefully the Synodal Fathers of 1999 Synod, who even against their personal convictions, were ready to reach a consensus for the good of the Church regarding the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. Now, we have to show the same magnanimity to implement the uniform mode of celebration.
- Prolonging the implementation of the decision is a danger the Synod should avoid. The Holy Father has asked for a prompt implementation. All Bishops should be committed to implement the decision of the Synod and should not permit anymore indiscipline in the Church.

- Thousands are praying for the outcome of the Synod. We should decide the date, 28 November 2021, as the date of implementing the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* and celebrate it in all the Cathedrals. This will be a great sign of unity. If the Bishops are determined and united, the priests and the faithful will obey the decision of the Synod.
- The Synod should decide that 28 November 2021 as the date to implement the uniform mode of celebration. In the meanwhile, *Bema* should be arranged in all churches and chapels. After the date of implementation of the uniform mode, no Bishop shall celebrate any other form of Holy *Qurbana* anywhere in the Church. The discussion on the aftermath of the implementation of the uniform mode should be held only in a Synod convened in the physical presence of the Bishops.
- The Apostolic See has given categorical instructions to the Syro-Malabar Church regarding the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration. The Letter of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches dated 9 June 2021 has clearly stated this message: *the new editio typica will coincide with the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration for the Divine Liturgy in your Rite, whether in its simple, solemn or most solemn (Raza) form.* So it is not an act of discretion from the part of the Synod. The uniform mode of celebration is applicable to all three forms of celebration and not only to *Raza*.
- In the communication from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, dated 17 December 1999 approving the Synodal decision on the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*, the following instructions were given: 1) The rubrics to be promulgated for the implementation of this Synodal decision, should be unmistakably explicit. They should state clearly, as in the above mentioned document, that during the Anaphora the priest faces East

(or the altar, i.e., with his back to the congregation, leading the people in prayer while facing in the same direction the people themselves are facing); and that the priest begins to face in this direction (toward the altar and away from the congregation) beginning with and including the prayer of *accessus ad altare*: “I give you thanks, my Father, Lord of heaven and earth...”. The priest remains facing in this direction during the entire Anaphora, except of course at those points where the traditional rubrics order him to turn to the congregation for a greeting. 2) It should be noted that in churches which have restored the once-traditional *Bema* in the center of the nave, in the midst of the congregation – and such a restoration would certainly be desirable at least *ad experimentum* for example in liturgical centres and seminary or monastic chapels- then during the Liturgy of the Word the clergy on the *Bema* would be seated in the midst of the people and facing in the same direction as they, in the direction of the lecterns for the readings Liturgy of the Word. 3) Furthermore, in churches so designed, it would not be necessary for the presiding priest to come to the *Bema* for the concluding rites of the liturgy, which would be celebrated from the front of the *qestroma* or sanctuary platform, facing the people.

- We have to admit that we could not implement the decision of the 1999 Synod in an effective manner. It would have been ideal to implement the decision giving sufficient time to each eparchy to implement it gradually after adequate formation and preparation. But the decision was implemented at a stretch which did not yield the desired result. This time, those Bishops who find it difficult to implement the decision immediately should inform the Synod a future date on which they would implement the decision in their eparchies. The Synod could fix that date as the date of implementation for the whole Church (Eg. 3 July 2022). In the meanwhile, the Synod could take steps

to complete the translation of the text of the *Qurbana* to the other languages. The Synod could issue a pastoral letter announcing this mode of implementation of the decision on the Holy *Qurbana*.

- The Synod should act in a determined way by implementing the decision for the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* on 28 November 2021. At the same time, the Synod has to accommodate pastorally the difficult situations faced in certain eparchies.
- The Synod should not give over emphasis to the priests who dissent, sidelining the feelings of those who obey the Synod and the Bishops. The majority of our people and priests have no issue in implementing the decision. The major issue behind the reluctance of some of our priests to comply seems to be the lack of charity. We need to help them for a conversion of hearts. To say that we have not prepared the clergy to accept this decision contradicts the history. All the major seminaries were following the uniform mode of celebration for more than twenty years. Therefore, it is better not to prolong the implementation of this decision.
- We need to accept and interpret the Holy Father's intervention as the will of God. Only if we submit ourselves to the will of God, we can convince our people of the intervention of the Holy Spirit in the Synod. The letter of the Holy Father is addressed to the Bishops, priests, religious and the laity of the Syro-Malabar Church and not to the Synod or to the Major Archbishop. That means, the responsibility of implementing the papal exhortation falls on each Bishop, priest, religious and laity. Even in the eparchies where difficulties are reported in implementing the decision, there are many who long for unity through the implementation of the uniform celebration of Holy *Qurbana*.
- Through the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Second Vatican Council

emphasized that reform in liturgy is for the renewal of the People of God, adaptations to the times, and evangelization. While accepting wholeheartedly the decision of the Synod for the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*, we need to think seriously the realities in the mission areas. The Christians there have their own culture, tradition and customs of worship different than the traditional Syro-Malabar diaspora. In this context, the adaptations that could be envisaged for the mission territories while implementing the uniform mode of celebration are to be seriously considered by the Synod.

- The liturgical uniformity is essential for the unity in the Church. This is essential for obtaining pastoral structures in the diaspora, especially in the Gulf countries. The division which is growing in these communities need to be addressed and repaired. For all these, the uniform mode of celebration should be implemented promptly as exhorted by the Holy Father. We are going through a difficult time in the history of our Church. The complexities of the situations should not make us desperate. We should realize the presence of Jesus who sleeps in the boat amidst the storm in the sea. It is enough that we have faith, take strong decisions and implement them with maximum sincerity and commitment.
- The Synod should take only one definitive decision to implement the uniform mode of celebration with effect from 28 November 2021. After that date if there arises any issue, they can be solved in January Synod 2022. The Synod shall not find solutions for imaginary problems, before implementing the decision.
- Nothing contrary to the letter of the Holy Father could be decided by the Synod or by individual Bishops. The Synod should unanimously decide for the implementation of the uniform mode. We should realize that all of us are part of the same journey. As a group, we should also consider those

who get scattered from the group and go astray, those who hesitate and doubt to march forward etc. The Synod has to think of these realities even when the uniformity is implemented.

- The theme of liturgy recurs in the discussions of the Synod. This Synod is entrusted with the important duty to decide on the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*. The future of the Syro-Malabar Church depends on the decision of this Synodal Session. People are looking at the Synod to see whether we obey the Pope or not. If the Bishops obey the decision, gradually the priests and the faithful will obey the decision, following the Bishops. We hear the voice of the Spirit through the voice of our Superiors.
- Our Church *sui iuris* which is in communion with the Universal Church is obliged to obey the Successor of Peter unconditionally. Some Bishops shared that in certain eparchies there are practical difficulties for the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration due to the resistance from the part of some clergy. It is in such situations that we have to be reminded of the meaning of the biblical words: "obedience is better than sacrifice". It has become crystal clear that the way the Holy Father shows us is the way of blessing for our Church. Obedience to the exhortation of the Holy Father is the best solution for overcoming the present difficulties that our Church faces.
- We have many examples of great leaders of the Church who, through their obedience to the Apostolic See set an example for an effective leadership. The Synod should implement the decision, as exhorted by the Holy Father. The Bishops should manifest a sincere commitment without evading from the responsibilities entrusted to them. In our context, it has become now clear that uniformity in the celebration of Holy *Qurbana* is needed for unity in our Church.

- It is sad that the letter of Holy Father was misinterpreted and so published in the social media. The educated people in the Church say that they are ashamed of the disputes among the Bishops and priests on liturgy. We should not give another chance to the enemies of the Church to mock at our Church, by not implementing the exhortation of the Holy Father. No Bishop shall promote the divisive spirit in the Church. Care must be there not to make anymore innovations in liturgy by individuals or eparchies without the concurrence of the Synod, because they would ultimately contribute to further divisions in the Church. All Bishops in humility and obedience should wholeheartedly accept the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
- As we have to follow the principle *cum Petro et sub Petro* we have to accept the exhortation of Pope Francis (CCEO c. 45 §§ 1, 3). We are bound to follow the liturgical norms/texts approved by the Synod (CCEO c. 150 §2; Cf. CCEO, cc. 667-669) after having received the *recognitio* of Apostolic See (CCEO c.657). Eparchial Bishops are duty bound to keep vigilance, and that liturgical life is 'ordered according to the prescriptions and legitimate customs of his own Church *sui iuris*' (CCEO cc. 199 §1, 655 §3, 656 §1). Therefore it is our obligation to implement promptly the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. There are difficulties in some eparchies in implementing the uniform mode. If the Synod stands united, the implementation would become easy.
- As per the clear directives from the Congregation dated 9 November 2020, the provision of canon 1538 of CCEO cannot be applied in giving dispensation from decision to implement the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*. Dispensation can be given only for individual cases "*for well-defined times and for specific reasons*" and not as general permission in an eparchy as done in 2000.
- As Jesus obeyed the Father, the Synod has to obey the exhortation of the Holy Father. One who does not obey the

Holy Father is not sharing the spirit of Jesus. If the Synod doesn't take the decision to implement the uniform mode, it will remain a scandal in the history of our Church. The eparchies which implemented the decision of 1999 Synod faced many problems. But, gradually they began to comply with the decision of the Synod. *Bema* should be there in all churches. Bishops should celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the Cathedrals on November 28, inaugurating the revised text.

- In the Jerusalem Synod, when there was a debate over a topic, Peter intervened and his decision was accepted by all. Likewise, the Holy Father has intervened to put an end to the confusion regarding the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. He has used a language respecting the autonomy of a Synod of an Oriental Church, giving a clear direction to the entire Syro-Malabar Church at the same time. The exhortation of the Holy Father to implement the uniform mode is a mandatory one, for which we have no other option than to obey it. He has exhorted us to implement the decision taken by our Synod. The Synod has to say *fiat* and should implement promptly the uniform mode of celebration. While we are duty bound to implement the uniform mode, we should address also the difficulties faced in a few eparchies in implementing this decision.
- The discussions on the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* were focused and effective. After 35 years, we could complete the revision of the *Qurbana* text. We have to go ahead with the implementation. The mode of celebration should be implemented in the mission areas also on the same date. The translation of the text in vernaculars may take some more time. We have to support each other in the Holy Spirit.
- The lay faithful are comfortable with or accustomed to the particular way of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* as followed in their respective parishes for some decades.

They may be reluctant to change. But once the matter is properly explained to them, they will be ready to follow what the bishops and priests tell them. Now, the problem is with Bishops and priests. The Holy Father has advised us to follow a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*. We must follow his advice earnestly without any hesitation. This uniform mode of celebration will eventually pay the way for perfect unity and the greater good of our Church. The concerns of the Bishops who have difficulties in implementing the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* need to be addressed. But, they also should have a time bound action plan in implementing the uniform mode of celebration without any hesitation.

- If the Bishops are ready to obey the exhortation of the Pope, the priests who have difficulty also will come to the obedience. The Holy *Qurbana* is the sublime expression of obedience of Jesus. How can we celebrate this *Qurbana*, without obeying our superiors? We have a structure in the Church based on obedience. By disobeying the Pope, we are destroying this structure of the Church.
- By all means we are bound to obey the Holy Father. The directive of the Apostolic See needs to be accepted in letter and spirit.

d) Reservations regarding the Implementation of the Uniform Mode of Celebration

- The implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana* cannot be done at the opposition of the priests of an Eparchy. The opposition of the priests will be converted into divisions and conflicts in the parishes. The unity of an Eparchy cannot be disturbed by implementing the uniform mode. This has been reiterated by the Apostolic Nuncio in his address to the Synod.
- In those eparchies, where the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration cannot be executed for pastoral

reasons, dispensation could be granted from the celebration of the uniform mode making use of the provision of c. 1538 of CCEO.

- Even when the obedience is rendered to the Holy Father and to the Congregation for the Eastern Churches in implementing the uniform mode of celebration, the disunity it would cause and the problematic situations which would arise are to be seriously taken into account. So more time needs to be given to those eparchies which are not yet prepared for celebrating the *Qurbana* in the Synodal formula.
- In those eparchies where the uniform mode of celebration cannot be implemented immediately due to various pastoral reasons, permission could be given to implement it step by step. For example, as the first step, in such eparchies the uniform mode of celebration could be implemented in the cathedrals, pilgrim centres, formation houses, religious communities and institutions. Sufficient time must be given to others to come to the uniform mode.
- Church means people of God. As we have involved the priests, the religious and the laity in the revision process of *taksa* of the Holy *Qurbana*, we should have done the same procedure also in the implementation of the uniform mode in those eparchies where it has not been implemented so far. Therefore, more catechesis and awareness are needed for implementing the uniform mode of celebration, where the faithful and priests are not familiar with the same.
- There should be an open and extensive discussion in the Synod regarding the implementation of the uniform mode. We need dialogue and discussions to share the burdens of the faithful. We have to find the reasons for not implementing the decision of the 1999 Synod even after 21 years. We always have the freedom to go back to the Holy Father when we have some serious concerns or difficulties in our Church.

- Faithful in some Eparchies find it difficult to change the custom of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* facing the faithful practiced for 60 years. When we find it difficult to implement the liturgical rituals, we could rethink about them.
- The celebration of the uniform mode of the Holy *Qurbana* with *bema* is not practical in the many parishes or centres of the eparchies in the mission and migrant areas. In many places, Holy *Qurbana* is celebrated in a limited space in residential apartments and small rented houses. These difficulties are to be seriously taken into consideration by the Synod. The Holy Father has acknowledged these situations in his letter. Considering these difficulties, it could be decided by the Synod that *Raza* shall be celebrated in the uniform mode in all eparchies. For the celebration of simple and solemn forms of *Qurbana*, freedom should be given to the respective bishop to allow so in his eparchy -facing the people or facing the altar. In common places, shrines and formation houses, the decision could be left to the eparchial Bishop.
- As a way forward, the Synod may submit to the Apostolic See either to ask permission to continue the celebration of simple and solemn *Qurbana* facing the people or facing the Altar and/or to make the posture of the celebrant “optional” to be decided by the eparchial bishop in the case of simple and solemn *Qurbana*. Introducing it as an “option” will bring in a permanent solution, as we had in the case of St. Thomas Cross, Sanctuary veil, sign of the cross, etc., proposed by the then Sessions of the Synod.
- We are in need of a culture of dialogue, without hurting. We have to promote collaboration in the Church. The process of taking decisions could be more inclusive. This is valid also in the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration.
- In the mission areas, a more dynamic celebration of liturgy is the need of the time. The people look for more involvement

and participation. The translation of the *Qurbana* text to other languages should be prepared maintaining a certain standard. There are disturbances among priests and people in some eparchies. We have to find space to listen to the Holy Spirit and the People of God.

- The consultation process with the priests, the religious and the laity was not done in the decision to implement the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*. This should be done before implementing the uniform mode.
- The personal relationships among the bishops should not be affected in the process of implementation of the Holy *Qurbana*. Unnecessary haste should be avoided in the implementation of the decision. The law of gradualness is more practical than to implement the decision all of a sudden.
- Our Church is going through a great crisis. Implementation of uniform mode of celebration will lead to more divisions in the Church. At present we are following many elements without uniformity (Eg. sign of cross, *kaikurusu*, sanctuary veil, dress used for liturgical and paraliturgical etc.). We have not discussed the uniform mode of celebration with the priests, religious and laity. Uniformity in celebration alone will not bring unity in the Church (Eg. Orthodox and Jacobite Churches). The Apostolic Nuncio's message was that uniformity in Liturgy should not be at the cost of unity of the Church.
- The Apostolic Nuncio spoke about the need for constant renewal in the Church. Our Church always wants to stick to the 4th century mode of celebration without any renewal. Chaldean Church has adopted renewal and is facing people during the celebration of the *Qurbana*. The present decision came from Rome is against the understanding of the last synod which was "not to impose but to introduce". In the mission context of evangelization, the *Qurbana* facing the people will help the new Catholics to understand the things better.

- The address of the Apostolic Nuncio to the Synod should be seriously assessed. His words are to be taken as the final position of the Apostolic See. His invitation to the Synod is to judiciously evaluate the timeframe for a prudent process of implementation in order to safeguard the unity of our Church.
- The difficult pastoral situation which prompted certain bishops to dispense from the decision of the Synod using the provision in c. 1538 of CCEO, still remains in some eparchies. In this context, the question asked by Cardinal Silvestrini, the then Prefect of the Oriental Congregation is relevant. He asked a Bishop why the Synod was not able to foresee the resistance in the Church against the implementation of the uniform mode. We should not give any more chance for such a situation. The Synod should be very cautious in taking decision to implement uniformity when it is clear that such a decision would disturb the unity.
- We must give importance to unity rather than uniformity by giving too much importance to the question of turning to altar or turning to people during the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. However, as Holy Father has exhorted, keeping aside our likes and personal aptitudes, we have to obey the Holy Father because we have the duty to be *cum Petro et sub Petro*.
- While implementing the uniform mode of celebration, we have to remember that divisions have taken place in our Church whenever decisions were imposed on the people. Therefore, we should be careful not to make more divisions in the Church. For this, the Synod should be in touch with the ground reality in the eparchies where there is opposition. Those eparchies which need more time and the priests who don't adhere to the Synodal decisions are to be somehow accommodated by the Synod.
- The difficulty expressed by a member to implement the

uniform mode in his eparchy was not duly addressed by the Synod. We could make a request to the Holy Father himself, informing him of the difficulty we face in the prompt implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The Major Archbishop could write to the Holy Father in this regard. The deadline to implement the decision may not be well accepted in some places.

- There is an apprehension that the decision taken by the Synod may cause disunity rather than unity in the Church. There is a feeling that the decisions taken by the Synod are not informed properly to the persons concerned.
- The next Synod should seriously discuss proposal to formulate an effective liturgical catechesis for the mission areas. The scope of evangelization in the mission areas needs to be explored and for that, a special approach needs to be there. The Synod has not taken the concerns raised by certain Bishops in implementing the uniform mode with due importance. As a Church we are facing a lot of problems. This decision could create another problematic situation. So the Synod is requested to take steps to address the problems faced by the Bishops in their eparchies.

e) Other suggestions

- The Synod has to think seriously of the possibility of making the celebration of the *Qurbana* dynamic in the mission areas.
- The Synod has spent more than justifiable time on liturgy. Without diminishing the importance of liturgy, the same priority should be given for evangelization in our Church. There are a vast majority of people in our country who have not even heard of Jesus. The personnel and assets of the Syro-Malabar Church accumulated in the State of Kerala should be distributed to the mission areas. The Church has yet to really grow outside Kerala.

f) Concluding Remarks

Bishop Raphael Thattil, the Moderator, thanked all the members for the fruitful discussion on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration. Presenting a statistics, Bishop Thattil said that among the thirteen eparchies inside Kerala, only two eparchies have expressed difficulty in the implementation of the decision. Of the 18 eparchies outside Kerala, eight of them are erected for the migrant communities (Kalyan, Belthangady, Bhadravathi, Ramanathapuram, Mandya, Faridabad, Hosur and Shamshabad). Then we have 10 mission eparchies in India and four eparchies outside India. In the migrant eparchies faithful from all eparchies in Kerala are present. Synodal formula should be celebrated there by all means. He said that in order to facilitate further discussion, he has formulated ten points. Before taking up the same for discussion, the moderator requested the Major Archbishop to conclude the discussion.

The Major Archbishop thanked everybody for the sincere participation in the discussion with the genuine intention to implement the uniform mode of celebration. The letter of Pope Francis, he said, was the most authentic direction to an Oriental Church. Such a direction has never been given by any Pope, solving a problem in our Church. We cannot even imagine of not accepting his letter. He described the official and solemn nature of the letter of the Holy Father, like the way it was announced and how the letter was given from St. John Lateran, Rome, with his sign and seal. The Major Archbishop, referring to the letters from the Congregation, said that the first communication urging for a uniform liturgy was in the context of live streaming of Holy *Qurbana* in various ways in the outbreak of the Covid pandemic. The final exhortation came through the letter of the Holy Father, along with the *recognitio* to the revised text from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. The Holy Father made it clear that the uniform mode was the only mode that we can accept for unity in our Church. Any other mode of celebration will not contribute to the unity in the Church.

The Malayalam text of the Holy *Qurbana* is the *editio tipica*, approved by the Congregation. The implementation of the uniform mode coincides with the promulgation of the new text of the *Qurbana* in the whole Church. The Synod could give time for the translations in other languages.

The Major Archbishop reminded the members of the various occasions when the Latin Bishops in India accepted the letters of the Holy Father under obedience, which led to solve the problems related to the erection of many of the eparchies outside Kerala. He highlighted the spirit of obedience of the Latin Bishops concerned, in such situations. The communion is established through obedience.

The Apostolic See is the final authority in liturgical matters, which preserves the liturgy of the Oriental Churches. The mandatory *recognitio* for the liturgical texts of the Oriental Churches given by the Apostolic See is a clear proof of this authority. It is on the occasion of granting *recognitio* to the revised *Qurbana* text, the Apostolic See asked us to implement the uniform mode of celebration. So we have to accept the direction on the uniform mode of celebration in such a spirit.

A few Bishops have shared their difficulties with regard to the implementation of the uniform mode in their eparchies. We have to think together how to address their situation. He reminded the Bishops that a divisive language on this matter would not be in line with the nature of the Synod and the witness it has to give to the faithful. He concluded his intervention inviting all the members to come to a unanimous decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of Holy *Qurbana*.

Discussion to formulate the Decision on the Uniform Mode of Celebration of Holy *Qurbana*

After concluding the long discussion on the matter, Bishop Raphael Thattil, the Moderator, said that he has formulated a proposal for taking a decision on the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy

Qurbana imbibing the spirit of the sharings made by Bishops. He said that he has formed ten points which would help the members to come to a decision, based on the discussion held so far. The ten points were read out at the instruction of the moderator. In the discussion that followed, several Bishops participated. There were suggestions regarding the language, the inclusion of some elements etc. During the discussion, it was made clear that the proposals as presented would not form a document in itself. The proposals serve to arrive at a decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of the Holy *Qurbana*. The final decision will be incorporated in the Pastoral Letter to be given by the Major Archbishop at the conclusion of the Synod. As the time was up, the moderator said that the discussion would continue on the following day.

On the following day, the Moderator presented a modified draft of the decision of the Synod on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* based on the suggestions on the previous day. The new draft was read out which contained ten points. In the discussion that followed, several Bishops participated. Each point was taken up for discussion. Some modifications were proposed in the language and the content. There was a general consensus on the date of promulgation of the revised text (*editio typica*) of the Holy *Qurbana* which will coincide with the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. There was lengthy discussion on how to accommodate certain eparchies which face practical difficulty in implementing the decision promptly on a particular date onwards. A few Bishops shared their difficulty in implementing the decision due to the opposition from some priests in their eparchies. They also expressed reservation about the dead line proposed to finish the process of catechesis and to implement the decision in the whole eparchy on Easter 2022. The Synod assured them continued support to face the difficult situations in their eparchies in the implementation of the uniform mode of *Qurbana*. The matter could be taken for evaluation in January Synod 2022.

There was a discussion on the necessity to include the non application of can. 1538 §1, for an eventual dispensation from implementing the decision of the uniform mode of celebration, as in the year 2000. Some apprehensions were raised whether restricting the prerogative given to the eparchial Bishops would go against the Canon Law. After a detailed discussion on the canonical aspects involved, the Bishops came to the conclusion to give the exact directive given by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches in its letter dated 09 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004) on granting dispensation. At the end of the discussion on the draft presented, it was decided to approve the draft of the decision of the Synod on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The Moderator informed that he would present the following day the text of the decision of the Synod after making linguistic fine tunings and incorporating the alterations as proposed by the Synod.

On the following day, the Moderator presented the text of the decision on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*, linguistically fine-tuned and factually perfected. At the request of the Moderator, Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, read the decision, elaborated in nine points. In the discussion that followed, there were a few suggestions to improve the formulation and to present the decision of the Synod as a response to the exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis. There was a discussion also on the aspect of the unanimous nature of the decision in the background of certain Bishops expressing their difficulty in implementing the decision promptly. At this point the Major Archbishop intervened and clarified that the expression 'unanimous decision' needs to be understood not as a unanimous consent given to a particular decision of the Synod, but as a unanimous acceptance of the exhortation of the Holy Father and the Apostolic See, in the spirit of loyalty and obedience. He added that a Synod of an Oriental Church in the communion of Catholic Churches cannot but give this unanimous consensus in accepting such an exhortation of the Holy Father. At the end of the

discussion, it was decided to accept unanimously the exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis to implement the uniform mode of celebration together with the promulgation of the revised text (*editio typica*) of the Holy *Qurbana* on the First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation (28 November 2021) onwards, as formulated in the text of the decision approved by the Synod. The text of the decision approved by the Synod is the following:

Decision of the Synod on the Implementation of the Revised Text and Uniform Mode of Celebration of Holy *Qurbana*

1. The Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church unanimously decided to begin the celebration of Holy *Qurbana* using the revised text (*editio typica*) with the *recognitio* of the Apostolic See (Letter of Congregation for the Eastern Churches, Prot. N. 248/2004, dated 9 June 2021) with effect from the First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation (28 November 2021).
2. The Synod unanimously accepts the exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis through his letter dated 3 July 2021, addressed to the bishops, clergy, religious and laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in all eparchies in the Syro-Malabar Church as decided by the November 1999 Synod and reiterated by the Synodal Sessions in 2020 and approved by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches (Prot. N. 1796/99, dated 17 December 1999; Prot. N. 248/2004 dated 9 November 2020 & 9 June 2021) together with the implementation of the revised text of Holy *Qurbana* from the First Sunday (28 November) of the Season of Annunciation 2021. The Congregation through its letter dated 9 June 2021 has specified the uniform mode of celebration as follows: “the celebrant shall face the faithful at the *Bema* during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar - in the same direction that the faithful are facing-for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful

during the concluding rites after Holy Communion” (Prot. N. 248/2004).

3. The bishops of certain Eparchies who expressed their difficulties to implement the decision in the whole eparchy will, abiding by the above mentioned decisions, introduce the uniform mode of celebration starting with the cathedrals, pilgrim centers, religious communities, possible parishes, minor seminaries and other formation centers on 28 November 2021 itself. By effective catechesis, the uniform mode shall be gradually introduced in the whole eparchy as early as possible, not later than Easter 2022 (17 April 2022).
4. In this regard, the directives from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches in its letter dated 09 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004) about dispensation by eparchial bishops as per provisions of CCEO c. 1538 §1 are to be followed. The Congregation states: “precision is necessary on the question of dispensations: as the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* clearly says, these must be given in a “special case” (can. 1538 §1) for the spiritual good of the faithful. By their very nature, they should not come to appear as general permission for something that cannot legitimately be authorized in opposition to the common norms. Therefore, Bishops should have recourse of dispensations only for well-defined times and for specific reasons”.
5. From the First Sunday of Annunciation 2021, all the Bishops will celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode everywhere in the Syro-Malabar Church.
6. Apostolic Visitation in Europe, the Syro-Malabar Communities in Gulf countries and other places where the Syro-Malabar Church does not have jurisdiction, all the bishops and priests will celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.

7. The Synod should think of formulating an effective liturgical catechesis catering to the specific needs of the new mission areas.
8. The options given to the celebrant shall not be reserved by eparchial bishops as it is clarified by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches through its letter dated 9 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004).
9. Innovations in Liturgy in matters like rituals, vestments, symbols, prayers etc. are to be introduced only with the consent of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church.

In the short discussion that followed, some Bishops said that fixing a dead line for implementing the decision was not practical in certain eparchies. The general opinion of the Synod was to implement the decision first and then to discuss the problems faced in the process of implementation. It was proposed that the efforts for implementation of the decision and the problems faced could be evaluated in the next Synod. Therefore, it was decided to evaluate the challenges in the implementation of the decision of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in January 2022 Synod.

Concluding the discussion on this topic, the Major Archbishop said that he gives due respect to all the suggestions and opinions expressed by the members during the discussions. He thanked everybody for the sincere and active participation. He requested all to strengthen further the efforts to foster communion in the Church. He thanked Bishop Raphael Thattil, who moderated the discussions on liturgy in a very cordial manner, coordinating well the suggestions of each and every member.

Appropriateness of Circulating Letters

The Major Archbishop sought the mind of the Synod in the appropriateness of circulating letters among the members while the Synod is in Session. The members in general discouraged this practice, since there is the possibility to share proper views in

the Synod itself. Therefore, the Major Archbishop requested the members to refrain from writing letters to the members while the Synod is in Session regarding the topics which are discussed in the Synod.

Appointment of Commissions

The Major Archbishop informed the Synod that the following Commissions are reconstituted with effect from 25 August 2021:

Commission for Finance:

Bishop Raphael Thattil (Chairman)
Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI (Member)
Bishop Joseph Pandarasseril (Member)

Commission for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life:

Bishop Sebastian Vadakel MST (Chairman)
Bishop Joseph Arumachadath MCBS (Member)
Bishop Remigiose Inchananiyil (Member)

The Major Archbishop thanked the outgoing members of these two Commissions for their dedication and commitment in carrying out the responsibilities attached to their Commissions and extended greetings to the newly appointed members.

Interaction with MPs and MLAs

The ninth day of the Synod, 26 August 2021, began with an interaction with MPs and MLAs belonging to the Syro-Malabar Church. It was arranged by the Public Affairs Commission. An informal interaction started at 4.30 pm. Out of three MPs from the Syro-Malabar Church, Shri. Thomas Chazhikadan MP (Kottayam) participated in the meeting. Shri Dean Kuriakose (Idukki) and Shri. John Brittas (Rajya Sabha) excused themselves for their absence. 11 MLAs out of 14 took part in the interaction: Minister Roshy Augustine (Idukki), Shri. Sajeev Joseph (Irikkoor), Sri. Sunny Joseph (Peravoor), Shri. Roji M. John (Angamaly), Shri. Antony John (Kothamangalam), Shri. Mani C. Kappan (Pala), Shri. Mons

Joseph (Kaduthuruthi), Shri. Sebastian Kulathunkal (Poonjar), Shri. T.J. Sanish Kumar Joseph (Chalaky), Shri. Job Michael (Changanacherry) and Shri. Linto Joseph (Thiruvampady). Shri P.J. Joseph (Thodupuzha), Shri. P.T. Thomas (Thrikkakara) and Shri Xavier Chittilapilly (Wadakkancherry) could not participate in the meeting due to unavoidable prior engagements. The Bishops appreciated the MLAs for their various interventions in the Assembly in favour of the community.

The formal interactive session began at 5 pm with a prayer led by Bishop Thomas Tharayil, Convenor of the Public Affairs Commission. Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, the Chairman of the Commission, extended a word of welcome to the Minister, MPs and MLAs. In his speech, Archbishop Thazhath brought to the attention of the elected representatives some of the concerns of the Church like the challenges that farmers face, discrimination of Dalit Christians, 80:20 ratio in the distribution of minority scholarships, the inequality in the distribution of the minority welfare schemes, the lack of due representation for Christians in the State and Central Minority Commissions, dwindling Christian presence in political and bureaucratic levels in the State and Center, the stringent criteria in granting the EWS reservation, difficulties in obtaining EWS certificates, the unwelcome legislations which hinder the smooth running of the educational and charitable institutions, the problem with regard to the name of the Community published in the Gazette of the State of Kerala and the efforts to correct the same, direct and indirect attacks on Christians and their religious symbols by extremist groups, the recent trends in rewriting history undermining Christian contributions in nation building, etc.

Major Archbishop Cardinal George Alencherry, in his address, congratulated the MLAs on their victory in the Assembly elections. He expressed happiness on the fact that there are 14 MLAs and three MPs from the Syro-Malabar Church. He invited them to feel with the community, making timely interventions in order to protect the legitimate rights of the community and to ensure that the legitimate rights are not arbitrarily denied. He congratulated

in a special way Shri. Roshy Augustine, the Minister for Water Resources in the Kerala Government, on being included in the Cabinet. He invited everybody to work together beyond the political allegiance for the welfare of the Catholic Community, avoiding the spirit of exclusivism, at the same time.

Following the address of the Major Archbishop, the Minister Roshy Augustine, Shri. Thomas Chazhikadan MP and a few MLAs made short interventions. All of them expressed their gratitude for having invited them to have a sitting with the Major Archbishop and Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church. They assured that they would be sensitive to the needs of the community and would do everything possible to protect the interests of the members of the Community. There was a suggestion to lift the ban from the Statutes of Church Youth Organizations which prohibits an office bearer of a political party to hold an Office in Youth Movements. This has practically hindered the entry of catholic youth into active politics. This needs to be addressed for the wider interests of the community. Another suggestion was to give a consolidated and studied opinion to the Kerala Forest Department which has invited suggestions on how to restrict the wildlife not to enter the inhabited areas. Similar efforts are to be taken to register our protests against the unilateral declaration of Ecologically Sensitive Zones (ESZ). Minister Roshy Augustine thanked the Major Archbishop and the Synod for having arranged a meeting with the elected representatives. He assured that he would do his best as Minister to address the concerns raised during the interaction, with the collaboration of other MLAs. Bishop Remigio Inchananiyil, member of Public Affairs Commission, proposed vote of thanks to the peoples' representatives for their presence and interactions. Bishop Thomas Tharayil, Convener of the Commission, coordinated the meeting.

Condolences

The Synod expressed its condolences on the demise of Dr. Jacob Mar Barnabas, the Bishop of the Eparchy of the Gurgaon of the

Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. The Sixty one year old Bishop was hospitalized due to Covid-19 and undergoing treatment since last four months. At the invitation of the Major Archbishop, the members observed a minute of silence, praying for the eternal repose of the departed soul. The Major requested all the Bishops to remember the departed Bishop in the Holy *Qurbana*.

Bishop Bosco Puthur informed the Synod of the death of Mr. Joshy (49), the cook who used to help during the Sessions of the Synod in the last 20 years. He hails from Trichur. He had serious health problems. He is survived by his wife and a son. The Major Archbishop invited the members to pray for the departed soul.

Clarification on Participation of Bishops *Emeriti* in the Synod after 80 years

One member sought a clarification regarding the participation of the Bishops *Emeriti* in the Synod after 80 years of age and their right to vote, as another member made a reference in this regard during his sharing. It was observed that there was a communication from Rome on the matter. It was suggested that the communications in this regard could be referred to bring clarity on the matter raised.

On the following day, at the direction of the Major Archbishop, the Curia Bishop read out a few correspondences between the Congregation for the Eastern Churches and the Major Archbishop regarding the participation of the Bishops *Emeriti* in the Synod after 80 years of age. It was clarified that it was at the request of the Congregation that the Synod took up this topic for discussion in the August Synod of 2013 and was put to vote. The Major Archbishop communicated the result of the voting to the Congregation. The Congregation is yet to give a definitive opinion on the topic.

Archbishop Andrews Thazhath, a Consultor of the Pontifical Council for Interpretation of Legislative Texts, informed that he would take this matter for further clarification. The Synod agreed to this proposal.

Approval of the amendments to the Statutes of *Paurastya Vidyapitham*

Archbishop Mathew Moolakkatt, the Vice Chancellor of *Paurastya Vidyapitham* (PVP), Vadavathoor, presenting the topic, informed the Synod that the Congregation for Catholic Education has consented to establish an Institute of Philosophy at Vadavathoor. He then requested Dr. Andrews Mekkattukunnel, the President of *Paurastya Vidyapitham*, who was specially invited, to present more details in this regard.

Fr Andrews said that the Department of Philosophy at Vadavathoor has been functioning as a stand-alone programme within the Faculty of Theology in *Paurastya Vidyapitham* granting the B. Ph. degree since 1985. However, according to the new Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis gaudium* on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, there are no provisions for a stand-alone Cycle I Philosophy Programme within a Faculty of Theology. Thus the Congregation decided to abrogate the right of the PVP in granting B. Ph. Moreover, the Congregation asked the PVP to get affiliated to another Faculty of Philosophy.

In this context the Synodal Commission for the PVP submitted an appeal, with the recommendation of the Major Archbishop, to the Congregation requesting to erect an independent Faculty of Philosophy at PVP. By responding to this appeal, the Congregation agreed to erect an Institute of Philosophy at Vadavathoor granting only the First Cycle degree of Baccalaureate, without being affiliated to a Faculty. One among the few requirements the Congregation asked the *Paurastya Vidyapitham* to provide in view of the erection of this Institute was to amend its approved Statutes and to effect adequate changes for accommodating the Cycle I of the proposed Institute of Philosophy.

In accordance with the Statutes of the PVP, article 52.1, the Major Archbishop together with the Synod is the competent authority to make the amendments to the Statutes of the PVP subject to the approval of the Holy See. Fr Andrews Mekkattukunnel explained to the Synod the few amendments that were made and

the Synod approved them. He also gave clarifications to the few questions raised by some members in this regard. At the end of the discussion, it was decided to approve the amendments made in the Statutes of *Paurastya Vidyapitham* in view of erecting an Institute of Philosophy at the PVP. The Major Archbishop as well as the Moderator thanked the President and the Staff of the PVP for the hard work and dedicated service that they do for its growth and development.

Conferring the Title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre

Bishop Pauly Kannookadan presented the request of Archbishop George Njaralakatt to confer the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Joseph's Church, Peravoor in the Archeparchy of Tellicherry. After a brief discussion, the Synod decided to confer the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Joseph's Church, Peravoor in the Archeparchy of Tellicherry.

Pastoral Letter and the Final Statement

Bishop Joseph Pamplany, the Chairman of the Media Commission, sought the mind of the Synod regarding the pastoral letter to be issued after the Synod and the final statement. He said that the Media Commission has prepared the drafts and they could be read in the Synod on the following day. One member suggested that in the pastoral letter, the need for unity in the Church needs to be highlighted. The Synod agreed to the proposal of the Chairman of the Media Commission to read the draft in the Synod.

Approval of the Pastoral Letter after the Synod

Bishop Joseph Pamplany, Chairman of the Media Commission, read out the draft of the pastoral letter to be issued after the Synod. After a brief discussion, the Synod approved it with a few modifications and decided to publish it as soon as the Synod is concluded.

Approval of the Final Statement of the Synod

Bishop Joseph Pamplany, Chairman of the Media Commission read out the draft of the final statement to be given to the media

at the conclusion of the Synod. After a brief discussion, the Synod approved it with a few modifications.

Inauguration of the Web Portal of Syro-Malabar Vision

The Chairman of the Media Commission Bishop Joseph Pamplany introduced the newly made news portal, an initiative of the Media Commission. The Major Archbishop inaugurated the news portal www.syromalabarvision.com. It was observed that this news portal will help to make the Church related news reach the faithful and the public alike.

Scrutiny of the Decisions of XXIX Synod (2021) Session II

The Synod made a scrutiny of the decisions of XXIX Synod (2021) Session II and gave its approval.

Conclusion of the Synod

The Major Archbishop sought the permission of the Synod to conclude the Session and gave the concluding address. He thanked God for the blessings showered on the Synod especially for taking important decision with regard to the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*. He said that many items in the agenda were not taken up due to lack of time and expressed the hope that they could be discussed in the forthcoming Synod. He added that priority would be given to the topic on the mission of evangelization, which is the most important responsibility of the Church. He thanked each and every member of the Synod for their whole hearted cooperation, effective interventions and active participation in the Synod. He also thanked everyone at the Major Archiepiscopal Curia for their collaboration. Invoking God's blessings upon the Church, the Major Archbishop declared the XXIX Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church (2021) Session II closed.

Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI

Secretary, Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Vincent Cheruvathoor

Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

DECISIONS

1. To include clear rubrical instruction regarding the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the revised text: the celebrant shall face the faithful at the *Bema* during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar - in the same direction that the faithful are facing - for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful during the concluding rites after Holy Communion.
2. To give permission to the Commission for Liturgy to print the revised *Qurbana taksa* which was granted *recognitio* by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches.
3. To request the Major Archbishop to grant, in consultation with the Commission for Liturgy, an extended time for translation of the revised text of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Eparchies where the text is used in languages other than Malayalam. The revised text of the Holy *Qurbana* will be implemented in these Eparchies by using Malayalam text on the same date as everywhere in the Church.
4. To include the rubrical instructions regarding the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the general instructions given in the initial pages of the *taksa*.
5. To approve the draft of the decision of the Synod on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*.
6. The Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church unanimously decided to begin the celebration of Holy *Qurbana* using the revised text (*editio typica*) with the *recognitio* of the Apostolic See (Letter of Congregation for the Eastern Churches, Prot.

- N. 248/2004, dated 9 June 2021) with effect from the First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation (28 November 2021).
7. The Synod unanimously accepts the exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis through his letter dated 3 July 2021, addressed to the bishops, clergy, religious and laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in all eparchies in the Syro-Malabar Church as decided by the November 1999 Synod and reiterated by the Synodal Sessions in 2020 and approved by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches (Prot. N. 1796/99, dated 17 December 1999; Prot. N. 248/2004 dated 9 November 2020 & 9 June 2021) together with the implementation of the revised text of Holy *Qurbana* from the First Sunday (28 November) of the Season of Annunciation 2021. The Congregation through its letter dated 9 June 2021 has specified the uniform mode of celebration as follows: “the celebrant shall face the faithful at the *Bema* during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar - in the same direction that the faithful are facing-for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful during the concluding rites after Holy Communion” (Prot. N. 248/2004).
 8. The bishops of certain Eparchies who expressed their difficulties to implement the decision in the whole eparchy will, abiding by the above mentioned decisions, introduce the uniform mode of celebration starting with the cathedrals, pilgrim centers, religious communities, possible parishes, minor seminaries and other formation centers on 28 November 2021 itself. By effective catechesis, the uniform mode shall be gradually introduced in the whole eparchy as early as possible, not later than Easter 2022 (17 April 2022).
 9. In this regard, the directives from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches in its letter dated 09 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004) about dispensation by eparchial bishops as per provisions of CCEO c. 1538 § 1 are to be followed. The Congregation states: “precision is necessary on the question of dispensations: as the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* clearly says, these must be given in a “special

case” (can. 1538 § 1) for the spiritual good of the faithful. By their very nature, they should not come to appear as general permission for something that cannot legitimately be authorized in opposition to the common norms. Therefore, Bishops should have recourse of dispensations only for well-defined times and for specific reasons”.

10. From the First Sunday of Annunciation 2021, all the Bishops will celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode everywhere in the Syro-Malabar Church.
11. Apostolic Visitation in Europe, the Syro-Malabar Communities in Gulf countries and other places where the Syro-Malabar Church does not have jurisdiction, all the bishops and priests will celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
12. The Synod should think of formulating an effective liturgical catechesis catering to the specific needs of the new mission areas.
13. The options given to the celebrant shall not be reserved by eparchial bishops as it is clarified by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches through its letter dated 9 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004).
14. Innovations in Liturgy in matters like rituals, vestments, symbols, prayers etc. are to be introduced only with the consent of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church.
15. To evaluate the challenges in the implementation of the decision of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in January 2022 Synod.
16. To approve the amendments made in the Statutes of *Paurastya Vidyapitham* in view of erecting an Institute of Philosophy at the PVP.
17. To confer the title of Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre on St. Joseph’s Church, Peravoor in the Archeparchy of Tellicherry.

Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI

Secretary, Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Vincent Cheruvathoor
Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

XXIX SYNOD (2021) SESSION II (ONLINE)
16-27 AUGUST 2021

CONCLUDING ADDRESS OF THE MAJOR ARCHBISHOP

My dear Brother Archbishops and Bishops,

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

This online Session of the XXIX Synod of our Church held from 16 to 27 August 2021 has come to the moment of conclusion. Among the 62 Bishops, 60 of us could participate in the Synod. I thank God for all the blessings He has showered on us during this Session especially for the important decisions taken on the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration of Holy *Qurbana*. May the Lord continue to guide us in shepherding the people of God in all our Eparchies, Apostolic Visitation and the communities in *Diaspora*.

The consent given by the Congregation for Catholic Education to establish the Institute of Philosophy at *Paurastya Vidyapitham*, Vadavathoor, is an important step in its growth. We could not deal with many other topics in the agenda due to lack of time. Let us hope and pray that in January 2022 Synod we can have a fruitful Session of the Synod in the physical presence at Mount St. Thomas to cover all the important topics, especially our mission of evangelization, being the most important responsibility of the Church.

I take this occasion to express my thanks to Archbishop Antony Kariyil CMI, the Secretary of the Synod, Bishop Sebastian Vaniyapurackal, the Curia Bishop, Fr Vincent Cheruvathoor, the Chancellor and Fr Abraham Kavilpurayidathil, the Vice Chancellor who worked hard for the successful conduct of the Synod, by arranging the technical assistance for the online meeting and

by beautifully preparing the minutes of each day. My special thanks are due to Bishop Raphael Thattil and Bishop Remigiose Inchananiyil for moderating the sittings. I thank in a special way also all the resident Secretaries of various Commissions and other inmates in the Major Archiepiscopal Curia who have helped me in one way or the other during the days of the Synod.

Finally, I thank each and every one of you for your whole hearted cooperation, effective interventions and active participation for the fruitful conduct of this Synodal Session. Let us entrust our Synod, the priests, the religious and the lay faithful of our Church to the protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, St. Thomas, our Father in faith, St. Alphonsa, St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara, St. Euphrasia, St Mariam Thresia and all the Blesseds of our Church.

With these words I formally declare the Second Session of the XXIX Synod of the Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church closed.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

**PASTORAL LETTERS
CIRCULARS**

സിനഡ് അനന്തര സർക്കുലർ

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ് കർദ്ദിനാൾ മാർ ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി തന്റെ സഹശുശ്രൂഷകരായ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താമാർക്കും മെത്രാന്മാർക്കും വൈദികർക്കും സമർപ്പിതർക്കും തന്റെ അജപാലന ശുശ്രൂഷയ്ക്ക് ഏല്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ ദൈവജനത്തിനും എഴുതുന്ന സർക്കുലർ

മിശിഹായിൽ പ്രിയ സഹോദരീ സഹോദരന്മാരേ,

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ 29-ാം സിനഡിന്റെ ഒന്നാം സമ്മേളനം 2021 ജനുവരി 11 മുതൽ 16 വരെ കോവിഡിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ ഓൺലൈനായി നടന്നു. നമ്മുടെ സഭയെയും വിശ്വാസത്തെയും സംബന്ധിക്കുന്ന ആത്മീയ സാമൂഹ്യ രാഷ്ട്രീയ വിഷയങ്ങളാണ് ആറുദിവസം നീണ്ട സിനഡിൽ ചർച്ചചെയ്തത്. കോവിഡിന്റെ പരിമിതികൾക്കുള്ളിലും വിശ്വാസവും സഭാസന്നേഹവും സജീവമായി നിലനിർത്താൻ സമർപ്പണ ബുദ്ധിയോടെ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന സഭാംഗങ്ങളെ സിനഡ് നന്ദിയോടെ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നു. വിശ്വാസത്തിലും പ്രത്യാശയിലും അധിഷ്ഠിതമായ സ്നേഹ സാന്നിധ്യംവഴി ലോകത്തിനു മുഴുവൻ മാർഗ്ഗദർശിയായ പരിശുദ്ധപിതാവ് ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർപാപ്പായുടെ ധീരമായ നേതൃത്വത്തെ സിനഡ് പിതാക്കന്മാർ അഭിമാനത്തോടെ അനുസ്മരിച്ചു. എല്ലാവരും സഹോദരർ (Fratelli Tutti) എന്ന പാപ്പായുടെ പുതിയ ചാക്രികലേഖനം തികച്ചും സമയോചിതമായ സാമൂഹ്യബോധനമാണ്. കോവിഡിന്റെ അന്ധകാരത്തിനിടയിലും ദൈവം തെളിച്ച നക്ഷത്രങ്ങൾപോലെ സീറോമലബാർ സഭയിൽ 235 നവവൈദികർ പുതുവർഷത്തിൽ അഭിഷിക്തരായി എന്നത് അഭിമാനകരമാണ്.

അനുസ്മരണയും അഭിനന്ദനവും

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ അഭിമാനമായിരുന്ന മാർ പോൾ ചിറ്റിലപ്പിള്ളി, ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ് ജോസഫ് ചെന്നോത്ത് എന്നീ പിതാക്കന്മാരു

ടെ ആകസ്മികമായ നിര്യാണത്തിൽ സിനഡ് പ്രാർത്ഥനാപൂർവ്വം അനുശോചനം രേഖപ്പെടുത്തി. തന്റെ ഇടയ ശുശ്രൂഷയിലൂടെ കല്യാൺ, താമരശ്ലേഠി രൂപതകളുടെ സർവ്വതോമുഖമായ വളർച്ചയ്ക്കു നേതൃത്വം നൽകിയ അഭിവന്ദ്യ മാർ പോൾ ചിറ്റിലപ്പിള്ളി പിതാവ് സീറോമലബാർ സഭയുടെ ആരാധനക്രമ നവീകരണത്തിനും സഭയുടെ പ്രത്യേകനിയമസംഹിത (Particular Law) യുടെ രൂപീകരണത്തിനും നൽകിയ സംഭാവനകൾ അവിസ്മരണീയങ്ങളാണ്. ജപ്പാനിലെ വത്തിക്കാൻ സ്ഥാനപതിയായി ശുശ്രൂഷ ചെയ്യുന്നതിനിടയിൽ നിത്യഭാഗ്യത്തിനായി വിളിക്കപ്പെട്ട ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ് ജോസഫ് ചേന്നോത്ത് പിതാവിനെ ആ രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ ഉന്നത ബഹുമതി നൽകി ജപ്പാൻ ഗവൺമെന്റ് ആദരിച്ചത് നമുക്ക് ഏറെ അഭിമാനകരമാണ്. ഈ വന്ദ്യപിതാക്കന്മാരെ ദൈവം നിത്യസൗഭാഗ്യം നൽകി അനുഗ്രഹിക്കട്ടെ.

കോട്ടയം അതിരൂപതയുടെ പുതിയ സഹായമെത്രാനായി നിയമിതനായ ഗീവർഗീസ് മാർ അപ്രേം പിതാവിന് ഇടയവഴിയിൽ എല്ലാനന്മകളും ഭാവുകങ്ങളും നേരുന്നു. സീറോമലബാർ സഭയും സീറോമലങ്കരസഭയും തമ്മിലുള്ള ഹൃദ്യമായ സാഹോദര്യത്തിന്റെ സാക്ഷ്യമായി അഭിവന്ദ്യപിതാവിന്റെ നിയമനത്തെ നമുക്കു മനസ്സിലാക്കാം.

യുവജന ശുശ്രൂഷകൾ

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ ഔദ്യോഗിക യുവജന സംഘടന ‘സീറോമലബാർ യൂത്ത് മൂവ്മെന്റ്’ (SMYM) ആണ്. കേരളത്തിലെ മുൻവ്യക്തിസഭകളിലെയും തനതു യുവജന സംഘടനകളുടെ കൂട്ടായ്മയായാണ് കെ. സി. വൈ. എം. പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നത്. അതിനാൽ SMYM ലെ അംഗത്വം വഴിയാണ് നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ യുവജനങ്ങൾ കെ. സി. വൈ. എം. ന്റെ ഭാഗമാകുന്നത്. സീറോമലബാർ സഭയിലെ 15 വയസ്സിനും 30 വയസ്സിനും ഇടയിൽ പ്രായമുള്ള എല്ലാ യുവജനങ്ങളും SMYM ന്റെ ഭാഗമാകണമെന്നാണ് സിനഡ് ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നത്. ഇതിനാവശ്യമായ നടപടിക്രമങ്ങൾ ഓരോ രൂപതയിലും സമയബന്ധിതമായി നടപ്പിലാക്കണമെന്ന യുവജനകമ്മീഷന്റെ നിർദ്ദേശം സിനഡ് അംഗീകരിച്ചു. 30 വയസ്സു പൂർത്തിയായ യുവജനങ്ങൾ കത്തേലിക്കാ കോൺഗ്രസ്സിൽ അംഗങ്ങളായി ചേർന്ന് സഭാശുശ്രൂഷയിൽ സജീവമാകണം. ഇതിനാവശ്യമായ ക്രമീകരണങ്ങൾ കത്തേലിക്കാ കോൺഗ്രസ്സിന്റെ സംഘടനാതലത്തിൽ വരുത്തുന്നതാണ്.

ആരാധനക്രമം

സഭയുടെ ആരാധനക്രമവുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട വിഷയങ്ങളിൽ സിനഡ് വിശദമായ ചർച്ചകൾ നടത്തി. കോവിഡിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ മൂത ദേഹങ്ങൾ ദഹിപ്പിക്കേണ്ട സാഹചര്യം ആരോഗ്യപരമായ കാരണങ്ങളാൽ ആവശ്യമായി വരുന്നുണ്ട്. വിശ്വാസികളുടെ മൂതദേഹം ദഹിപ്പിക്കുന്ന സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കാനുള്ള പ്രാർത്ഥനകൾക്കു സിനഡ് അംഗീകാരം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. മൂതദേഹം ദഹിപ്പിക്കുന്ന സന്ദർഭങ്ങളിൽ ഇനിമേൽ ഈ ക്രമം അനുഷ്ഠിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. ക്രൈസ്തവ വിശ്വാസത്തിൽ മൂതദേഹത്തോടു പുലർത്തുന്ന സവിശേഷമായ ആദരവ് സംസ്കരിക്കുമ്പോഴും ദഹിപ്പിക്കുമ്പോഴും ഒരുപോലെ പരിരക്ഷിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതാണ് എന്ന വസ്തുത സിനഡ് ആവർത്തിച്ച് ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

നമ്മുടെ ആരാധനക്രമത്തിൽ വി. കുർബ്ബാനകളിൽ വായിക്കുന്നതിന് പരമ്പരാഗതമായുണ്ടായിരുന്ന വായനാ പഞ്ചാംഗത്തിനൊപ്പം മറ്റൊരു വായനാ പഞ്ചാംഗത്തിനുകൂടി സിനഡ് പരീക്ഷണാർത്ഥം അംഗീകാരം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. അടുത്ത ആരാധനക്രമവത്സരത്തിൽ ഈ പുതുക്കിയ വായനാപഞ്ചാംഗമാണ് നാം ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നത്. കൂടാതെ, സഭയിലെ വിവിധതിരുന്നാളുകളെ അവയുടെ പ്രാധാന്യത്തിനനുസരിച്ച് ക്രമീകരിച്ച പട്ടികയ്ക്കും സിനഡ് അംഗീകാരം നൽകി. സീറോമലബാർ സഭയുടെ യാഥപ്രാർത്ഥനകൾ പരിഷ്കരിക്കുന്നതിനായുള്ള അവസാനവട്ടചർച്ചകളും സിനഡിൽ നടന്നു.

ക്രൈസ്തവ പീഡനം

ആഗോളതലത്തിൽ ക്രൈസ്തവർക്കെതിരായ പീഡനങ്ങൾ വർദ്ധിച്ചുവരുന്നതിൽ സിനഡ് ആശങ്കരേഖപ്പെടുത്തി. തങ്ങളുടെ ക്രിസ്തീയ വിശ്വാസത്തെപ്രതി പ്രതിദിനം 13 ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾ രക്തസാക്ഷിത്വം വരിക്കുന്നു എന്ന കണക്ക് ഭീതിപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതാണ്. 2020 ഡിസംബർമാസത്തിൽ 750 ക്രൈസ്തവർ എത്യോപ്യായിൽ കൂട്ടക്കൊല ചെയ്യപ്പെട്ടത് ലോകമനസ്സാക്ഷിയെത്തന്നെ നടുക്കിയ സംഭവമാണ്. പീഡാനുഭവങ്ങളുടെയും രക്തസാക്ഷിത്വത്തിന്റെയും വഴികളിൽ തളരാത്ത വിശ്വാസതീക്ഷ്ണത പ്രകടമാക്കിയ ഈ ധീര രക്തസാക്ഷികളുടെ മാതൃക നമ്മുടെ വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തെ പ്രചോദിപ്പിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്. തീവ്രമായ സഹനത്തിന്റെയും വ്യവസ്ഥയില്ലാത്ത ക്ഷമയുടെയും സുവിശേഷവഴികളിൽ ധീരമായി മുന്നേറാൻ പീഡിത സഭകളിലെ വിശ്വസികൾക്കുവേണ്ടെങ്ങിനമുക്ക് തീക്ഷ്ണമായി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കാം.

കർഷക സമരം

രാജ്യതലസ്ഥാനത്ത് മാസങ്ങളായി സമരമുഖത്തായിരിക്കുന്ന കർഷകരോട് സീറോമലബാർസഭ ഐക്യദാർഢ്യം പ്രഖ്യാപിക്കുന്നു. തങ്ങളുടെ ന്യായമായ അവകാശങ്ങൾപോലും കോർപ്പറേറ്റു മുതലാളിമാർക്ക് അടിയറവയ്ക്കേണ്ടിവരുന്ന സാഹചര്യമാണ് പുതിയ കാർഷിക ബില്ലിലൂടെ നടപ്പിലാകുന്നത് എന്ന കർഷകരുടെ ആശങ്ക പരിഹരിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതാണ്. കർഷകചന്തകൾ, ഉല്പന്നങ്ങളുടെ താങ്ങുവില, അവശ്യസാധനങ്ങളുടെ സംഭരണത്തിലെ നിയന്ത്രണ നിരോധനം, കോൺട്രാക്ട് ഫാമിംഗ് തുടങ്ങി ഒട്ടേറെ വിഷയങ്ങൾ പുതിയ കാർഷിക നിയമത്തിൽ കർഷകരെ ആശങ്കപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ട്. കർഷകരുമായി വേണ്ടത്ര കൂടിച്ചോലോചനകൾ നടത്താതെയാണ് പുതിയ നിയമം നടപ്പിലാക്കിയത് എന്ന ആക്ഷേപത്തിനും പരിഹാരം കാണേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ അന്നദാതാക്കളായ കർഷകർ തങ്ങളുടെ നിലനിൽപ്പിനായി തെരുവിലിറങ്ങേണ്ടി വന്നത് അങ്ങേയറ്റം ദുഃഖകരമാണ്. കേരളത്തിലെ കർഷകർ അനുഭവിക്കുന്ന വിളകളുടെ വിലത്തകർച്ച, വന്യമൃഗശല്യം, ബഹർസോൺ പരിസ്ഥിതിലോല ഭീഷണികൾ എന്നിവയ്ക്കും ശാശ്വതമായ പരിഹാരം ആവശ്യമാണ്.

സഭയിലെ അച്ചടക്കം

കത്തോലിക്കാസഭയുടെ കെട്ടുറപ്പിനും മഹനീയമായ മാതൃകയ്ക്കും കാരണമായവയിൽ സഭയിലെ അച്ചടക്കത്തിന് സുപ്രധാനമായ പങ്കാണുള്ളത്. സമീപകാലത്ത് സീറോമലബാർസഭയിലെ ചില വൈദികരും സമർപ്പിതരും അല്പമായ നേതാക്കന്മാരും സഭയുടെ അച്ചടക്കത്തെയും കൂട്ടായമയെയും വെല്ലുവിളിക്കുന്ന നിലപാടുകളുമായി പരസ്യമായി രംഗത്തു വരുന്നതായി സിനഡ് വിലയിരുത്തി. സഭയുടെ ആഭ്യന്തരവേദികളിൽ ചർച്ച ചെയ്തു പരിഹരിക്കേണ്ട വിഷയങ്ങൾ പൊതുവേദികളിൽ വിവാദമാക്കുന്നതിലൂടെ സഭാഗാത്രത്തിനുണ്ടാകുന്ന മുറിവ് വലുതാണ്. സഭാപ്രബോധനങ്ങൾക്കും സഭാനേതൃത്വത്തിനും എതിരായ നിലപാടുകൾ സ്വീകരിക്കുന്നവരെ തിരുത്താനും ആവശ്യമെങ്കിൽ സഭാനിയമം അനുശാസിക്കുന്ന ശിക്ഷണ നടപടികൾ സ്വീകരിക്കാനും അതാതു രൂപതാധ്യക്ഷന്മാരെ സിനഡ് ചുമതലപ്പെടുത്തി.

മൗലികവാദങ്ങൾ സമൂഹത്തിന്റെ ഭദ്രതയ്ക്കും സമുദായസൗഹാർദ്ദത്തിനും ഹാനികരമാണ്. ഇതര മതങ്ങളുമായുള്ള ബന്ധം, ആരാധനക്രമം, സഭയിലെ കരിസ്മാറ്റിക് നവീകരണം തുടങ്ങിയ മേഖലകളിൽ തികച്ചും മൗലികവാദപരവും വിഭാഗീയത ഉളവാ

ക്കുന്നതുമായ ചില നിലപാടുകൾ സമീപകാലത്ത് മുളയെടുക്കുന്നതായി സിനഡ് വിലയിരുത്തി. ഇത്തരം മൗലികവാദപരവും അസഹിഷ്ണുത നിറഞ്ഞതും പ്രകോപനകരവുമായ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളും പ്രസ്താവനകളും സഭയിലും സമൂഹത്തിലും ഏറെ വിവാദങ്ങൾക്കും ഭിന്നതകൾക്കും കാരണമാകുന്നുണ്ട്. സഭയുടെ നന്മയെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കിക്കൊണ്ട് പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നു എന്ന് അവകാശപ്പെടുന്ന ഇത്തരം നിലപാടുകൾ വരുത്തുന്ന അപകടങ്ങൾ ദുരവ്യാപകമാകയാൽ വിശ്വാസികൾ ജാഗ്രത പാലിക്കേണ്ടതാണെന്ന് സിനഡ് വിലയിരുത്തി.

നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവീശോമിശിഹായുടെ പീഡാസഹനത്തെയും കുരിശു മരണത്തെയും അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്ന നോമ്പുകാലത്തിന്റെയും സമാഗതമാകുന്ന ഉയിർപ്പുതിരുനാളിന്റെയും മംഗളങ്ങൾ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ആശംസിക്കുന്നു. വി. യൗസേപ്പിതാവിന് സവിശേഷമാം വിധം സമർപ്പിതമായ ഈ വർഷത്തിൽ നിങ്ങളെയെല്ലാവരെയും ആ വത്സലപിതാവിന്റെ സംരക്ഷണയ്ക്കു ഭരമേല്പിക്കുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ അമ്മയായ പരിശുദ്ധ കന്യകാമറിയത്തിന്റെയും നമ്മുടെ പിതാവായ മാർത്തോമ്മാശ്ലീഹായുടെയും മാധ്യസ്ഥ്യം നിരന്തരം നിങ്ങളോടൊത്തുണ്ടായിരിക്കട്ടെ.

കാക്കനാട് മൗണ്ട് സെന്റ് തോമസ്സിലുള്ള മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പിന്റെ കാര്യലയത്തിൽനിന്ന് 2021 ആണ്ട് ഫെബ്രുവരി മാസം 10-ാം തിയതി നൽകപ്പെട്ടത്.

കർദ്ദിനാൾ ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി
സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ്

POST SYNODAL CIRCULAR

Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Men and Women and Lay Faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church.

May the Grace of the Lord be with you all!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The First Session of the XXIX Synod of the Syro-Malabar Church was held on line from January 11 to 16, 2021 because of the Covid -19. Various issues connected with the faith and the Church in the social, spiritual and political areas were discussed during the days of the Synod. The Synod remembered with grateful feelings the deep and committed work of the faithful during these troubled times to preserve their faith and love of the Church in spite of the limitations imposed by the pandemic. The Fathers of the Synod acknowledged with gratitude the heroic leadership rendered by the steady presence of the Holy Father as a pillar of hope and faith. The Encyclical, *Fratelli tutti*, affirming that all are brothers, was a timely social teaching. It is a matter of great joy that 235 deacons were ordained priests who should be seen as a string of stars lighted by God during these dark days of the Covid.

Congratulations and Remembrances

The Synod offered their prayerful condolences at the passing away of Mar Paul Chittilapilly and Archbishop Mar Joseph Chennoth who were the zealous shepherds of the Church. Mar Paul Chittilapilly

who did a magnificent work for the all round development of the Eparchies of Kalyan and Thamarassery contributed immensely to the renewal of the liturgy and for the codification of the Particular Law of the Church. Archbishop Joseph Chennoth who was the Apostolic Nuncio to Japan was honoured with the highest civilian award by the Government of Japan. May God bless these dear bishops and may their souls rest in peace!

The Synod offered its prayers and blessings to Geevarghese Mar Aprem who was appointed the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Kottayam. His appointment can be seen as a great witness to the fraternal relationship between the Syro-Malabar and the Syro-Malankara Churches.

Ministry for the Youth

The Syro-Malabar Youth Movement (SMYM) is the official organization for the youth of the Church. KCYM is the federation of the youth wings of the three Churches *sui iuris*. It is through the membership of the SMYM that one becomes a member of the KCYM. The Synod desires that all the youth between the ages of 15 through 30 should become members of the SMYM. The Synod accepted the recommendation of the Youth Commission that all the Eparchies should take up a time bound programme to enlist all the youth in their respective Eparchies to become members of the SMYM. Those who are above the age of 35 should become active in the various ministries of the Church by becoming members of the Catholic Congress. Arrangements for this will be made at the organizational level of the Catholic Congress.

Liturgy

The Synod held a detailed discussion of the issues connected with liturgical matters. It has now become necessary to cremate the dead on account of the Covid. The Synod has given approval for the prayers that should be said on occasions when cremations are taking place. These prayers are to be used from now onwards. The Synod requests the faithful to show the same respect to the

dead whether they are cremated or buried. The Synod has given approval to a new set of liturgical readings on an experimental basis. During the next liturgical cycle, this new set of readings will be used. The Synod has also given its approval to the list of feasts according to the priority of their importance. Discussions were also held with regard to the revision of the breviary.

Persecutions against Christians

The Synod expressed its deep shock over the increased attacks and acts of violence against Christians all over the world. It is terrifying to find that around thirteen Christians are murdered daily in the world. The killing of 750 Christians in Ethiopia during the Christmas 2020 sent shockwaves in the Christian world. Their heroic deaths should enliven our faith. We shall pray for the Christians in those lands of persecution so that they may be blessed with infinite patience and endurance.

Farmers' Agitation

The Synod has expressed its solidarity with the farmers who are engaged in a long struggle for their rights at the Capital of India. The anxiety of the farmers that their natural rights would be curtailed through the new laws enacted to satisfy the demands of the corporate sector has to be alleviated. New markets for agricultural products, grant of support prices, dismantling of controls with regard to the storage of essential products, contract farming etc are the issues that disturb the farmers. The new laws were enacted without any prior consultation with the farmers. It is highly troubling to find the farmers who feed the country are to go on a long struggle to solve their grievances. The farmers in Kerala who are experiencing deep hardship on account of the low price of their products, attacks of wild animals, creation of buffer zones etc need support and help.

Discipline in the Church

Discipline in the Church has a very important role to play to preserve the unity and example of the Church. The Synod has

noted that recently some lay people, priests and the religious have come forward with positions that challenge the unity and the structure of the Church. Those issues that are to be discussed at the internal forums of the Church are being discussed in public by these people, causing great harm to the Church. The Synod has authorized the bishops to take necessary disciplinary actions against those who indulge in activities that are against the teachings and the authority of the Church.

Fundamentalism is a threat against the communal harmony and the unity of the society. The prevalence of certain attitudes that are fundamentalist and divisive in liturgy, charismatic renewal and inter religious relations is causing confusion and disturbance in the Church, according to the Synod. These fundamentalist activities filled with intolerance and provocations are the causes of many divisions and differences in the Church and the society. The Synod has assessed that such positions, though outwardly appearing as helpful to the Church, are really causing very far reaching disastrous results and hence is urging the faithful to be more vigilant.

I wish all the blessings of the Paschal season and of the Lent. During this year dedicated specially to St. Joseph, I entrust all of you to the loving protection of St. Joseph. May the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of our Father in Faith, St. Thomas the Apostle, be with all of you.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkannad, on 10 February 2021.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

സിനഡ് അനന്തര ഇടയലേഖനം

സീറോമലബാർ സഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ് കർദിനാൾ ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി തന്റെ സഹശുശ്രൂഷകരായ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തമാർക്കും മെത്രാൻമാർക്കും വൈദികർക്കും സമർപ്പിതർക്കും തന്റെ അജപാലന ശുശ്രൂഷയ്ക്ക് ഏല്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ ദൈവജനത്തിനും എഴുതുന്നത്.

ഈശോമിശിഹായ്ക്കു സ്തുതിയായിരിക്കട്ടെ!

‘പുതിയ റാസ കുർബാന തക്സയ്ക്ക് അംഗീകാരം നൽകുന്ന സന്ദർഭം ഉപയോഗിച്ചു നിങ്ങളുടെ സഭയുടെ ഐക്യത്തിനും ഉപരിനന്മയ്ക്കുമായി വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ അർപ്പണരീതിയിലുള്ള ഐക്യവും ഉടനടി നടപ്പിലാക്കാൻ എല്ലാ വൈദികരെയും സമർപ്പിതരെയും അല്പമായ വിശ്വാസികളെയും ഞാൻ ആഹ്വാനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. സിനഡിന്റെ തീരുമാനം നിങ്ങൾ നടപ്പിലാക്കുമ്പോൾ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവു നിങ്ങളുടെ സഭയിലെ എല്ലാ അംഗങ്ങളും തമ്മിലുള്ള ഐക്യവും യോജിപ്പും സഹോദര്യവും പരിപോഷിപ്പിക്കട്ടെ’.

- ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർപാപ്പ.

മിശിഹായിൽ പ്രിയ സഹോദരീ സഹോദരന്മാരേ,

1934 മുതൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭ ആരാധനക്രമ നവീകരണത്തിന്റെ പാതയിലായിരുന്നു. 1986-ൽ പുനരുദ്ധരിക്കപ്പെട്ട റാസക്രമം നിലവിൽ വന്നതോടെ സഭയുടെ പൈതൃകങ്ങളുടെയും തനിമയുടെയും അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ പുതിയ ഉൾക്കാഴ്ചകൾ സ്വീകരിക്കാൻ സഹായകമായ ആഴമേറിയ പഠനങ്ങൾ ആരംഭിച്ചു. അതിന്റെ ഫലമായി വിവിധ കുദാശകളുടെ കർമ്മക്രമങ്ങളും തിരുപ്പട്ടകുദാശക്രമവും മറ്റു ആരാധനക്രമകർമ്മങ്ങളും ഏകീകൃതരൂപത്തിലാക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞു. എന്നാൽ, വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയർപ്പണ രീതി ഏകീകൃതരൂപത്തിലാ

ക്കാൻ നാം നടത്തിയ പരിശ്രമങ്ങൾ പലകാരണങ്ങളാൽ പൂർണ്ണ ഫലപ്രാപ്തിയിലെത്തിയില്ല. 1999-ലെ സിനഡ് ഇതിനായി ഒരു ഏകീകൃതരൂപം നൽകിയെങ്കിലും അത് എല്ലാ രൂപതകളിലും നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്താൻ കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല. എങ്കിലും വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ അർപ്പണരീതിയിലെ ഐക്യത്തിനായി സഭയുടെ തലത്തിൽ നിരന്തരം ആവശ്യമായർന്നുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. സഭാമക്കൾ അതിനായി പ്രാർഥിച്ചുകൊണ്ടേയിരുന്നു. ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ നടന്ന എല്ലാ സഭാ അസംബ്ലികളിലും വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയർപ്പണരീതിയിലെ ഏകീകരണത്തിനായി എല്ലാവരും ഒരേ സ്വരത്തിൽ വാദിച്ചിരുന്നു. മെത്രാന്മാരുടെ സിനഡൽ സമ്മേളനങ്ങളും അർപ്പണരീതിയിലെ ഏകീകരണത്തിനായി പരിശ്രമിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരുന്നു. 2019 ആഗസ്റ്റിലെ സിനഡ് സമ്മേളനത്തിനിടയിൽ മെത്രാന്മാരോടൊപ്പം രൂപതകളിലെ പാസ്റ്ററൽ കൗൺസിൽ സെക്രട്ടറിമാർ ഒരുമിച്ചുകൂടിയപ്പോൾ അവരും വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയർപ്പണത്തിന്റെ ഏകീകരണത്തിനായി ശക്തമായി ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടു. 2020 ആഗസ്റ്റിലെ മെത്രാന്മാരുടെ സിനഡ് അതുവരെ വി. കുർബാനയുടെ ഏകീകൃത അർപ്പണരീതി നടപ്പിലാക്കാതിരുന്ന രൂപതകളിൽ അപ്രകാരം ചെയ്യണമെന്നു നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു.

കൊറോണക്കാലത്ത് ഓൺലൈൻ കുർബാനകളിൽ പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെട്ട വിവിധ രൂപതകളിലെ അർപ്പണരീതികളുടെ വൈവിധ്യവും വൈകാരികതയും സഭാംഗങ്ങളെ കൂടുതൽ അസ്വസ്ഥരാക്കി. പരിശുദ്ധ സിംഹാസനത്തെയും കുർബാനയർപ്പണരീതികളിലെ അനൈക്യം അത്യാവശ്യമാണെന്ന നിഗമനത്തിൽ പൗരസ്ത്യസഭകൾക്കായുള്ള കാര്യലയം എത്തിച്ചേർന്നു. അതിൻപ്രകാരം 2020 മെയ് 4-ന് അപ്പസ്തോലിക് നൂൺഷ്യോ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പിനു കത്തെഴുതി. നവീകരിച്ച വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ തക്സ അംഗീകാരത്തിനു സമർപ്പിച്ചപ്പോൾ അർപ്പണരീതിയിൽ ഐക്യം ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടുകൊണ്ടു 2020 നവംബർ 9-ന് പൗരസ്ത്യസഭകൾക്കായുള്ള കാര്യലയം നേരിട്ടു കത്തെഴുതി. നവീകരിച്ച തക്സയ്ക്ക് അംഗീകാരം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് 2021 ജൂൺ 9-ന് എഴുതിയ കത്തിലും വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ അർപ്പണരീതിയിലുള്ള ഐക്യരൂപം വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്ന നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ പൗരസ്ത്യസഭകൾക്കായുള്ള കാര്യലയം നൽകി. ഇതിനെതുടർന്നാണ് പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവു ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർ പാപ്പ തന്നെ വളരെ ആധികാരികമായി 2021 ജൂലൈ മൂന്നാം തീയതി നമ്മുടെ സഭയിൽ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ അർപ്പണരീതിയിലെ ഐക്യരൂപം ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടുകൊണ്ടു മെത്രാന്മാർക്കും വൈദികർക്കും

സമർപ്പിതർക്കും അല്പമായ വിശ്വാസികൾക്കുമായി കത്തെഴുതിയത്. ഇതു സീറോമലബാർസഭ മുഴുവനും വേണ്ടി പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് എഴുതിയ കത്താണ്. അതിനാൽ ഈ കത്തിലെ നിർദ്ദേശമനുസരിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കാൻ ഓരോ സീറോമലബാർ വിശ്വാസിക്കും കടമയുണ്ട്. ഈ കത്തിൽ പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവു നടത്തിയ ആഹ്വാനമാണ് ഈ ഇടയലേഖനത്തിന്റെ ആരംഭത്തിൽ ഉദ്ധരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. മാർപാപ്പ ഇപ്രകാരം നമ്മുടെ സഭയ്ക്ക് ഒരു കത്തെഴുതുന്നത് ഇതാദ്യമാണ്.

ഈ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ, 2021 ആഗസ്റ്റ് 16 മുതൽ 27 വരെ ഓൺലൈനായി സമ്മേളിച്ച സിനഡ് ഈ വിഷയം ആഴമായ പഠനത്തിനും ചർച്ചയ്ക്കും വിധേയമാക്കി. രണ്ടായിരം വർഷത്തെ അനുസ്മൃതമായ കത്തോലിക്കാവിശ്വാസപാരമ്പര്യമുള്ള സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ ചരിത്രത്തിലെ ഏറ്റവും വലിയ പ്രത്യേകത സാർവത്രിക സഭയോടും മാർപാപ്പായോടും പുലർത്തിയ അചഞ്ചലമായ വിശ്വസ്തതയാണ്. പത്രോസിനോടൊപ്പവും പത്രോസിനോടുള്ള വിധേയത്വത്തിലും (*cum Petro et sub Petro*) സഭാതലവനോടും രൂപതാമെത്രാനോടുമുള്ള അനുസരണത്തിലും ജീവിച്ച പാരമ്പര്യമാണ് നമ്മുടെ പിതാമഹന്മാർ നമുക്കു പകർന്നു തന്നിട്ടുള്ളത്. 1934-ൽ സഭയുടെ ആരാധനക്രമം സംബന്ധിച്ചുണ്ടായ സമാനമായ പ്രതിസന്ധിയിൽ എറണാകുളം മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്തയായിരുന്ന ഭാഗ്യസ്ഥരണാർഹനായ അഗസ്റ്റിൻ കണ്ടത്തിൽ പിതാവു മാർപാപ്പായ്ക്ക് എഴുതിയത് 'തിരുസിംഹാസനം എടുക്കുന്ന ഏതു തീരുമാനവും ഞങ്ങൾക്കു പൂർണ്ണമായും സ്വീകാര്യമാണ്' എന്നായിരുന്നു. ഈ മാതൃകയാണ് നാം സ്വീകരിക്കേണ്ടത്. പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവ് തിരുസ്സഭയെ ഏറ്റവും വ്യക്തമായും കൃത്യമായും പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവിലൂടെയാണെന്ന് നാം വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു. പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവിന്റെ നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ അനുസരിക്കാൻ വിശ്വാസികൾക്കുള്ള കടമയെക്കുറിച്ചു നമുക്ക് അറിവുള്ളതാണല്ലോ (CCEO c. 45). ആരാധനക്രമത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ച കാര്യങ്ങൾ അന്തിമതീർപ്പു കല്പിക്കേണ്ടതു മാർപാപ്പായാണെന്നു സഭാപ്രബോധനങ്ങളിൽ വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നുണ്ട് (SC 22). മാർപാപ്പ തീർപ്പുകല്പിച്ച ആരാധനക്രമത്തിൽ എന്തെങ്കിലും കൂട്ടിച്ചേർക്കാനോ മാറ്റംവരുത്താനോ വൈദികർക്കോ മറ്റുള്ളവർക്കോ അവകാശമില്ല (SC 22.3). അതിനാൽ, പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവിന്റെ നിർദ്ദേശം നടപ്പിലാക്കാൻ നാം ബാധ്യസ്ഥരാണ്. വ്യത്യസ്തമായ ഒരു തീരുമാനമെടുക്കാൻ സിനഡിനോ ഏതെങ്കിലും രൂപതാധ്യക്ഷനോ അവകാശമില്ല. 'അനുസരണം ബലിയെക്കാൾ ശ്രേഷ്ഠമാണ്' (1 സാമു. 15:22)

എന്നതു നാം മറക്കരുത്. പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവു കാണിച്ചുതന്ന വഴിയാണു നമുക്കു ദൈവാനുഗ്രഹത്തിന്റെ വഴി. അതിനാൽ, സഭാമക്കൾ ആഗ്രഹിച്ചതും സിനഡ് അംഗീകരിച്ചതും പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് ആഹ്വാനം ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നതുമായ വി. കുർബാനയുടെ അർപ്പണരീതി അനുവർത്തിക്കുക എന്നതു കത്തോലിക്കരായ നമ്മെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം സഭാകൂട്ടായ്മയിലുള്ള നമ്മുടെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വനിർവഹണവും പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവിനോടുള്ള നമ്മുടെ വിധേയത്വത്തിന്റെ പ്രകാശനവുമാണ്.

ആരാധനക്രമത്തിൽ ഐക്യരൂപ്യമല്ല ഐക്യമാണ് വേണ്ടത് എന്നു ചിന്തിക്കുന്നവരുണ്ടാകാം. ഐക്യവും ഐക്യരൂപ്യവും ഒന്നല്ലെങ്കിലും പരസ്പരപൂരകങ്ങളാണ്. അടിസ്ഥാനഘടകങ്ങളിലുള്ള ഐക്യരൂപ്യം ഐക്യത്തിന് ആവശ്യമാണ്. ആരാധനക്രമത്തിന്റെ അടിസ്ഥാനരൂപങ്ങളിൽ ഐക്യരൂപ്യമില്ലാതെ ഐക്യം സാധ്യമാവില്ല. ഇതിനു നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ ചരിത്രം തന്നെ സാക്ഷിയാണ്. വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയർപ്പണത്തിലെ ഐക്യരൂപ്യം ഇതാണ്: കാർമിക്ൻ ആമുഖശുശ്രൂഷയും വചനശുശ്രൂഷയും ഉൾപ്പെടെ വിശ്വാസപ്രമാണം കഴിയുന്നതുവരെ വചനവേദി (ബേമ്മ)യിൽ വെച്ചു ജനാഭിമുഖമായും അനാഫൊറാ ഭാഗം അൾത്താരയ്ക്ക് അഭിമുഖമായും വി. കുർബാന സ്വീകരണത്തിനുശേഷമുള്ള സമാപനശുശ്രൂഷ ജനാഭിമുഖമായും നിർവഹിക്കുക. അർത്ഥപൂർണ്ണമായ ബലിയർപ്പണത്തിനു വചനത്തിന്റെ മേശയും (ബേമ്മ) അപ്പത്തിന്റെ മേശയും (ബലിപീഠം) ആവശ്യമാണെന്നു രണ്ടാം വത്തിക്കാൻ കൗൺസിൽ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നുണ്ട് (DV 14). നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ പൗരാണികമായ പാരമ്പര്യവും ഇതുതന്നെയാണ്.

നമ്മുടെ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയിൽ ആമുഖശുശ്രൂഷയും വചനശുശ്രൂഷയും യഥാക്രമം ഈശോയുടെ ജനനത്തെയും പരസ്യജീവിതത്തെയുമാണ് അനുസ്മരിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. ഈ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിലാണ് വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ ആദ്യഭാഗം വചനവേദിയിൽ ജനാഭിമുഖമായി അർപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. തുടർന്നു, 'കഴുകി ശുദ്ധമാക്കപ്പെട്ട ഹൃദയത്തോടും വെടിപ്പാക്കപ്പെട്ട മനസ്സാക്ഷിയോടും കൂടെ' വിശ്വാസപ്രമാണത്തിനുശേഷം വിശുദ്ധ മദ്ബഹായിൽ പ്രവേശിക്കുന്ന പുരോഹിതൻ സഭയുടെ നാമത്തിൽ മിശിഹായുടെ പ്രതിനിധിയായി പരമപിതാവിനു ബലിയർപ്പിക്കുകയാണ്. അതിനാലാണു കൂദാശാഭാഗം മദ്ബഹായ്ക്ക് അഭിമുഖമായി അർപ്പിക്കണമെന്നു നിർദ്ദേശിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്. പാശ്ചാത്യ, പൗരസ്ത്യ സഭകളിലെല്ലാം 1965 വരെ അൾത്താരയ്ക്ക് അഭിമുഖമായാണ് വി. കുർബാന അർപ്പി

ച്ചിരുന്നത്. സഭയുടെ ആരംഭം മുതലേ നിലനിന്നിരുന്ന ഈ വിശുദ്ധ പാരമ്പര്യം വീണ്ടെടുക്കാനാണു പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവു നമ്മോട് ആവശ്യപ്പെടുന്നത്. വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയുടെ അർപ്പണഭാഗം സമാപിക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ടാണു കുർബാനസ്വീകരണത്തിനു ശേഷമുള്ള കൃതജ്ഞതാപ്രാർത്ഥനകളും സമാപനാശീർവാദവും ജനങ്ങളുടെ നേരെ തിരിഞ്ഞു ചൊല്ലേണ്ടതാണെന്നു നിർദ്ദേശിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്.

വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയെന്നതു മിശിഹായുടെ ശരീരമായ സഭ ശിരസ്സായ അവിടത്തോടു ചേർന്നു പിതാവായ ദൈവത്തിന് അർപ്പിക്കുന്ന ബലിയാണ്. അതിനാൽ സഭാഗാത്രമായ ദൈവജനവും ശിരസ്സായ മിശിഹായുടെ നാമത്തിൽ വിശുദ്ധ രഹസ്യങ്ങൾ പരികർമ്മം ചെയ്യുന്ന വൈദികനും പിതാവായ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സിംഹാസനമായ വിശുദ്ധ അശ്ത്താരയ്ക്ക് അഭിമുഖമായി ബലിയർപ്പണവേദിയിൽ വ്യാപരിക്കുന്നതു സമുചിതമാണെന്ന് ആദിമകാലം മുതലേ സഭ കരുതിയിരുന്നു. വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയർപ്പിക്കുന്ന കാർമ്മികൻ ഒരേ സമയം ക്രിസ്തുവിനെയും സഭയെയും പ്രതിനിധാനം ചെയ്യുന്നു (*alter Christus et altera Ecclesia*). ക്രിസ്തീയ ജീവിതം സ്വർഗത്തെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കിയുള്ള തീർത്ഥാടനമാണെന്ന വിശ്വാസവും ഈ അനുഷ്ഠാനത്തിലൂടെ തിരുസ്തുഭ പ്രഘോഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. മദ്ബഹാ പ്രതിനിധാനം ചെയ്യുന്ന സ്വർഗത്തെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കി ദൈവജനമൊന്നാകെ തീർത്ഥാടനം ചെയ്യുന്ന അനുഭവമാണു കുർബാനയിലൂടെ ലഭിക്കുന്നത്. ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സിംഹാസനമായ ബലിപീഠത്തിനു മുന്നിൽ കുമ്പിട്ടാരാധിക്കുന്ന മാലാഖവൃന്ദങ്ങളോടും സ്വർഗവാസികളായ വിശുദ്ധരോടും ചേർന്നു ഭൂവാസികളും ദൈവത്തെ ആരാധിക്കുന്ന രീതിയിലാണു നമ്മുടെ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയിലെ പ്രാർത്ഥനകൾ ക്രമീകരിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്. ഒരേ സമയം പരിശുദ്ധ ത്രിത്വത്തിന്റെ സിംഹാസനവും നമ്മുടെ കർത്താവിന്റെ കബറിടവുമായി പരിഗണിക്കപ്പെടുന്ന വിശുദ്ധ അശ്ത്താരയ്ക്കു നമ്മുടെ ആരാധനക്രമത്തിൽ വലിയ പ്രാധാന്യമുണ്ട്. അതിനാലാണ് അശ്ത്താരയിലേക്കു തിരിയുന്നതിനെ ‘കർത്താവിലേക്കു തിരിയുന്നതായി’ (*conversi ad Dominum*) നമ്മുടെ പിതാക്കന്മാർ വിശേഷിപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്. അതിനാൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ തനതായ പാരമ്പര്യം പരിഗണിച്ചു വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനയിലെ അനാഫൊറയുടെ ആരംഭം മുതൽ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാനസ്വീകരണംവരെയുള്ള ഭാഗം മദ്ബഹായ്ക്കു അഭിമുഖമായി അർപ്പിക്കണമെന്ന സിനഡിന്റെ തീരുമാനം ഉടനടി (*promptly*) നടപ്പിലാക്കാനാണു പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്.

ആരാധനക്രമത്തിലെ ഐക്യമാണു സഭയുടെ കൂട്ടായ്മയുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനം എന്ന സത്യം തിരിച്ചറിയാൻ നാം വൈകിയതും സഭാഗാത്രത്തിൽ ഏറെ മുറിവുകൾ സൃഷ്ടിക്കാൻ കാരണമായി. ഈ വീഴ്ചയെ എളിമയോടും അനുതാപത്തോടുംകൂടെ നമുക്കു ദൈവതിരുമുഖിൽ ഏറ്റുപറയാം. 'അൾത്താരയിൽ ഐക്യം ഇല്ലാതെ സഭയിൽ ഐക്യം സാധ്യമല്ല' എന്ന ബെനഡിക്റ്റ് മാർപാപ്പയുടെ ചിന്ത നമുക്കു മാർഗദീപമാകട്ടെ.

ഏകീകൃത ബലിയർപ്പണരീതി നടപ്പിലാക്കുന്നതിലെ വൈഷമ്യങ്ങൾ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാണിച്ചു വിവിധ തലങ്ങളിൽനിന്നുയർന്ന നിരീക്ഷണങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും സിനഡ് പിതാക്കന്മാർ ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി ചർച്ച ചെയ്തു. ഏതാനും ദശകങ്ങളായി ശീലിച്ച പതിവു ശൈലി മാറ്റുവോഴുള്ള പ്രായോഗിക ബുദ്ധിമുട്ടിനെക്കുറിച്ച് ഉന്നയിക്കപ്പെട്ട ആശങ്കകൾ പിതാക്കന്മാർ ഹൃദയപൂർവ്വം മനസ്സിലാക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ, കർത്താവിന്റെ അജഗണത്തെ ഒരുമയോടെ മുന്നോട്ടുനയിക്കാനുള്ള പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവിന്റെ ആഹ്വാനം ശിരസ്സാവഹിക്കണമെന്നാണു സിനഡിലെ ചർച്ചകളിലൂടെ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവു പ്രചോദിപ്പിക്കുന്നതെന്നു പിതാക്കന്മാർക്കു ബോധ്യപ്പെട്ടു. സഭയിൽ ഏതെങ്കിലുമൊരു ആശയഗതിയുടെ വിജയമോ പരാജയമോ ആയി ഈ തീരുമാനത്തെ ആരും വിലയിരുത്തരുത്. ആരാധനക്രമാനുഷ്ഠാനത്തിൽ നിലവിലുണ്ടായിരുന്ന രണ്ടു വ്യത്യസ്ത ചിന്താധാരകളെ സംയോജിപ്പിച്ചു സിനഡു തീരുമാനിച്ച മധ്യമാർഗ്ഗമാണു പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവു നടപ്പിലാക്കാൻ ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്.

അതിനാൽ, പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവു നിർദ്ദേശിച്ച പ്രകാരമുള്ള ഏകീകൃത ബലിയർപ്പണരീതി യിൽ നവീകരിച്ച കുർബ്ബാനക്രമം (*editio typica*) അടുത്ത ആരാധനക്രമവത്സരം ആരംഭിക്കുന്ന 2021 നവംബർ 28-ാം തിയ്യതി മംഗളവാർത്തക്കാലം ഒന്നാം ഞായറാഴ്ച മുതൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭയിൽ നടപ്പിലാക്കാൻ സിനഡു തീരുമാനിച്ചു. വ്യക്തിപരമായ ഇഷ്ടാനിഷ്ടങ്ങൾ മാറ്റിവെച്ചു സഭയുടെ പൊതുനന്മയെ ലക്ഷ്യമാക്കി ഒരുമനസ്സോടെ ഈ തീരുമാനം നടപ്പിലാക്കണമെന്നു സിനഡു പിതാക്കന്മാർ സഭാംഗങ്ങൾ എല്ലാവരോടും സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

സിനഡിന്റെ വിജയത്തിനുവേണ്ടി സഭ മുഴുവൻ കഴിഞ്ഞ ഒരു മാസം ഉപവസിച്ചു പ്രാർഥിക്കുകയായിരുന്നല്ലോ. സിനഡിൽ നല്ല തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ എടുക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള ദൈവാനുഗ്രഹം ലഭിക്കുന്ന

തിന് ഈ പ്രാർഥന സഹായകമായി. സഭാമക്കളേവരോടും ഹൃദയപൂർവ്വം നന്ദി പറയുന്നു.

വി.കുർബാനയർപ്പണം ദൈവജനത്തിനു കൂട്ടായ്മയുടെ അനുഗ്രഹം സ്വന്തമാക്കാനുള്ള അവസരമാക്കി മാറ്റാൻ നമുക്ക് ഒരു മനസോടെ തീരുമാനമെടുക്കാം. ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ ഇനിയും വിധോജനസ്വരങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാകാതിരിക്കാൻ എല്ലാവരും ശ്രദ്ധിക്കണം. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട വൈദികരും സമർപ്പിതരുമാണ് ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ കൂടുതൽ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കേണ്ടത് എന്നു സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ലോകത്തെ രക്ഷിക്കാൻ ഈശോ അർപ്പിച്ച ആത്മബലി അത് അർപ്പിക്കുന്ന അവിടത്തെ മൗതികശരീരമായ നമ്മുടെയും ആത്മബലിയാകട്ടെ. ഭിന്നതകളുടെ മതിലുകൾ തകർക്കുന്ന ദൈവാരൂപിയുടെ പ്രവർത്തനത്തിനായി നമുക്കു സഭയെ സമർപ്പിക്കാം. കാൽവരിയിലെ തിരുക്കുമാരന്റെ ബലിയിൽ ഏറ്റവും ആത്മാർത്ഥതയോടെ പങ്കെടുത്ത പരിശുദ്ധ കന്യകാമറിയത്തിന്റെയും സത്യവിശ്വാസം പകർന്നുതന്ന നമ്മുടെ പിതാവു മാർത്തോമ്മാശ്ലീഹായുടെയും നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ വിശുദ്ധരുടെയും വാഴ്ത്തപ്പെട്ടവരുടെയും സവിശേഷമായ മാധ്യസ്ഥ്യം കൂട്ടായ്മയുടെ അരുപിയിൽ നമ്മെ നയിക്കട്ടെ.

കാരുണ്യവാനായ കർത്താവിന്റെ കൃപ നിങ്ങളെല്ലാവരോടും കൂടെ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കട്ടെ!

കാക്കനാട് മൗണ്ട് സെന്റ് തോമസ്സിലുള്ള മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പിന്റെ കാര്യാലയത്തിൽ നിന്ന് 2021-ാം ആണ്ട് ആഗസ്റ്റ് മാസം 27-ാം തീയതി നൽകപ്പെട്ടത്.

കർദ്ദിനാൾ ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി

സീറോമലബാർ സഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ്

POST SYNODAL PASTORAL LETTER

Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop
of the Syro-Malabar Church, to the Archbishops,
Bishops, Priests, Men and Women
Religious and Lay Faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Praise be to Jesus Christ!

“I willingly take the occasion of the recognition of the new Raza Qurbana Taksā to exhort the clergy, religious and lay faithful to proceed to a prompt implementation in the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy Qurbana, for the greater good and unity of your Church. May the Holy Spirit foster harmony, fraternity and unity among all members of your Church as you work to implement the Synodal decision”.

- Pope Francis

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

As you are aware, our Church was in the path of renewal of the Liturgy from 1934 onwards. Deeper investigations into the heritage and the identity of the Church which gave new insights began to take place with the implementation of the *Raza* text of the *Qurbana* in 1986. As a result of that effort, it was possible to form a uniform text for all the Sacraments and for the Sacred Orders. But the efforts to have a uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* did not bear fruit on account of several factors. Although a model for a uniform mode of celebration was given by the Synod in 1999, it was not implemented in all the eparchies. Because of

that, demands were made from the different levels of the Church for a uniform mode of celebration. The members of the Church also were praying for it. At all the Major Archiepiscopal Assemblies, the delegates asked for a uniform mode of celebration. The Synod of Bishops at their different Sessions was trying to implement a uniform mode of celebration. At the Synod of 2019, the secretaries of the pastoral councils who were present along with the Bishops have asked for a uniform mode of celebration. The Synod of 2020 made the suggestion that the non-compliant eparchies should be asked to conform to the uniform mode of celebration.

During the Corona crisis, people were disturbed when they watched the Holy *Qurbana* celebrated in different ways. This lack of unity in the mode of celebration has also upset the Apostolic See. The Congregation for the Eastern Churches came to the conclusion that it would be absolutely necessary to have a uniform mode of celebration. Hence the Apostolic Nuncio sent a letter on 4 May 2020 to the Major Archbishop in this regard. When the revised text of the *Qurbana* was submitted for approval, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches wrote back on 09 November 2020 asking for uniformity in the mode of celebration. Granting *recognitio* to the revised text of the Holy *Qurbana*, on 09 June 2021, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches gave clear directions for the implementation of the uniform mode of celebration. As a continuation of this, the Holy Father wrote a letter to the bishops, priests, religious and the laity of the Syro-Malabar Church exhorting to follow a uniform mode of celebration. This was a letter meant for the whole Syro-Malabar Church. Hence every member of the faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church has an obligation to follow this directive. The words of this appeal of the Holy Father are quoted at the beginning of this pastoral letter.

In this context, the Synod that was held online from 16 to 27 August 2021 studied and discussed this topic in detail. What is most distinguishing about the Syro-Malabar Church is its unwavering and unbreakable fidelity to the Holy See. Our ancestors gave us the tradition of this faithfulness to Peter (*cum Petro et sub Petro*)

and obedience to the Head of the Church and to the Bishops. It is worthwhile to remember the words of Mar Augustine Kandathil, the former Archbishop of Ernakulam, in a similar context with regard to the liturgical celebration in 1934: "Whatever may be the decision of the Holy See, we accept it." This is the model we have to follow. We believe that the Holy Spirit teaches us through the Holy Father. We know that the faithful are obliged to obey the directives of the Holy Father (CCEO c. 45). The Church documents also affirm this fact. It is the Holy Father who is to give the final verdict in matters of worship (SC 22). No one, whether priests or the laity, has the right to change or add to the text of the liturgical celebrations (SC 22,3). Hence we are obliged to obey the direction given by the Holy Father. Neither the Synod nor any individual Bishop has the right to take a contrary decision. We should not forget that obedience is greater than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15-22). The way shown by the Holy Father is the way of God's grace for us. Hence, our only choice is to follow the mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* which is exhorted by the Holy Father, approved by the Synod and desired by the faithful as an expression of our obedience to the Holy Father and the discharge of our responsibility as members of the ecclesial communion.

There may be people among us who hold that what is needed is not uniformity but unity. Although unity and uniformity are not the same, they are complementary. Unity won't be possible without uniformity in the basic forms of the Liturgy. The history of our Church attests to this. The uniformity of the celebration consists in this: The celebrant faces the faithful until the end of the Creed, then turns to the Sanctuary until the end of the *Anaphora* up to the Communion and then faces congregation after the Communion for thanksgiving prayers and for final benediction. The Second Vatican Council teaches us that there should be both the *Bema* (the Table of the Word) and the Altar (the Table of the Bread) for an authentic celebration of the Eucharist (DV 14). The tradition of our Church shows also the same.

The Introductory Service and the Liturgy of the Word in the Holy *Qurbana* remind us of the birth and the public ministry of Jesus. It is because of this that the first part of the *Qurbana* is offered facing the people. Then, after the creed the celebrant, “with clean heart and clear conscience”, enters the Sanctuary as a representative of the Christ and on behalf of the Church and offers the sacrifice to the Heavenly Father. It is on account of this that the direction is given for the celebrant to face the Sanctuary during the *Anaphora* and the consecratory part. In the Eastern as well as in the Western Churches, the Eucharist was offered facing the Altar until 1965. The Holy Father is asking us to recover the ancient tradition of the Church. When the offering part is over, the celebrant turns to face the congregation after the communion to say the thanksgiving prayers and to give the final blessings.

The Eucharist is the sacrifice offered by the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ in union with the Head to the Heavenly Father. The Church from the first centuries thought it appropriate for the people of God and for the priest who acts in the name of Christ to face the Altar which is the throne of God. The priest who offers the *Qurbana* represents Christ and the Church at the same time (*alter Christus et altera ecclesia*).

The Church also proclaims that the Christian life is a pilgrimage to heaven. The people of God as a whole are on a pilgrimage to heaven which is symbolized by the *Madbhaha*. All the prayers in the *Qurbana* are arranged for a joint celebration of the people on earth with the angelic choirs and Saints in heaven. The Altar which is considered to be the throne of God and the sepulcher of our Lord has a dominant role in the Liturgy. It is because of this that the “turning to the altar” is considered to be the turning to God by the Fathers of the Church (*conversi ad Dominum*). On account of this sacred tradition of the Church the decision was made by the Synod to ask the celebrant to turn to the Altar from the beginning of the *Anaphora* up to the communion and the same was exhorted by the Holy Father to be implemented promptly.

The realization that the unity in the Liturgy is the basis of ecclesiastical communion has come to us late and because of that many divisions did take place which created wounds in the body of the Church. We shall confess this failure in humility and contrition before God. Let the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI that “Without unity at the Altar, there will be no unity in the Church” be the guiding light for us.

The Fathers of the Synod discussed sincerely the difficulties raised from some corners in implementing the uniform mode of celebration. The Bishops are aware of the concerns and apprehensions that would arise when a mode of celebration that was in practice for several decades in a few eparchies undergoes a sudden change. But the Fathers felt that the Holy Spirit was guiding them to obey wholeheartedly the direction given by the Holy Father to guide the flock of the Lord in unity. This decision should not be viewed as a victory or a failure of a particular line of thought. The Holy Father has asked us to follow the decision of the Synod that has tried to integrate the two differing lines of thought in Liturgy.

Hence the Synod has now decided to implement the revised text of the Holy *Qurbana (editio typica)* in the uniform mode of celebration as directed by the Holy Father, from the beginning of the next liturgical year, which is the first Sunday of the Season of Annunciation that falls on 28 November 2021. The Synod Fathers are requesting everyone to implement this decision with a single mind, taking into account the common good of the Church and setting aside the individual likes and dislikes.

The whole Church was praying and fasting in the last month for the success of the Synod. This prayer was helpful for the Synod to receive the Grace of God to take good decisions.

We shall take a common decision to make the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* an occasion for receiving the grace for the unity of the Church. All have to be beware of creating dissenting voices in this matter. I am urging with great fraternal solicitude the priests

and the consecrated men and women to pay their serious attention to this matter. Let the sacrifice of Jesus which was offered for the redemption of mankind be our own self-sacrifice. Let us surrender ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit that destroys the walls of division. May the intercession of our Blessed Mother who was a full participant in the sacrifice at Calvary and that of St. Thomas who transmitted to us the Light of Faith along with that of the Saints and Blesseds of our Church guide us in our path of Unity!

May the Grace of the Merciful Lord be with you always!

Given this from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad on 27 August 2021.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

ഇടയലേഖനം
സഭാദിനം - ദുക്രാനതിരുനാൾ

സീറോമലബാർ സഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ് കർദിനാൾ
ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി തന്റെ സഹ ശുശ്രൂഷകരായ
മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താമാർക്കും മെത്രാന്മാർക്കും വൈദികർക്കും
സമർപ്പിതർക്കും തന്റെ അജപാലന ശുശ്രൂഷയ്ക്ക്
ഏല്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ ദൈവജനത്തിനും
എഴുതുന്നത്.

കർത്താവിന്റെ കൃപ നിങ്ങളെല്ലാവരോടും കൂടെ ഉണ്ടായിരിക്കട്ടെ!

ഈശോമിശിഹായിൽ പ്രിയ സഹോദരീ സഹോദരന്മാരേ,

ജൂലൈ മുന്ന് വലിയ ഒരു ഓർമ്മ ഉണർത്തുന്ന ദിവസമാണ്. ഭാരതത്തിന്റെ അപ്പസ്തോലനായ മാർതോമാശ്ലീഹായുടെ ഓർമ്മ. ദുക്രാനതിരുനാൾ എന്നാണല്ലോ നാം അതിനെ വിശേഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നത്. ദുക്രാന എന്ന വാക്കിന്റെ അർത്ഥം ഓർമ്മ എന്നാണ്. 2013 മുതൽ ദുക്രാനതിരുനാൾ സഭാദിനമായും നമ്മൾ ആഘോഷിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഈ വർഷത്തെ സഭാദിനവും കഴിഞ്ഞ വർഷത്തേതുപോലെ കോവിഡ്-19ന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിലാണ് ആഘോഷിക്കേണ്ടി വരുന്നത്.

മഹാമാരിയുടെ പശ്ചാത്തലം

കോവിഡ്-19ന്റെ ഒന്നാം തരംഗത്തെ ഇന്ത്യ ഏറെക്കുറെ വിജയകരമായി നേരിട്ടു. എന്നാൽ രണ്ടാം തരംഗം കൂടുതൽ പേരുടെ മരണത്തിനു കാരണമായി. ഔദ്യോഗിക കണക്കനുസരിച്ചു ഇതിനകം ഭാരതത്തിൽ 387000 തോളം ആളുകൾ കോവിഡ്-19 മൂലം മരണപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇതിൽ 12000ൽ അധികംപേർ കേരളത്തിൽ നിന്നുതന്നെയാണ്. മരണമടഞ്ഞവരെയും അവരുടെ കുടുംബങ്ങളെയും നമുക്കു ദൈവതൃക്കരങ്ങളിൽ സമർപ്പിക്കാം. മരണം സംഭവിച്ചില്ലെങ്കിലും കോവിഡ് ബാധമൂലം ഉണ്ടായ ആരോഗ്യപ്രശ്നങ്ങളാൽ ക്ലേശിക്കുന്നവർ അനേകരുണ്ട്. കോവിഡിന്റെ മൂന്നാമതൊരു തരംഗത്തെക്കുറി

ച്ചുള്ള മൂന്നറിയിപ്പുകൾ മാധ്യമങ്ങളിലൂടെ നമുക്കു ലഭിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. മൂന്നാം തരംഗത്തിൽ കുട്ടികളെ ഈ രോഗം കൂടുതൽ ബാധിക്കാൻ സാധ്യതയുണ്ടെന്നു പറയപ്പെടുന്നു. കോവിഡ് വാക്സിൻ സ്വീകരിച്ച് എല്ലാവരും പ്രതിരോധശക്തി ഉള്ളവരായിരിക്കുക എന്നതാണ് നമുക്കിപ്പോൾ ചെയ്യാനുള്ളത്. അതിനായി സർക്കാരുകൾ മുന്നോട്ടുവയ്ക്കുന്ന പദ്ധതികളോട് എല്ലാവരും ആത്മാർത്ഥമായി സഹകരിക്കണം.

കോവിഡ് നിർമ്മർജനത്തിനായി ജീവൻപോലും പണയംവെച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന അനേകരുണ്ട്. ഡോക്ടർമാരെയും നഴ്സുമാരെയുംമറ്റ് ആരോഗ്യപ്രവർത്തകരെയും സമർപ്പിതരെയും നമുക്കു നന്ദിപൂർവ്വം സ്മരിക്കാം. രോഗീപരിചരണത്തിനിടയിൽ ജീവഹാനി സംഭവിച്ച ആരോഗ്യപ്രവർത്തകർക്കു നമുക്ക് ആദരാഞ്ജലികൾ അർപ്പിക്കാം. സന്നദ്ധസംഘങ്ങളായി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന വൈദികരും സമർപ്പിതരും യുവതീയുവാക്കളും നമ്മുടെ പ്രത്യേക പ്രശംസയർഹിക്കുന്നു. കോവിഡ് രോഗംമൂലം ഇതിനകം ഇന്ത്യയിൽ നാല് മെത്രാന്മാരും 500 ലധികം വൈദികരും സമർപ്പിതരും മരണം പ്രാപിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. കാര്യബാധനായ കർത്താവ് അവരുടെ സമർപ്പണത്തിനു പ്രതിഫലം നൽകട്ടെ. മരണമടഞ്ഞ മെത്രാന്മാരിൽ ഒരാൾ സാഗർ രൂപതയുടെ മുൻ അധ്യക്ഷനായ അഭിവന്ദ്യ ജോസ്ഫ് പാസ്റ്റർ നീലങ്കാവിൽ പിതാവാണ്. അഭിവന്ദ്യ പിതാവിന്റെ ആത്മാവിനു നിത്യശാന്തി നേരുന്നു.

കേരളത്തിനു പുറത്തുള്ള സംസ്ഥാനങ്ങളിലും വിദേശ രാജ്യങ്ങളിലുമുള്ള നമ്മുടെ രൂപതകൾ കോവിഡുകാലത്തു വലിയ പ്രതിസന്ധികളിലൂടെയാണു കടന്നുപോയ്ക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നത്. വിദേശ രാജ്യങ്ങളിൽ കോവിഡ് ഇപ്പോൾ നിയന്ത്രണ വിധേയമാണല്ലോ. ഭാരതത്തിലെ നമ്മുടെ മിഷൻ രൂപതകൾ കോവിഡു പ്രതിരോധപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ വളരെ സജീവമാണ് എന്ന് എടുത്തുപറയേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. അഭിവന്ദ്യ പിതാക്കന്മാരും വൈദികരും സമർപ്പിതരും അല്പമായ നേതാക്കളും വലിയ പ്രതിബദ്ധതയോടെയാണ് ഈ രംഗത്ത് പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നത്. നമ്മുടെ പ്രാർത്ഥന ഏവർക്കും ശക്തിയും സംരക്ഷണവും നൽകട്ടെ.

മാർ തോമാ ചൈതന്യവും മാതൃകയും

ഈ കോവിഡ് കാലത്തു മാർ തോമാശ്ലീഹായിൽനിന്നു നമുക്കു സ്വീകരിക്കാവുന്ന പ്രചോദനം എന്താണ് എന്നു ചിന്തിക്കുന്നതു നന്നാ

യിരിക്കും. പന്തക്കുസ്തായിൽ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാഭിഷേകം സ്വീകരിച്ച ശിഷ്യന്മാർ കൂടുതൽ ശക്തി നേടി സുവിശേഷപ്രഘോഷകരും സാക്ഷികളുമായി മാറിയല്ലോ. അതേ പരിശുദ്ധാത്മ ചൈതന്യത്തിലാണു തോമാശ്ലീഹാ ഇന്ത്യയിൽ വന്നു സുവിശേഷം പ്രസംഗിച്ചതും ക്രൈസ്തവസമൂഹങ്ങൾക്കു രൂപം കൊടുത്തതും. അന്നത്തെ പല സ്തീനായിൽനിന്ന് ഇന്ത്യവരെയുള്ള യാത്രയും ഇന്ത്യയിലെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളും തോമാശ്ലീഹാ നിർവഹിച്ചത് എങ്ങനെയെന്നു നമുക്ക് ഊഹിക്കാനേ സാധിക്കൂ. അടുത്തകാല ഗവേഷണങ്ങളുടെ വെളിച്ചത്തിൽ തോമാശ്ലീഹാ ഭാരതത്തിലേക്കു രണ്ട് യാത്രകൾ നടത്തിയതായി അനുമാനിക്കാൻ കഴിയും. ഒന്നാമത്തേത്, കരമാർഗം ഉത്തരഭാരതത്തിലേക്കും രണ്ടാമത്തേത് കടൽമാർഗം കേരളത്തിലേയ്ക്കും. തോമാശ്ലീഹായുടെ ഈ യീരത കോവിഡ് കാലത്തെ എല്ലാ പ്രതിസന്ധികളെയും നേരിടുവാൻ നമുക്കു പ്രചോദനം നൽകേണ്ടതാണ്.

തോമാശ്ലീഹാ അസാധാരണമായ യീരത തന്റെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ പ്രകടമാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ലാസറിനെ പുനർജീവിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിന് ഉള്ളിൽ തീരുമാനിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് യുദ്ധയായിലേക്കു പോകുവാൻ ഈശോ ആഗ്രഹിച്ചു. എന്നാൽ അവിടത്തെ കല്ലെറിയാൻ യഹൂദർ തക്കം പാർത്തിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നു പറഞ്ഞു ശിഷ്യന്മാർ ഈശോയെ തടഞ്ഞു. അപ്പോൾ തോമാശ്ലീഹാ പറഞ്ഞു ‘നമുക്കും അവനോടുകൂടി പോയി മരിക്കാം’ (യോഹ. 11:16). പിന്നീട്, തോമാശ്ലീഹാ ഭാരതത്തിൽ വന്നു ‘ഈശോയോടൊപ്പം’ മരിച്ചുവല്ലോ. കർത്താവിന്റെ സുവിശേഷത്തെയും ജീവിതത്തെയും കുറിച്ചുള്ള രഹസ്യങ്ങൾ അവിടത്തോടു തന്നെ ചോദിച്ചു മനസ്സിലാക്കാനുള്ള ആത്മദൈവവും തോമാശ്ലീഹായ്ക്കുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. ഈശോ ഈ ലോകം വിട്ടു പോകാറായി എന്നറിയിക്കുകയും പോകുന്നിടത്തേക്കുള്ള വഴി ശിഷ്യന്മാർക്ക് അറിയാമെന്നു സൂചിപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തപ്പോൾ തോമാശ്ലീഹാ യാണ് ഈശോയോടു ചോദിച്ചത്, ‘കർത്താവേ, നീ എങ്ങോട്ടാണ് പോകുന്നത് എന്ന് ഞങ്ങൾക്ക് അറിഞ്ഞുകൂടാ; പിന്നെ എങ്ങനെ വഴി അറിയും?’ എന്ന്. ഈ ചോദ്യത്തിന് ഉത്തരമായാണ്, ‘ഞാനാകുന്നു വഴിയും സത്യവും ജീവനും’മെന്ന (യോഹ. 14:6) സുപ്രധാനമായ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തൽ ഈശോ നടത്തിയത്. ഈശോയാണു മനുഷ്യർക്കു രക്ഷയുടെ മാർഗം എന്ന സത്യം നന്നായി ഗ്രഹിക്കുവാൻ ഈശോയുടെ വെളിപ്പെടുത്തൽ തോമാശ്ലീഹായ്ക്ക് ഉപകരിച്ചു. സുവിശേഷത്തിലെ തോമാശ്ലീഹായുടെ സാന്നിധ്യവും ഇടപെട

ലുകളും ഈശോയിൽ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നവർക്കു പ്രചോദനവും ധൈര്യവും പകരുന്നവയാണ്.

ഓൺലൈൻ ശൈലി

കോവിഡ് മഹാമാരിയുടെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ സഭയുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളുടെ ഏകോപനം സി. ബി. സി. ഐ., കെ. സി. ബി. സി., മെത്രാൻ സിനഡ്, രൂപതകൾ, സമർപ്പിതസമൂഹങ്ങൾ, സംഘടനകൾ എന്നീ തലങ്ങളിൽ ഓൺലൈനായി നടക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഈ വിധത്തിൽ സഭാജീവിതത്തിന്റെ സജീവത്വം നിലനിർത്തുവാൻ നമുക്കു സാധിക്കുന്നതിൽ ദൈവത്തിനു നന്ദി പറയാം. ഒരു മഹാമാരി മനുഷ്യരെ പരസ്പരബന്ധത്തിൽ നിന്ന് അകറ്റിനിർത്തുമ്പോൾ ഇന്റർനെറ്റിന്റെ സാധ്യതകൾ ഈ കാലസന്ധിയിൽ നമുക്ക് ഒരു അനുഗ്രഹമായിത്തീർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു!

കോവിഡ്-19ന്റെ സാഹചര്യം മൂലം 2020 ഓഗസ്റ്റിലും 2021 ജനുവരിയിലും സഭയുടെ സിനഡ് ഡിജിറ്റൽ ഫോറത്തിലാണു നടത്തിയത്. വരുന്ന ഓഗസ്റ്റിലെ സിനഡും അങ്ങനെയൊന്നു നടക്കാനാണു സാധ്യത. ഡിജിറ്റൽ ഫോറത്തിൽ സിനഡ് നടത്താനുള്ള പ്രായോഗികനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ പരി. സിംഹാസനം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്.

സഭാ വാർത്തകൾ

നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ തലത്തിൽ വന്നിട്ടുള്ള ചില മാറ്റങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചു നിങ്ങളോടു സംസാരിച്ചുകൊള്ളട്ടെ. ഓസ്ട്രേലിയയിലെ മെൽബൺ രൂപതയുടെ അധികാരപരിധി ന്യൂസിലൻഡിലേക്കും ഓഷ്യാനിയയിലെ മറ്റു രാജ്യങ്ങളിലേക്കും വ്യാപിപ്പിച്ചുകാര്യം ഇതിനകം നിങ്ങൾ അറിഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ടല്ലോ. പരിശുദ്ധ സിംഹാസനത്തോടു നമുക്കു നന്ദിയുള്ളവരായിരിക്കാം. മെൽബൺ രൂപതയെയും അഭിവന്ദ്യ ബോസ്കോ പുത്തൂർ പിതാവിനെയും അഭിനന്ദിക്കാം. ഭാരതത്തിലെ പുതിയ അപ്പസ്തോലിക് ന്യൂൺഷ്യോ ആയി ആർച്ച്ബിഷപ്പ് ലെയോ പോൾദോ ജിറേല്ലി കഴിഞ്ഞ മെയ് മാസം 28-ാം തീയതി ചാർജ്ജ് ഏടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. പുതിയ അപ്പസ്തോലിക് ന്യൂൺഷ്യോയെ നമുക്കു സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം സ്വാഗതം ചെയ്യാം. കഴിഞ്ഞ മൂന്നുവർഷങ്ങളിൽ മാർപാപ്പയുടെ പ്രതിനിധിയായി സേവനം ചെയ്ത ആർച്ച്ബിഷപ്പ് ജോബത്തിസ്ത ദികാത്രോയ്ക്കു നമുക്കു നന്ദി പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യാം. സീറോമലബാർസഭാംഗങ്ങളായ മെത്രാന്മാർ ഭാരതത്തിലും വിദേശരാജ്യങ്ങളിലും ലത്തീൻ രൂപതകളിൽ ശുശ്രൂഷചെയ്യുന്നു എന്നതു നമുക്കു സന്തോഷമുളവാക്കുന്നതാണ്. ഏറ്റവും പുതിയ

തായി കാഞ്ഞിരപ്പള്ളി രൂപതാംഗവും ഹെറാൾഡ്സ് ഓഫ് ഗുഡ് ന്യൂസ് സന്യാസസമൂഹാംഗവുമായ ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട സിബി മാത്യു പീടികയിലച്ചനെ പപ്പുവാ ന്യൂഗിനിയായിലെ ഐതപ്പെ രൂപതയുടെ മെത്രാനായി ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർപാപ്പ നിയമിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. അഭിവന്ദ്യ പിതാവിനു മാതൃസഭയുടെ അഭിനന്ദങ്ങളും പ്രാർത്ഥനാംശസകളും!

നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ വൈദികപരിശീലനം ലോക്ഡൗൺ നിയന്ത്രണങ്ങൾക്കിടയിലും കാര്യക്ഷമമായി മുന്നോട്ടുകൊണ്ടുപോകുവാൻ സെമിനാരി കമ്മീഷനുകളും സന്യാസസമൂഹങ്ങളും സെമിനാരികളിലെ ഉത്തരവാദിത്വപ്പെട്ടവരും പ്രത്യേകം ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്. ഓൺലൈൻ ക്ലാസ്സുകൾ പുതിയ അധ്യയനവർഷത്തിൽ ആരംഭിച്ചു കഴിഞ്ഞു. വിവിധ മൈൻ സെമിനാരികളിലും മേജർ സെമിനാരികളിലും വൈദിക വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ പരിശീലനത്തിൽ ഏർപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നവരെ കൃതജ്ഞതയോടെ അനുസ്മരിക്കുന്നു.

വി. കുർബാനയുടെ പരിഷ്കരിച്ച തക്സാ പരി. സിംഹാസനത്തിന്റെ അംഗീകാരത്തിനായി സമർപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുകയാണ് എന്ന കാര്യം അറിയിക്കട്ടെ. നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ യാമപ്രാർത്ഥനകളുടെ ഏകീകരണവും നവീകരണവും ലിറ്റർജി കമ്മീഷന്റെ ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ പ്രധാന കർമ്മപരിപാടിയാണ്. കോവിഡുകാലത്തെ കുട്ടികളുടെ വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനപദ്ധതികൾ നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ വിശ്വാസപരിശീലന കമ്മീഷൻ ഫലപ്രദമായി തയ്യാറാക്കിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. സൺഡേസ്കൂൾ ക്ലാസുകളും അധ്യാപകർക്കു വേണ്ടിയുള്ള ക്ലാസുകളും ഓൺലൈനിലൂടെ വിജയകരമായി നടക്കുന്നു. വിശ്വാസപരിശീലനക്ലാസ്സുകൾ ഉദാരതയോടെ സംപ്രേക്ഷണം ചെയ്യുന്ന ഗൂഡ്നെസ്, ശാലോം, ഷെക്കെയ്ന ചാനലുകൾക്കു ഹൃദയംനിറഞ്ഞ നന്ദി!

ഏതാനും വർഷങ്ങളായി മൗണ്ട് സെന്റ് തോമസിലെ സഭയുടെ കാര്യലയത്തിൽ നിന്ന് ഇന്റർനെറ്റ് മിഷനും മീഡിയാ കമ്മീഷനും കാലഘട്ടത്തിന്റെ ആവശ്യകതകൾ കണക്കിലെടുത്തു പല നൂതന പരിപാടികളും ആസൂത്രണം ചെയ്തു നടപ്പാക്കിവരുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ രൂപതകൾക്കും സമർപ്പിതസമൂഹങ്ങൾക്കും സംഘടനകൾക്കും വേണ്ടിയുള്ള വെബ്സൈറ്റ് നിർമ്മാണവും സോഫ്റ്റ് വെയർ വികസിപ്പിക്കലും സീറോമലബാർ മാട്രിമണിയുമാണു ഇന്റർനെറ്റ് മിഷന്റെ പ്രധാന പരിപാടികൾ. മീഡിയാ കമ്മീഷന്റെ ആഭിമുഖ്യത്തിൽ 'സീറോമലബാർ വിഷൻ', 'മൗണ്ട് വിഷൻ' എന്നീ രണ്ട് ഓൺലൈൻ ബുള്ളറ്റിനുകൾ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരിക്കുന്നു. ലിറ്റർജി

ക്കൽ റിസർച്ച് സെന്ററിന്റെ ആഭിമുഖ്യത്തിൽ സഭാചരിത്രഗവേഷണം ആരംഭിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. സീറോമലബാർ ഹെറിറ്റേജ് ആന്റ് റിസേർച്ച് സെന്റർ എന്ന പേരിൽ ഒരു പദ്ധതി നടപ്പിലാക്കിവരുന്നു. സാമ്പത്തികപരാധീനതകൾ മൂലം ഈ പദ്ധതി ഉദ്ദേശിച്ച സമയത്തു പൂർത്തിയാക്കാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നില്ല. സഭയുടെ മിഷൻപ്രവർത്തനവും പ്രവാസികൾക്കായുള്ള കർമ്മപരിപാടികളും ദൈവവിളി പ്രോത്സാഹനവും ദളിത് ക്രൈസ്തവ സ്കോളർഷിപ്പുകളും നല്ലരീതിയിൽ നടപ്പിലാക്കാൻ ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട കമ്മീഷനുകൾ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കുന്നുണ്ട്.

ജനക്ഷേമ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ

നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ എല്ലാ രൂപതകളിലും മിഷൻപ്രദേശങ്ങളിലും കോവിഡ് പ്രതിരോധത്തിനും സാമൂഹികക്ഷേമത്തിനുമായി നിരവധി പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ നടക്കുന്നതിൽ സന്തോഷിക്കുന്നു. കേരളത്തിലെ സഭയിൽ സോഷ്യൽസർവീസ് ഫോറവും കാത്തലിക് ഹെൽത്ത് അസോസിയേഷനും കെ. സി. ബി. സി. ഹെൽത്ത് കമ്മീഷനും ചേർന്നു പി. ഒ. സി. കേന്ദ്രമായി കോവിഡ് പ്രതിരോധപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ കാര്യക്ഷമമായി ഏകോപിക്കുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ രൂപതാസംവിധാനങ്ങളും ഇവയോടു സഹകരിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നുണ്ടല്ലോ. പ്രവാസികളുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ നിർവഹിക്കുന്നതിനും അവരുടെ ക്ലേശങ്ങൾക്കു പരിഹാരം കണ്ടെത്തുന്നതിനും സർക്കാരിനോടു സഹകരിച്ചു നമ്മുടെ രൂപതകളും സമർപ്പിതസമൂഹങ്ങളും ചെയ്യുന്ന പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളും അഭിനന്ദനമർഹിക്കുന്നു.

സർക്കാർ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുള്ള ക്ഷേമനിധികളിൽ നിന്നു സമൂഹത്തിലെ പാവപ്പെട്ടവരായ ആളുകൾക്കു ലഭ്യമാകാവുന്ന പദ്ധതികൾ കണ്ടെത്തി അവയെല്ലാം പ്രയോജനപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിന് അവരെ പ്രബുദ്ധരാക്കുകയും സഹായിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യേണ്ടത് ഓരോ രൂപതയുടെയും ഉത്തരവാദിത്വമായി കാണണം. കർഷകക്ഷേമനിധി അടുത്ത കാലത്തു സർക്കാർ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തിയിരിക്കുന്ന ഒരു നല്ല പദ്ധതിയാണ്. ചെറുകിട കർഷകരെ ഈ ക്ഷേമനിധിയിൽ അംഗങ്ങളാക്കി അതിന്റെ പ്രയോജനം എടുക്കുവാനും സഭാശുശ്രൂഷകർ നേതൃത്വം നൽകേണ്ടതാണ്.

കാലവർഷക്കെടുതികൾ ഉണ്ടാകുന്ന സന്ദർഭമാണല്ലോ ജൂൺ, ജൂലൈ, ഓഗസ്റ്റ് മാസങ്ങൾ. അവയെ നേരിടുവാനും നാം ഒത്തൊരുമിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു.

അർഹമായ അവകാശങ്ങൾ

ന്യൂനപക്ഷാവകാശങ്ങളുടെ വിതരണത്തിൽ ആനുപാതികമായതും ന്യായമായതും ആർക്കും നിഷേധിക്കപ്പെടാതിരിക്കാൻ സർക്കാർ പ്രതിബദ്ധതയോടെയും സമഭാവന യോടെയും പ്രവർത്തിക്കണം. അതുപോലെ സംവരണതര വിഭാഗത്തിലെ സാമ്പത്തി കമായി പിന്നോക്കം നിൽക്കുന്നവർക്കുള്ള സംവരണവും സംരക്ഷിക്കപ്പെടേണ്ടതുണ്ട്. ഇവിടെയെല്ലാം ലത്തീൻ കത്തോലിക്കർക്കും ദളിത് ക്രൈസ്തവർക്കും ഇതര സമുദായങ്ങൾക്കും അർഹതപ്പെട്ടത് ഒരു കുറവും കൂടാതെ ലഭിക്കണമെന്നതാണു നമ്മുടെ നിലപാട്. ഭരണഘടനയും ജനാധിപത്യ ഭരണവ്യവസ്ഥിതിയും നൽകുന്ന അർഹമായ അവകാശങ്ങൾ വ്യവസ്ഥാപിത സംവിധാനങ്ങളിലൂടെയാണ് നേടിയെടുക്കേണ്ടത്. അതിന്റെ പേരിൽ മതങ്ങൾ തമ്മിലും സമുദായങ്ങൾ തമ്മിലും കേരളത്തിൽ നിലനിൽക്കുന്ന സൗഹാർദാന്തരീക്ഷം തകർക്കുന്ന യാതൊരു സമീപനവും ആരുടെയും ഭാഗത്തു നിന്നുണ്ടാകരുത്. സാമൂഹ്യമാധ്യമങ്ങളിലൂടെയുള്ള പ്രതികരണങ്ങളിൽ മിതത്വവും ക്രൈസ്തവ സമീപനവും നഷ്ടപ്പെടുത്താതിരിക്കാൻ ഏവർക്കും കരുതലുണ്ടാകണം. സാമൂഹിക വിഷയങ്ങളിൽ സഭയുടെ പബ്ലിക് അഫെയേഴ്സ് കമ്മീഷൻ കാര്യക്ഷമമായ ഇടപെടലുകൾ യഥാസമയം നടത്തുന്നുണ്ട്. സമുദായ സംഘടന എന്ന നിലയിൽ കത്തോലിക്കാ കോൺഗ്രസും ഈ വിഷയങ്ങളിൽ ജാഗ്രത പുലർത്തുന്നു.

അവസാനമായി

കോവിഡ് മഹാമാരിയിൽനിന്നു മോചിതരാകാൻവേണ്ടി നമ്മുടെ പ്രത്യേക പ്രാർത്ഥനകളും ആരാധനയും തുടർന്നും നടത്തേണ്ടതാണ്. എല്ലാക്കാര്യങ്ങളും മനുഷ്യന്റെ മാത്രം കഴിവുകൾകൊണ്ടു സാധിക്കുന്നതല്ല എന്ന തിരിച്ചറിവും ഈ കാലഘട്ടം നമുക്കു നൽകുന്നുണ്ട്. ‘കർത്താവാണ് എന്റെ ഇടയൻ, എനിക്ക് ഒന്നിനും കുറവുണ്ടാകില്ല...മരണത്തിന്റെ നിഴൽ വീണ താഴ്വരയിലൂടെയാണ് ഞാൻ നടക്കുന്നതെങ്കിലും അവിടന്ന് കൂടെയുള്ളതിനാൽ ഞാൻ ഭയപ്പെടില്ല’ (സങ്കീ. 23:1-4). നമുക്കു ദൈവത്തിൽ ആശ്രയിക്കാം. നല്ല സമറിയാക്കാരനെപ്പോലെ ഏതെങ്കിലും രീതിയിൽ നമ്മുടെ ശുശ്രൂഷകൾ ആവശ്യമുള്ളവർക്കു നൽകുവാൻ സമർപ്പണ മനോഭവത്തോടെ നമുക്കു പരിശ്രമിക്കാം.

ജൂലൈ മൂന്നാം തീയതി വിശുദ്ധകുർബാനയുടെ അനുഭവം ഏതെങ്കിലും രീതിയിൽ എല്ലാവർക്കും നൽകുവാൻ ബഹു. വൈദികർ ശ്രദ്ധിക്കണമെന്ന് അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു. അതുപോലെതന്നെ കഴിയുന്നിടത്തോളം ഓൺലൈൻ പരിപാടികൾ സംഘടിപ്പിച്ചു സഭാമക്കളുടെ കൂട്ടായ്മ പരിപോഷിപ്പിക്കുവാൻ പരിശ്രമിക്കേണ്ടതാണ്.

എല്ലാവർക്കും ദുഷ്ഠനാ തിരുനാളിന്റെയും സഭാദിനത്തിന്റെയും മംഗളങ്ങൾ ആശംസിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് പിതാവിന്റെയും പുത്രന്റെയും പരിശുദ്ധാത്മാവിന്റെയും നാമത്തിൽ നിങ്ങളെ ഞാൻ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം ആശീർവദിക്കുന്നു.

കാക്കനാട് മൗണ്ട് സെന്റ് തോമസ്സിലുള്ള മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പിന്റെ കാര്യാലയത്തിൽ നിന്ന് 2021-ാം ആണ്ട് ജൂൺ മാസം 21-ാം തീയതി നൽകപ്പെട്ടത്.

കർദ്ദിനാൾ മാർ ജോർജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി
സീറോമലബാർ സഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ്

PASTORAL LETTER
DUKRANA - SABHADINAM

Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Men and Women and Lay Faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church.

May the Grace of the Lord be with you all!

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ,

As you are aware, the third of July is a day that awakens great memories. We call it the *Dukrana*, the day of commemoration of St. Thomas the Apostle. The meaning of the word *Dukrana* is “remembrance”. We celebrate this day as *Sabhadinam* from 2013 onwards. We celebrate this year’s *Dukrana* as in the previous year without any solemn public functions because of the Covid-19.

The Background of the Pandemic

India was almost successful in combating the spread of the Covid-19 in its beginning stage, called as the first wave. But the second wave is very disastrous and has caused the deaths of thousands. As per official account, 387000 were dead because of the Covid-19 in India. Of these, around 12000 are from Kerala. It is undoubtedly a massive loss of lives. We shall remember those who passed away and their grieving families in our prayers. There are also thousands who are enduring great physical hardships on account of the pandemic. We get dire intimations of the eruption of a third wave through the news media in the coming months. It is feared that this third wave would affect children badly. What

we can do is to get vaccinated at the earliest available time as a preventive strategy. We shall cooperate wholeheartedly with the preventive measures proposed by the governments.

There are many who are sacrificing their lives to prevent the onslaught of the pandemic. We shall remember gratefully the valuable services of doctors, nurses, health workers and the religious who have given their lives to serve the sick and dying during these harrowing times. We shall offer our prayers for those health workers who lost their lives in this battle against the Covid-19. The young people, the religious and the clergy who work as volunteers to care for the sick deserve our admiration. Four bishops, more than five hundred priests and the religious have died in the pandemic in India. May the merciful Lord bless them abundantly for their dedicated service! One of the bishops who passed away was Mar Joseph Pastor Neelankavil, the Bishop Emeritus of Sagar. May his soul rest in peace!

Our Eparchies in States outside Kerala and India are passing through difficult times during this period of Covid-19. But the pandemic has subsided in foreign countries. We have to mention specially the heroic work by our mission dioceses in combating the pandemic. The bishops, priests and the lay faithful are working with great dedication at this time. Let our prayers be a source of strength and protection for them!

The Example and the Spirit of St. Thomas

It would be appropriate to reflect at this time on what kind of inspiration we can derive from the commemoration of the Feast of St. Thomas. We are aware of the transformation that happened in the lives of the Apostles on the day of the Pentecost when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. It was through the power of the same Spirit that St. Thomas came to India to preach the faith and to establish the faith-communities. We cannot imagine the enormous effort he had taken for his journey and ministry in India. According to some study, he had made two trips to India: one by land to North India and the other by sea to reach Kerala.

This heroism of St. Thomas should fill us with confidence to face the hardships caused by the pandemic.

St. Thomas has shown extraordinary heroism in his life. When Jesus desired to go to Jerusalem in order to resurrect Lazarus when the Jews were planning to stone Him to death, Thomas said with great faith and boldness: "Let us go and die with him" (Jn. 11:16). Later, he came to India and was martyred here 'with Jesus' in his heart. He also tried to get more information about the message and life by asking Jesus directly. It was he who asked the Lord when he was mentioning that he was about to leave the world and that they know the way: "Lord, we do not know where you are going; but then how can we know the way?" It was in response to this question that Jesus made the great declaration: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (Jn. 14:6). This revelation of Jesus made Thomas more aware of Jesus as the Savior of the world. The presence and interventions of St. Thomas in the Gospels are a source of hope and confidence to those who believe in Jesus.

Online Programmes

During this time of Covid-19, the activities of the Church as exercised through the CBCI, the KCBC, the Synod of Bishops, Eparchies, religious congregations, organizations etc. are being coordinated online. We shall be thankful to God that we can preserve the life of the Church in this manner. When the pandemic is creating distance among people, online programmes offer a way of life to bring people together.

The Synod of Bishops of our Church was held online in August 2020 and January 2021 because of the Covid-19. The next Synod will also, most probably, be taking place in the digital platform. The Holy See has given guidelines for the conduct of the online Synod.

Recent Developments in the Church

I am very happy to let you know of some of the changes happening in the day to day activities of the Church. You might have known by this time that the territorial jurisdiction of the Eparchy of

Melbourne has been extended to the whole of Oceania. We shall be thankful to the Holy See. Our congratulations go to Mar Bosco Puthur, the Bishop and the Eparchy of Melbourne. We are happy to welcome Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli, the new Apostolic Nuncio who has taken charge of his office on 28 May. We are thankful to the former Nuncio, Archbishop Giambattista Diquattro who served India for the last three years with great dedication. It is a matter of joy for us that many Bishops who belong to the Syro-Malabar Church are serving in various Latin dioceses in India and in the world. Recently Msgr. Siby Peedikayil who belongs to the Congregation of the Heralds of Good News and is hailing from the Eparchy of Kanjirapally was appointed the Bishop of Aitape, a diocese in Papua New Guinea, a country in Oceania. Congratulations and prayerful greetings to the new bishop from the mother Church!

The seminary commissions, religious congregations and the seminary authorities are doing their utmost in carrying out the work of the formation of the seminarians despite the many obstacles that have come in their way on account of the Covid. Online classes for the new academic year have already begun. We remember with gratitude all those who are engaged in the formation of our seminarians with great dedication and commitment.

A revised text of the Holy *Qurbana* has been submitted to the Holy See for approval. The Liturgy Commission is focused at present on the unification and revision of the *Yama Prarthanakal*. The Catechetical Commission has prepared online classes very effectively during the Covid period. Sunday school classes and classes for Sunday school teachers are being held online. Thanks also go to the Goodness, Shalom and Shekinah channels for telecasting the online Sunday classes very generously.

The Internet Mission and the Media Commission are organizing many innovative programmes, taking into account the needs of the times. The main programmes of the Internet Mission are building websites for the Eparchies and other organizations,

developing software for them and the Syro-Malabar matrimony. The Media Commission publishes two online bulletins known as the *Syro-Malabar Vision* and *Mount Vision*. Historical research was begun under the auspices of the Liturgical Research Centre. The project of the Syro-Malabar Heritage and Research Centre, which was started a few years ago, is not yet completed on account of the paucity of funds because of the Covid-19. The Commissions concerned have successfully implemented different programmes for mission activities, for the expatriates, scholarships for *Dalit* Catholics and for the promotion of vocations.

Welfare Schemes

I am happy that various programmes are being put together in all Eparchies and mission territories for the prevention of the spread of the pandemic and for the welfare of the people. In the Church of Kerala, programmes for the prevention of the contagion of the virus are being organized by the Social Service Forum, the Catholic Health Association and the KCBC Health Commission. The eparchial organizations are collaborating with them. In order to take care of the needs of the expatriates and to find solutions for their problems, our eparchial organizations are cooperating with the government and they deserve our appreciation. Each Eparchy has to see to it that it is its responsibility to find the right welfare schemes for the poor in our society from the various welfare programmes started by the government. The Welfare Fund for Farmers is a good programme of the government. Our eparchial organizations should get our farmers enrolled in these programmes.

As the monsoon months of June, July and August would bring in more hardships and floods, we should all join together to bring help to the suffering.

Due Rights of the Community

The government should see to it that there be justice and due proportionality in the distribution of minority benefits. Similarly the rights of the economically backward in the non reservation

communities should also be protected. In all these instances, our policy is that the benefits due to the Latin community, the *Dalit* Christians and other communities should in no way be affected. It is through just methods that the due rights given by the Constitution and the democratic set-ups should be secured. There should be no attempts to break the communal harmony existing in the country among different religions and communities. The responses expressed through the social media in this regard should be tolerant and Christian. The Public Affairs Commission of our Church is intervening effectively at critical times in all these matters. The Catholic Congress is also vigilant in the social issues.

Finally

We have to continue our special prayers and acts of adoration to get total liberation from the pandemic. This time of the pandemic gives us the wisdom to discern that our talents alone would not achieve everything in life. "The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want...I will not fear even though I walk in the shadow of death (Ps. 23:1-4). We shall put our trust in the Lord. We shall also strive to live like the Good Samaritan by placing our services at the disposal of those who need our help.

I hope our priests will somehow find ways to give the faithful the experience of participation in the Eucharistic service on July 3rd in one way or another. Also, please try to increase the participation of the people in our church-related online programmes which will strengthen the sense of solidarity among the faithful.

I wish all of you the blessings of the *Dukrana* feast and of the *Sabhadinam* and bless all of you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St Thomas, Kakkannad, on 21 June 2021.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

സർക്കുലർ

സിനഡിന്റെ വിജയത്തിനായി പ്രാർത്ഥനാമാസം

മിശിഹായിൽ പ്രിയ സഹോദരീസഹോദരന്മാരേ,

സീറോ മലബാർ സഭയിലെ മെത്രാന്മാരുടെ 29-ാം സിനഡിന്റെ രണ്ടാം സമ്മേളനം 2021 ഓഗസ്റ്റ് 16 മുതൽ 27 വരെ തീയതികളിൽ ഓൺലൈനായി നടക്കുകയാണ്. കേരളത്തിലെ 13 രൂപതകളിലെയും കേരളത്തിനു പുറത്ത് ഇന്ത്യയിലുള്ള 18 രൂപതകളിലെയും ഇന്ത്യയ്ക്കു വെളിയിലുള്ള 4 രൂപതകളിലെയും യൂറോപ്പിലെ അപ്പസ്തോലിക് വിസിസ്റ്റേഷനിലെയും 46 മെത്രാന്മാരും റിട്ടയർ ചെയ്ത 16 മെത്രാന്മാരും ഉൾപ്പെടെ 62 പേരാണ് സിനഡിൽ സംബന്ധിക്കുന്നത്.

കോവിഡ് 19-ന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ 2020 ഓഗസ്റ്റിലും 2021 ജനുവരിയിലും ഓൺലൈനായിട്ടാണു സിനഡു സമ്മേളനങ്ങൾ നടന്നത്. കോവിഡ് പകർച്ചവ്യാധിമൂലമുള്ള യാത്രാ നിയന്ത്രണങ്ങൾ കർശനമായി തുടരുന്നതിനാലാണ് ഇത്തവണയും സിനഡ് ഓൺലൈനായി നടത്താൻ തീരുമാനമായിരിക്കുന്നത്.

നമ്മുടെ സഭയുടെ നവീകരിക്കപ്പെട്ട കുർബാനക്രമത്തിനു പരിശുദ്ധ സിംഹാസനം അംഗീകാരം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. പുതൂക്കിയ കുർബാനക്രമം നടപ്പിൽ വരുന്നതോടൊപ്പം നമ്മുടെ എല്ലാ രൂപതകളിലും സമർപ്പിത ഭവനങ്ങളിലും ഒരേ രീതിയിൽ വിശുദ്ധ കുർബാന അർപ്പിക്കണമെന്നു 2021 ജൂലൈ 3-ന് പുറപ്പെടുവിച്ച തിരുവെഴുത്തിലൂടെ പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് ഫ്രാൻസിസ് മാർപാപ്പാ പ്രത്യേകമായ ആഹ്വാനം നൽകിയിട്ടുണ്ടല്ലോ. പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവിന്റെ ഈ ആഹ്വാനം നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള തീയതി ആഗസ്റ്റു മാസത്തിലെ സിനഡിൽ തീരുമാനിക്കുന്നതാണ്. നമ്മുടെ സഭയിൽ എല്ലാ തലങ്ങളിലും പൂർണ്ണമായ ഐക്യം കൈവരുന്നതിനും സഭയുടെ പ്രേഷിത ചൈതന്യം പരിപോഷിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനും ഉപയുക്തമായ തീരുമാനങ്ങൾ കൈക്കൊള്ളുന്നതിന് എല്ലാവരുടെയും പ്രാർഥന അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു.

അതിനായി, 2021 ജൂലൈ മാസം 27 മുതൽ സിനഡു സമാപിക്കുന്ന ഓഗസ്റ്റ് 27 വരെ നീണ്ടുനില്ക്കുന്ന ഒരു മാസത്തെ പ്രാർഥനാചരണത്തിനായി ഏവരെയും ആഹ്വാനം ചെയ്യുന്നു. ഈ ഒരു മാസത്തിലെ വെള്ളിയാഴ്ചകളിൽ സാധിക്കുന്നവരെല്ലാം ഉപവാസമെടുക്കുന്നതും ഉചിതമായിരിക്കും.

സീറോ മലബാർ സഭയ്ക്കു പ്രത്യേകമായി എഴുതിയ കത്തിൽ തനിക്കുവേണ്ടി പ്രാർഥിക്കണമെന്നു പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് അഭ്യർത്ഥിച്ചിരുന്നല്ലോ. അടുത്തകാലത്ത് ഒരു ശസ്ത്രക്രിയയ്ക്കു വിധേയനായ പരിശുദ്ധ പിതാവ് എത്രയും വേഗം ആരോഗ്യം പൂർണ്ണമായും വീണ്ടെടുക്കുന്നതിനും സാർവ്വത്രികസഭയിലെ നേതൃത്വ ശുശ്രൂഷ ഫലപ്രദമായി തുടർന്നും നിർവഹിക്കുന്നതിനും വേണ്ടി നമുക്കു പ്രത്യേകം പ്രാർഥിക്കാം.

പരിശുദ്ധ കന്യാകാമറിയത്തിന്റെയും വി. യൗസേപ്പിതാവിന്റെയും ഭാരതത്തിന്റെ അപ്പസ്തോലനായ മാർ തോമാശ്ലീഹായുടെയും നമ്മുടെ സഭയിലെ വിശുദ്ധരുടെയും വാഴ്ത്തപ്പെട്ടവരുടെയും പ്രാർഥനയാൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭ മുഴുവനിലും പ്രത്യേകിച്ചു സിനഡു സമ്മേളനത്തിലും ദൈവത്തിന്റെ കാരുണ്യവും അനുഗ്രഹവും വർഷിക്കപ്പെടാൻ ഇടയാകട്ടെ.

ഈശോയിൽ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം,

കർദ്ദിനാൾ ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി

സീറോ മലബാർ സഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ്

CIRCULAR
OBSERVANCE OF A MONTH OF PRAYER
FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE SYNOD

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Second Session of the XXIX Synod of the Syro-Malabar Bishops will be held online from 16 to 27 August 2021. Sixty two Bishops of the Church - from the 13 Eparchies in Kerala, 18 Eparchies outside Kerala in India, four Eparchies outside India, the Apostolic Visitation in Europe and 16 Bishops Emeriti - will be participating in this Synod.

The Synods of 2020 August and of 2021 January were held online because of Covid -19. The decision to hold online this Session of the Synod was made because of the restrictions on travel imposed due to the spread of Covid pandemic.

The Holy See has given recently approval to the revised text of our Holy *Qurbana*. The Holy Father has made a special exhortation through the Apostolic Letter dated 3 July 2021, for the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* uniformly in all Eparchies and religious houses, on the occasion of the promulgation of the revised text. The date of implementation of this exhortation of the Holy Father will be decided in the Synod to be held in August. The prayers of all are requested for taking appropriate decisions for the implementation of the appeal for unity at all levels of the Church and for deepening the spirit of evangelization of our Church.

All are requested, hence, to observe a month of prayer from 27 July 2021 to 27 August 2021, the concluding day of the Synod. Also, those who can, are encouraged to observe all the Fridays during this month as days of fasting.

In the letter sent to our Church by the Holy Father, he has asked us to pray for him. We shall offer our prayers for his good health to lead the Church with full zeal and enthusiasm and also for his full recovery from the surgery he underwent recently.

May the grace and mercy of the Lord be showered upon our Church always and especially at the time of the Synod through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of St. Joseph, of St. Thomas, the Apostle of India and of the Saints and the Blesseds of our Church!

Yours cordially in Christ,

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

സർക്കുലർ

സീറോമലബാർ പ്രേഷിതവാരാചരണം 2021

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ് കർദിനാൾ മാർ ജോർജ്ജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി തന്റെ സഹശുശ്രൂഷകരായ മെത്രാപ്പോലീത്താമാർക്കും മെത്രാന്മാർക്കും വൈദികർക്കും സമർപ്പിതർക്കും തന്റെ അജപാലന ശുശ്രൂഷയ്ക്ക് ഏല്പിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന എല്ലാ ദൈവജനത്തിനും എഴുതുന്നത്.

ദനഹാതിരുനാളായ ജനുവരി 6 മുതൽ 12 വരെ സീറോമലബാർസഭ പ്രേഷിതവാരമായി എല്ലാ വർഷവും ആചരിക്കുന്ന വിവരം നമുക്കറിവുള്ളതാണല്ലോ. ‘മിഷനെ അറിയുക, മിഷനറിയാവുക’ എന്ന ആദർശവാക്യത്തെ പ്രായോഗികതലങ്ങളിലെത്തിച്ച് ജീവിതത്തിലും പ്രവൃത്തിയിലും പ്രേഷിത തീക്ഷ്ണതയാൽ നിറഞ്ഞു, സഭയുടെ പ്രേഷിത ഉദ്യമങ്ങളെ ശക്തിപ്പെടുത്തുവാനുള്ള പരിശ്രമമാണ് പ്രേഷിതവാരം ലക്ഷ്യം വയ്ക്കുന്നത്. ഈയവസരത്തിൽ കേരളത്തിനകത്തും പുറത്തുമായി, ലോകത്തിന്റെ വിവിധ ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽ, വീരോചിതമായ രീതിയിൽ മിഷൻ പ്രവത്തനത്തിൽ ഏർപ്പെട്ടുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന മെത്രാന്മാരും വൈദികരും സന്യസ്തരും അല്പമായസഹോദരങ്ങളും ഉൾപ്പെടുന്ന എല്ലാ മിഷനറിമാരെയും അവരുടെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെ സഹായിക്കുന്നവരെയും സഭയുടെ പേരിൽ അഭിനന്ദിക്കുകയും, അവർക്കുവേണ്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു.

പ്രേഷിതവാരാചരണത്തിന്റെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ ആനുകാലിക ലോകത്തിന്റെയും തിരുസ്സഭയുടെയും സാഹചര്യങ്ങളെ ആസ്പദമാക്കി ഏതാനും ചിന്തകൾ നിങ്ങളുമായി പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുവാൻ ഞാൻ ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു. 2020 മിഷൻ ഞായറിനായുള്ള പ്രേഷിത സന്ദേശത്തിൽ ഫ്രാൻസിസ് പാപ്പാ പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുന്നത്, ഇന്നിന്റെ കലുഷിത സാഹചര്യങ്ങളിലേക്ക് ദൈവസ്നേഹത്തിന്റെയും സമാധാനത്തിന്റെയും സന്ദേശവാഹകരാകുവാൻ, “ആരാണു് എനിക്കായി

പോവുക” (ഏശയ്യ 6:8), എന്ന ആകുലതയാണ്. കോവിഡ് മഹാമാരിയുടെ പശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ ഒരു നവീന ക്രൈസ്തവ മാനവികതയുടെ നിർമ്മാണത്തിനായി പരിശ്രമിക്കുവാൻ ‘എല്ലാവരും സോദരർ’ എന്ന തന്റെ പുതിയ ചാക്രികലേഖനത്തിലൂടെ ഫ്രാൻസിസ് പാപ്പാ നമ്മെ ഉദ്ബോധിപ്പിച്ചു. യഥാർത്ഥമായ സുവിശേഷപ്രഘോഷണം വർണ്ണ വർഗ്ഗ ലിംഗഭേദമില്ലാതെ എല്ലാവർക്കും ദൈവത്തിന്റെ സ്നേഹവും കരുണയും പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുന്നതും അതനുഭവിക്കാൻ അവസരം നൽകുന്നതുമാകണമെന്ന് മാർപ്പാപ്പ ഉദ്ബോധിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

കോവിഡിന്റെ വിപത്തിൽ, ആവശ്യങ്ങളും അത്യാവശ്യങ്ങളും അനാവശ്യങ്ങളും തമ്മിലുള്ള വ്യത്യാസം നാം ശരിക്കും മനസ്സിലാക്കി. തിരുസ്സഭയിലെ ഏതൊരു ശുശ്രൂഷയുടെയും സംവിധാനത്തിന്റെയും മൂല്യം, സുവിശേഷവൽക്കരണത്തിനായി അത് എന്തുമാത്രം സഹായിക്കുന്നു എന്നതിനെ ആശ്രയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു. പ്രേഷിതപ്രവർത്തനത്തിന് തടസ്സമായി നിൽക്കുന്ന ഏതു സഭാസംവിധാനവും ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ സുവിശേഷത്തിന് വിരുദ്ധമാണെന്നും അവയെ സുവിശേഷാത്മകമായി പുനർനിർമ്മിക്കണമെന്നും ഫ്രാൻസിസ് പാപ്പാ ഉദ്ബോധിപ്പിക്കുന്നു (സുവിശേഷത്തിന്റെ ആനന്ദം, 26). നല്ല സമരിയാക്കാരുടെ ഉപമ ആനുകാലികമായി വ്യഖ്യാനിച്ചുകൊണ്ട്, മായംചേരാത്ത ദൈവസ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ മാതൃകകളായി സഭാസംവിധാനങ്ങളെ പുനർനിർമ്മിക്കണമെന്ന് ‘എല്ലാവരും സോദരർ’ എന്ന ചാക്രികലേഖനത്തിലൂടെ ഫ്രാൻസിസ് പാപ്പാ വീണ്ടും ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു (നമ്പർ 62). കാരണം സ്നേഹിക്കാത്തവൻ ദൈവത്തിന്റെ കൂടെയല്ല (1 യോഹ. 4:8-16). അതിനാൽ, സ്നേഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രമാണം അടിസ്ഥാനമാക്കി സഭാസംവിധാനങ്ങളെയും ശുശ്രൂഷകളെയും പുനർനിർമ്മിച്ചാൽ മാത്രമേ, അവ ക്രിസ്തുവിശ്വാസത്തിലേക്ക് മനുഷ്യമക്കളെ നയിക്കുന്ന പ്രേഷിതപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളായി പരിണമിക്കൂ.

അക്രൈസ്തവരുടെ ഇടയിൽ സുവിശേഷം പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുവാനുള്ള ഉത്സാഹം പ്രാദേശികസഭകളുടെ പക്ഷതയുടെ അടയാളമായിട്ടാണ് ബനഡിക്ട് പതിനാറാമൻ മാർപ്പാപ്പ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നത് (*Verbum Domini* 95). സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ വിശ്വാസപക്ഷതയുടെ തെളിവാണി ഈ സഭയിൽനിന്നും അക്രൈസ്തവർക്കിടയിൽ ജോലി ചെയ്യുവാനായി ഇറങ്ങി പുറപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്ന പതിനായിരക്കണക്കിന് സഭാമക്കളുടെ ജീവിതകഥകൾ. അതിനായി അവരെ ഒരുക്കിയ കുടുംബങ്ങളും ഇടവകകളും പക്ഷതനിറഞ്ഞ വിശ്വാസജീവിതത്തിന്റെയും അജപാലനത്തിന്റെയും ചരിത്രം പറയുന്നു. നമ്മുടെ

സഭയിൽ രൂപീകൃതമായ നിരവധി സന്യാസ-മിഷനറി സമൂഹങ്ങളോടൊപ്പം വിലമതിക്കേണ്ടതാണ് ചില അല്പമായ ഭക്തസംഘടനകൾ നടത്തിയ മുന്നേറ്റങ്ങൾ. നമ്മുടെ ഇടവകവൈദികരുടെയും സന്യസ്തരുടെയും മതാധ്യാപകരുടെയും കാര്യക്ഷമമായ പ്രോത്സാഹനങ്ങളും കരിസ്ഥാറ്റിക്ക് നവീകരണ പ്രസ്ഥാനങ്ങൾ നൽകുന്ന തീക്ഷ്ണത നിറഞ്ഞ സന്ദേശങ്ങളും നിമിത്തം മിഷൻ പ്രവർത്തനത്തിനായി വൈദിക-സമർപ്പിത ജീവിതം തെരഞ്ഞെടുക്കുന്ന യുവജനങ്ങളുടെയും മിഷൻപ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ ജോലി ചെയ്യാൻ മുന്നിട്ടിറങ്ങുന്ന അല്പമായ സഹോദരങ്ങളുടെയും വർദ്ധിച്ചുവരുന്ന തീക്ഷ്ണത ആശാവഹമാണ്.

സഭയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന മാധ്യമവിഭാഗങ്ങളും ഒറ്റയ്ക്കും സംഘടിതവുമായി ഉത്സാഹത്തോടെ സുവിശേഷമുല്പാദനങ്ങൾ പങ്കുവയ്ക്കുന്ന നവമാധ്യമ കൂട്ടായ്മകളും നമ്മുടെ പ്രേഷിതചൈതന്യത്തിന്റെ ഉദാഹരണങ്ങളാണ്. എന്നാൽ ചിലപ്പോഴെല്ലാം അപക്വമായ പെരുമാറ്റശൈലികളും ഉള്ളടക്കങ്ങളും പ്രസരിപ്പിക്കുന്നതു വഴി നമ്മുടെ മാധ്യമസംസ്കാരത്തെ അക്രൈസ്തവമാക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ എന്ന്, അവയുടെ പ്രേഷിതമുല്പാദനത്തിന്റെ അളവുകോലിൽ നാം പരിശോധിക്കുകയും തിരുത്തുകയും ചെയ്യേണ്ടതാണ്. കാരണം, നവമാധ്യമങ്ങളുടെ കാര്യക്ഷമമായ ഉപയോഗം നമ്മുടെ പ്രേഷിതപ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെ പതിന്മടങ്ങ് ഫലപ്രദവും ആയാസകരവുമാക്കാൻ ഉപകരിക്കുന്നു എന്നു മാത്രമല്ല, പ്രേഷിതപ്രവർത്തനത്തിന്റെ ഭാവി എങ്ങനെ സഭയ്ക്കുള്ളിൽ തന്നെ ഒരു പുതിയ മാധ്യമസംസ്കാരം നമ്മൾ രൂപപ്പെടുത്തുന്നു എന്നതിനെ ആശ്രയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു.

ഭാരതത്തിലെവിടെയും പ്രേഷിതപ്രവർത്തനം നടത്തുവാനുള്ള അവസരം 2017 ൽ നമ്മുടെ സഭയ്ക്ക് ലഭ്യമായതിനുശേഷം, പുതിയ മിഷൻ പ്രദേശങ്ങൾ ഏറ്റെടുത്ത് അവിടെ ജോലിചെയ്യുവാനായി നമ്മുടെ പല രൂപതകളും സമർപ്പിതകൂട്ടായ്മകളും കുടുംബപ്രേഷിതരും നടത്തുന്ന പ്രയത്നങ്ങൾക്ക് എല്ലാ വിജയങ്ങളും ആശംസിക്കുകയും, അതിനായി മുൻകൈ എടുത്ത രൂപതാധ്യക്ഷന്മാരെയും സമർപ്പിതസമൂഹാധികാരികളെയും അല്പമായ നേതൃത്വത്തെയും ഞാൻ നന്ദിപൂർവ്വം ഓർക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്നു. മിഷനുവേണ്ടി പ്രാർത്ഥിച്ചും മിഷനറി ദൈവവിളികൾ പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിച്ചും ആവുന്ന രീതിയിലെല്ലാം സാമ്പത്തിക സംഭാവനകൾ നൽകിയും നമ്മുടെ പ്രേഷിത പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെ സഹായിക്കണമെന്ന് ഞാൻ അഭ്യർത്ഥിക്കുന്നു. അതിനായി സഭാകേന്ദ്രത്തിൽ പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്ന സീറോ

മലബാർ മിഷൻ ഓഫീസിന്റെ ശുശ്രൂഷകളുമായി സഹകരിക്കണമെന്ന് ഓർമ്മിപ്പിക്കുന്നു.

മറക്കാൻ പാടില്ലാത്ത ഒരു ഉപദേശം ക്രിസ്തു അന്ത്യഅത്താഴസമയത്ത് ശിഷ്യന്മാർക്കു നൽകുന്നുണ്ട് “നിങ്ങൾക്ക് പരസ്പരം സ്നേഹം ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ, നിങ്ങൾ എന്റെ ശിഷ്യന്മാരെന്ന് ലോകം അറിയും” (യോഹ 13:35). ശിഷ്യരുടെ ജീവിതത്തിന്റെ ഉൽകൃഷ്ടതയാണ് ഗുരുവിന്റെ നാമം നിലനിർത്തുന്നതും അറിയിക്കുന്നതും. സുകൃതപൂർണ്ണമായ ജീവിതംകൊണ്ടും പ്രഘോഷണം കൊണ്ടും നമ്മുടെ ഗുരുവിനെയും അദ്ദേഹം നൽകുന്ന നിത്യജീവനെയും അനേകരിലെത്തിക്കാം. അതിനായി പരിശ്രമിക്കുന്നവരെ പ്രാർത്ഥന കൊണ്ടും സഹകരണങ്ങൾകൊണ്ടും സഹായിക്കാം. അങ്ങനെ സുവിശേഷത്തിന്റെ സ്നേഹവും കാര്യബുദ്ധിയും പ്രത്യാശയുമാകുന്ന വെളിച്ചം നൽകി ജനഹൃദയങ്ങളെ സ്पर्ശിക്കുവാനായി നാം പരിശ്രമിച്ചാൽ, പരിമിതമായ വാക്കുകൾ കൊണ്ട് തന്നെ ഫലപ്രദമായ പ്രേഷിതപ്രവർത്തനം നടത്താം. അതിനായി ശ്രേഷ്ഠമിഷനറിയായ ക്രിസ്തുനാഥന്റെ അനുഗ്രഹവും പ്രേഷിതരാണിയായ പരിശുദ്ധ അമ്മയുടെയും പ്രേഷിത താതൻ തോമാസ്റ്റീഹായുടെ മധ്യസ്ഥതയും മിഷനറിമാരായ നാമോരോരുത്തരെയും സഹായിക്കട്ടെ.

കാക്കനാട് മൗണ്ട് സെന്റ് തോമസിലുള്ള മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പിന്റെ കാര്യലയത്തിൽ നിന്ന് 2020-ാം ആണ്ട് മാസം ഡിസംബർ 18-ാം തീയതി നൽകപ്പെട്ടത്.

മിശിഹായിൽ സ്നേഹപൂർവ്വം,

കർദിനാൾ ജോർജ് ആലഞ്ചേരി

സീറോമലബാർസഭയുടെ മേജർ ആർച്ചുബിഷപ്പ്

CIRCULAR
MISSION WEEK CELEBRATION OF THE
SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH 2021

Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop
of the Syro-Malabar Church to the Archbishops,
Bishops, Priests, Consecrated Men and Women
and Lay Faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church.

May the Grace of the Lord be with you all!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus,

As we are aware, the Syro Malabar Church celebrates the Mission Week every year from the 6th of January, the feast of *Denaha* to the 12th. The purpose of celebrating the Mission Week is to strengthen the missionary activities of our Church by making the motto 'Know the mission and Be a missionary' applied to the practical level of life and work with an enhanced missionary zeal. The Church appreciates the ministry of all the missionaries including bishops, priests, the religious and the laity who courageously engage in mission work at various parts of the world, and the benefactors who support their missionary activities and prays for them.

As we celebrate the Mission Week, I would like to share with you some thoughts in the context of the contemporary world and the Church. In his message for the Mission Sunday 2020, Pope Francis expresses his concerns on "Who will go for me" (Isaiah 6:8) to be a messenger of God's love and peace in the confused world of today. In his new encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis exhorts us to strive for the building up of a new Christian humanity in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Pope reminds us that the true proclamation of the Gospel must be an opportunity for all,

regardless of race, creed or gender, to share and experience God's love and mercy.

We clearly understand the difference between needs, necessities and non-necessities especially in the context of the pandemic. The value of any ministry or organization in the Church depends on how much it contributes to evangelization. Pope Francis mentions that any Church system that hinders mission work is against the Gospel of Christ and must renew itself evangelically (The Joy of the Gospel 26). In his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, the Pope interprets the parable of the Good Samaritan in the present-day context and reminds us once again to restructure the systems in the Church as models of God's unconditional love (No. 62). It is because he who does not love is not with God (1 John 4: 8-16). Therefore, only if the Church systems and ministries are reconstructed based on the doctrine of love, will they become missionary activities that attract people to the Christian faith.

Pope Benedict XVI teaches that the zeal to share the Gospel among non-Christians is a sign of maturity of the local churches (*Verbum Domini* 95). The life stories of tens of thousands Syro Malabar faithful who have ventured to do the mission among the non-Christians are a testimony of maturity in our Christian faith. The families and parishes that prepared them for it tell the story of their faith and pastoral life. Progress in mission work made by some lay organizations shall be valued and appreciated along with that of many religious-missionary communities already working in the mission.

It is very hopeful that due to the effective encouragement of our parish priests, the religious sisters, catechism teachers and the zealous messages of the charismatic reformation movements, there is a growing zeal among the youth to choose the missionary life as consecrated persons or as lay missionaries.

The media outlets that work for the Church and the new media communities that enthusiastically share evangelical values, both individually and collectively, are examples of our missionary spirit.

At times we also need to examine their media values to see if they are disfiguring our media culture in an unchristian manner by disseminating immature content and behaviours and take the necessary initiatives to correct them. This is because the efficient use of new media not only helps to make our mission work tenfold effective and effortless, but the future of our missionary work depends on the shape we give to a new media culture within the Church.

Ever since our Church has got the opportunity to carry out missionary work anywhere in India from 2017, many Eparchies, Congregations, Societies and lay missionaries came forward to take up new mission areas and got engaged in missionary apostolates. I commend and thank the bishops, religious congregations, Societies and lay leadership for the initiative they have taken. I request you to help our missionary activities by praying for the missions, encouraging missionary vocations and making financial contributions in every way possible.

Christ gives his disciples a piece of unforgettable advice at the Last Supper, "If you love one another, the world will know that you are my disciples" (John 13:35). Preserving and announcing the name of the Teacher demonstrate the brilliance of the life of the disciples. Through a virtuous life and preaching, we can bring our Lord and the eternal life He gives to many. Let us help those who strive for it through prayers and cooperation.

So, if we strive to touch the hearts of the people with the light of love, mercy and hope of the Gospel, we can carry out effective missionary work with limited words. May each of the missionaries be sanctified with the blessings of the great missionary Jesus Christ and have the intercession of the Holy Mother, the Queen of missions, and St Thomas the Apostle of missions.

Given from the Office of the Major Archbishop at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad, on 18 December 2020.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro Malabar Church

DOCUMENTS
DECREES
ACTIVITIES OF THE TRIBUNALS
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS



LETTER OF THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS *To the Bishops, Clergy, Religious and Laity of the Syro-Malabar Church*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Holy See regards with special approval and encouragement the agreement unanimously reached by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church in 1999 and repeatedly endorsed in subsequent years - for a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, considering this an important step towards increasing stability and ecclesial communion within the whole body of your beloved Church. The concerted efforts towards applying this auspicious development in the great Jubilee Year 2000 gave joyful confidence in your *sui iuris* Church to my saintly predecessor Pope John Paul II.

Notwithstanding some difficulties, which require ongoing discernment in the life of your vibrant Church, the approved norms. For the Eucharistic celebration have borne considerable fruit including evangelization in those places, especially the missionary Eparchies, where the whole community has joined in peaceful and prayerful observance, interpreting the continuing consensus of the Hierarchy as a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

I strongly urge the Syro-Malabar Bishops to persevere, and I confirm their ecclesial “walking together with God’s people, trusting that “time is greater than space” (cf. *Evangelií Gaudium*, 222-225) and that “unity prevails over conflict” (cf. *ibid*, 226-230).

I willingly take the occasion of the recognition of the new *Raza Qurbana* Taksa to exhort all the clergy, religious and lay faithful

to proceed to a prompt implementation of the uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, for the greater good and unity of your Church. May the Holy Spirit foster harmony, fraternity and unity among all members of your Church as you work to implement the Synodal decision.

Entrusting all of you to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Holy Patriarch Saint Joseph and the Apostle Saint Thomas, I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing. I assure you of my closeness in prayer and ask you, please, to pray for me.

Francis

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 3 July 2021

LETTER FROM THE CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES

Uniform Mode of Celebration and Dispensation

Your Beatitude,

This Congregation has begun studying the Malayalam *Raza Qurbana Taksa*, which was accompanied by your esteemed letter Prot. No. 0798/2020 dated 10 July. Despite a positive preliminary assessment, the Dicastery can only contemplate granting the definitive *recognition* after receiving and studying the English translation in completion of the Liturgical Commission norms (cf. points 8 and 9 of the *Linee Guide* transmitted with letter Prot. N. 152/2015 dated 20 July 2016). Apart from this minor omission and the resulting delay, I commend the Syro-Malabar Commission for Sacred Liturgy on its compliance with the canonical procedure and its excellent report. In the meanwhile, let me take this opportunity to provide two points for reflection by Your Beatitude and the other Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, in anticipation of what will be the definitive *edition typica* for the Divine Liturgy of your Rite.

The first theme concerns the discrepancies in the orientation of different moments during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, a longstanding and grievous division exacerbated due to the broadcasting and live streaming during the present pandemic. This situation demands the promulgation of unmistakably explicit rubrics, with each Bishop assuming full pastoral responsibility for the faithful and correct implementation of this norm, as this Congregation had previously indicated upon notification of the authoritative decision of the 1999 Synod. Allow me to emphasize that clear rubrical instructions should certainly be included in the

new liturgical book, but will not be enough on their own, a cohesive commitment is required on the part of the Synod, both collegially and from every Bishop individually. Indeed, the Holy See rejoices in the signs of such concord and harmony. As my late predecessor Cardinal Achille Silvestrini had written to the newly elevated Major Archbishop Mar Varkey Vithayathil following an Audience with Pope John Paul II on 18 December 1999, “first steps towards ever-increasing stability and ecclesial communion... include the special effort which has been made towards a **unanimous agreement** on the mode of celebrating the Holy Qurbana. I have great confidence that this continued development will bear great spiritual fruit for all the faithful of the Syro-Malabar Church as we begin this great Jubilee Year” (Prot N. 140/99 dated 24 December 1999). Unfortunately, that joyful hope was soon marred by open defiance, creating an explosive pastoral situation with grave spiritual harm to the faithful. Given this sad history of nonobservance on the part of some clergy, the Bishops must take charge, gently but firmly, of catechizing and correcting those culpable, as a requirement for safeguarding the unity and common witness of the Synod and the whole Church *sui iuris*.

In this regard, precision is necessary on the question of dispensations: as the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* clearly says, these must be given in a “special case” (can. 1538 §1) for the spiritual good of the faithful. By their very nature, they should not come to appear as general permission for something that cannot legitimately be authorized in opposition to the common norms. Therefore, Bishops should have recourse of dispensations only for well-defined times and for specific reasons. (For instance: restoring or reordering the sanctuary platform in front of the Altar, allowing time for adequate preparatory liturgical formation so that a given congregation comes to understand the meaning of the priest leading the people in prayer while facing the same direction as they themselves are facing during the Anaphora, etc.) By way of assistance in the endeavor of mystagogical catechesis, I attach some relevant pages on the Instruction “*Il Padre Incomprendibile*”

published by this Dicastery in 1996 (enclosure). Despite the twenty-five years that have since passed, this Instruction remains a useful help for the implementation of the provisions of Vatican II.

The second topic of consideration, which also relates to the authority of Bishops as first liturgists in their Eparchies, is necessary in light of the recent consensus decision to render facultative certain parts of the Anaphora, indicating in square brackets selected sections with condensed versions. Eparchial Bishops should take these optional abbreviations into account in their liturgical statutes and instruction, leaving adequate room for prudent judgment by the local clergy in this choice. Similar subsidiarity should apply in availing, for pastoral reasons, of the various solemn and simple forms of the Sacred Liturgy as a whole. If some difficulty arises regarding a priest or his congregation, hierarchical recourse will be possible to resolve it, but Bishops in supporting their sanctifying mission with teaching and lawgiving should not presume to reserve for themselves by Eparchial statutes those decisions that can be made at the local level, just as they cannot indefinitely dispense from the Synod's decisions.

Thanking Your Beatitude for your kind attention, I entrust the Syro-Malabar Hierarchy and entire Church to the intercession of St. Thomas the Apostle and the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Mater Ecclesiae*, with prayerful good wishes and fraternal regards.

Sincerely in Christ,

Leonardo Card. Sandri

Prefect

Giorgio Demetrio Gallaro
Archbishop Secretary

LETTER FROM THE CONGREGATION FOR THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES

Granting recognitio to the Malayalm Raza Qurbana Taska

Your Beatitude,

This Congregation has attentively reviewed the modifications and revisions of the text of the Holy *Qurbana*, unanimously approved by the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, in accordance with canon 657 §1 CCEO.

The Dicastery gladly grants the *recognitio* to the Malayalm *Raza Qurbana Taska*, hoping that the venerable Syro-Malabar Church may be for all others an exemplary witness of ecclesial unity, supremely expressed in the worthy and faithful celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

In particular, the Apostolic See enthusiastically anticipates great spiritual fruit from the fact that the new *edito typical* will coincide with implementation of the uniform mode of celebration for the Divine Liturgy in your Rite, whether in its simple, solemn or most solemn (*Raza*) form: as unanimously decided by Synod of Bishops in November 1999 and recently reconfirmed in January 2020, the celebrant shall face the faithful at the Bema during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar-in the same direction that the faithful are facing-for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful during the concluding rites after Holy Communion

This Congregation trusts that the people of God will abide by the decision of the Synod, and expects a cohesive commitment from every Bishop and priest of your Church *sui iuris*, both collegially and individually.

Expressing my closeness to the whole Syro-Malabar Church, I remain with fraternal regards,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Leonardo Card. Sandri
Prefect

Giorgio Demetrio Gallaro
Archbishop Secretary

DECISION OF THE SYNOD

Implementation of the Revised Text & Uniform Mode of Celebration of Holy *Qurbana*

1. The Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church unanimously decided to begin the celebration of Holy *Qurbana* using the revised text (*editio typica*) with the *recognitio* of the Apostolic See (Letter of the Oriental Congregation, Prot. N. 248/2004, dated 9 June 2021) with effect from the First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation (28 November 2021).
2. The Synod unanimously accepts the exhortation of the Holy Father Pope Francis through his letter dated 3 July 2021, addressed to the bishops, clergy, religious and laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, to implement the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in all eparchies in the Syro-Malabar Church as decided by the November 1999 Synod and reiterated by the Synodal Sessions in 2020 and approved by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches (Prot. N. 1796/99, dated 17 December 1999; Prot. N. 248/2004 dated 9 November 2020 & 9 June 2021) together with the implementation of the revised text of Holy *Qurbana* from the First Sunday (28 November) of the Season of Annunciation 2021. The Congregation through its letter dated 9 June 2021 has specified the uniform mode of celebration as follows: “the celebrant shall face the faithful at the *Bema* during the Liturgy of the Word, turn towards the Altar - in the same direction that the faithful are facing - for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and once again face the faithful during the concluding rites after Holy Communion” (Prot. N. 248/2004).

3. The bishops of certain Eparchies who expressed their difficulties to implement the decision in the whole eparchy will, abiding by the above mentioned decisions, introduce the uniform mode of celebration starting with the cathedrals, pilgrim centers, religious communities, possible parishes, minor seminaries and other formation centers on 28 November 2021 itself. By effective catechesis, the uniform mode shall be gradually introduced in the whole eparchy as early as possible, not later than Easter 2022 (17 April 2022).
4. In this regard, the directives from the Congregation for the Eastern Churches in its letter dated 09 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004) about dispensation by eparchial bishops as per provisions of CCEO c. 1538 § 1 are to be followed. The Congregation states: “precision is necessary on the question of dispensations: as the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* clearly says, these must be given in a “special case” (can. 1538 § 1) for the spiritual good of the faithful. By their very nature, they should not come to appear as general permission for something that cannot legitimately be authorized in opposition to the common norms. Therefore, Bishops should have recourse of dispensations only for well-defined times and for specific reasons”.
5. From the First Sunday of Annunciation 2021, all the Bishops will celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode everywhere in the Syro-Malabar Church.
6. Apostolic Visitation in Europe, the Syro-Malabar Communities in Gulf countries and other places where the Syro-Malabar Church does not have jurisdiction, all the bishops and priests will celebrate the Holy *Qurbana* in the uniform mode.
7. The Synod should think of formulating an effective liturgical catechesis catering to the specific needs of the new mission areas.

8. The options given to the celebrant shall not be reserved by eparchial bishops as it is clarified by the Congregation for the Eastern Churches through its letter dated 9 November 2020 (Prot. N. 248/2004).
9. Innovations in Liturgy in matters like rituals, vestments, symbols, prayers etc. are to be introduced only with the consent of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas Kakkanad on 27 August 2021.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

Revised Malayalam *Taksa* of Holy *Qurbana* of the Syro-Malabar Church

After due consultation and deliberation in the forums concerned, with the approval of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church in the First Session of XXVIII Synod (2020) and after having obtained the *recognitio* of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches (Prot. N. 248/2004, dated 09 June 2021), the undersigned Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, hereby promulgates the definitive *Taksa* of the *Raza*, Solemn and Simple forms of the Holy *Qurbana* in Malayalam to be effective from 28 November 2021 (First Sunday of the Season of Annunciation), as per the decision of the Second Session of the XXIX Synod (2021). It is further decreed that all other texts in Malayalam hitherto in use for the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* stand abrogated from the date of promulgation of the new *Taksa*.

I am privileged to place on record immense gratitude to His Holiness Pope Francis for his Apostolic Letter, signed on 03 July 2021, addressed to the Bishops, Clergy, Religious and Laity of the Syro-Malabar Church, affirming the unanimous decision of the Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church in 1999 for a uniform mode of celebrating the Holy *Qurbana*, repeatedly endorsed in subsequent years, and exhorting its prompt implementation on the occasion of recognition of the new *Raza Qurbana Taksa*, for the greater good and unity of the Church.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on 08 September 2021, Feast of the Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

LETTER

Congregation for the Oriental Churches Extending the Territory of the Eparchy of Melbourne.

Your Beatitude,

I have the pleasure of communicating that Pope Francis, during the Audience granted to me on 29 March 2021, pronounced in favour of extending the jurisdiction of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne over all of Oceania, including New Zealand.

This Congregation has therefore prepared a decree executing this decision of the Holy Father and I attach a copy for your records. The same has also been sent to His Excellency Mar Bosco Puthur, as well as the Papal Representatives and Episcopal Conferences concerned.

With prayerful best wishes and fraternal regards, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Leonardo Card. Sandri

Prefect

Giorgio Demetrio Gallaro

Archbishop Secretary

DECREE

Congregation for the Oriental Churches Extending the Territory of the Eparchy of Melbourne.

CONGREGATIO PRO ECCLESIIS ORIENTALIBUS DECRETUM

Eparchia Sancti Thomae Apostoli Melburnensis pro Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis christifidelibus in Australia degentibus die 23 mensis Decembris anno 2013 erecta est. Cum tamen plures eiusdem Ecclesiae fideles in Nova Zelandia et Oceania hodie commorentur, opportunum visum est fines eparchiales ita ampliare ut ad omnes fideles eo migrates Episcopi eiusdem Eparchiae pastoralis vigilantia et sollicitudo perveniat.

Summus Pontifex FRANCISCUS PP.,

his omnibus ab infrascripto Cardinali Praefecto in Audientia die 29 mensis Martii hoc vertente anno expositis, habito Conferentiarum Episcopaliuffragio neenon voto Exc,morum Apostolicorum Nuntiorum competentium, fines Eparchiae Sancti Thomae Apostoli Melburnensis ita immutare dignatus est, ut non modo Australiam verumetiam Novam Zelandiam et Oceaniam comprehendant, simul omnes Ecclesiae Syro-Malabarensis fideles, qui in his nationes degunt vel degent, Episcopi Sancti Thomae Apostoli Melburnensis iurisdictioni submittens.

Idem Summus Pontifex mandavit ut hoc Decretum fieret.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Congregationis pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus, die 29 mensis Martii A.D 2021

Leonardus Cand. Sandri
Praefectus

Rev. Flavius Pace
Subsecretarius

DECREE

Conferring the title of *Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre* to St. Mary's Forane Church Arakuzha of the Eparchy of Kothamangalam

Whereas the XXVI Synod (2018) of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church, Session I, held from 8-13 January 2018 decided to institute the title 'Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre' to be conferred to certain parish churches and pilgrim centres in the Syro-Malabar Church, having great historical importance, according to the norms and conditions as appended to this decree,

Whereas the Vicar of St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, of the eparchy of Kothamangalam, requested for the title 'Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre' for St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, based on the decision of the Parish Council held on 01 March 2020 and Mar George Madathikandathil, bishop of the eparchy of Kothamangalam recommended the request of the said Vicar,

Whereas St. Mary's Forane Church, Arakuzha, is verified to have all the necessary requirements to be conferred with such a title and has accepted to abide by the norms and conditions established by Synod of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church in this regard,

Whereas the XXIX Synod (2021) of Bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church Session I, held from 11-16 January 2021, decided to confer the title of 'Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre' to the said church, I,

CARDINAL GEORGE ALENCHERRY,
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church,
hereby confer the title of
Major Archiepiscopal Pilgrim Centre
on
ST. MARY'S FORANE CHURCH, ARAKUZHA

of the eparchy of Kothamangalam with effect from 8 April 2021,
with all the rights and duties envisaged in the norms for such a
Pilgrim Centre.

Given this from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St.
Thomas, Kakkanad on 07 April 2021.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

Fr. Vincent Cheruvathoor

Major Archiepiscopal Chancellor

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

Norms and Procedures of the Appellate Safe Environment Committee in the Syro-Malabar Church

The undersigned Cardinal George Alencherry, the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church, in accordance with the decision of XXVII Synod (2019), Session I, held from 07-18 January 2019, promulgated for the Syro-Malabar Church the *KCBC Guidelines for Safe Environment Programme for Church Personnel Connected With Institutions where Minors or Vulnerable Adults Are Given Particular Care* on 6 February 2019.

Meanwhile, Holy Father Pope Francis, through the *motu proprio, Vos estis lux mundi*, which was promulgated on 9 May 2019 and entered into force on 01 June 2019, established new procedures for reporting abuse and violence committed by clerics or members of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Apostolic Life. This *motu proprio* gave direction that every eparchy/archeparchy should have public, stable and easily accessible systems for submission of reports, even through the institution of a specific ecclesiastical office within an year from its entry into force.

In this context, the XXVII Synod (2019), Session II held from 19-30 August 2019 decided to constitute structures in the light of the *motu proprio, Vos estis lux mundi* to implement the Safe Environment Programme in the Syro-Malabar Church, formulating necessary guidelines and procedures to be followed in the execution of Safe Environment Programme, taking into account the laws of the land. As directed by the Synod of Bishops, the Episcopal Committee formed by the Permanent Synod for scrutinizing the norms and guidelines presented the draft in meeting of the Permanent Synod on 22 May 2020. The meeting of the Permanent Synod approved

the *Norms and Procedures of the Eparchial/Archeparhial Safe Environment Committee in the Syro-Malabar Church* and requested the Major Archbishop to promulgate the same before 01 June 2020. Thus these norms and procedures were promulgated on 30 May 2020 to be effective from the following day.

On 3 November 2020 with Prot. No. 1301/2020, the Major Archbishop constituted an *ad hoc* Committee for the formulation of the *Norms and Procedures to deal with Sexual Abuse Cases at the Appellate Level in the Syro-Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church*, which submitted the draft on 19 November 2020. This draft was sent for scrutiny to the Episcopal Committee concerned and incorporated the modifications proposed by the said Episcopal Committee. In this context, I hereby promulgate the **NORMS AND PROCEDURES OF THE APPELLATE SAFE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE IN THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH** to be effective from 23 February 2021.

All contrary dispositions notwithstanding.

Given from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia at Mount St Thomas on 23 February 2021.

Cardinal George Alencherry

Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE SYRO-MALABAR CHURCH SUMMARY REPORT - 2020

1. TRIBUNAL MINISTERS

NAME	Date of Appointment	Date of Renewal	Academic Degree in Canon Law
I. PRESIDENT			
1. Fr. Thomas Adoppillil	Judge on 17.08.2007; Vice-President on 8.6.2018; President on 18.6.2019	President on 18.6.2024	JCD, Ph.D.
II. VICE - PRESIDENT			
2. Fr. Joseph Varanath	Judge on 28.07.2000; Vice-President on 7.11.2003	27.11.2021	D.O.C.L.
III. JUDGES			
3. Fr. Jose Pathiyamoola MCBS	01.09.1994	31.10.2025	D.O.C.L.
4. Fr. Varghese Palathingal	01.09.1994	31.10.2025	D.O.C.L.
5. Fr. John Kochupurackal CST	26.06.1996	17.08.2022	D.O.C.L.
6. Fr. Joseph Thoompunkal	28.07.2000	31.10.2025	D.O.C.L.
7. Fr. Berchmans Kodackal	18.08.2002	17.08.2022	D.C.L.
8. Fr. James Thalachelloor	18.03.2010	17.03.2025	D.O.C.L.
9. Fr. Vincent Chittilappilly	18.03.2010	Relieved on 10-04-2021	D.O.C.L.

10. Fr. Mathew Changankary	14.02.2014	13.02.2024	JCD, Ph.
11. Fr. Thomas Thengumpally	17.07.2014	16.07.2024	D.O.C.L.
12. Fr. Joseph Mukaleparambil	18.03.2015	02.03.2025	D.O.C.L.
IV. DEFENDERS OF BOND			
1. Fr. Mani Kuthodiputhenpurayil CST	17.08.2007	17.08.2022	D.O.C.L.
2. Fr. Joseph Velinjalil	18.03.2010	17.03.2025	D.C.L.
3. Fr. John Chennakuzhy	14.02.2019	13.02.2024	D.C.L.
4. Fr. Sebastian Muttamthottil MCBS	17.08.2019	16.08.2024	D.O.C.L.
V. PROMOTER OF JUSTICE			
1. Fr. Mani Kuthodiputhenpurayil CST	17.08.2007	17.08.2022	D.O.C.L.
VI. NOTARY			
1. Sr. Subha MSJ	03.07.2019		
VII. ADVOCATES			
Name of Advocates	Diocese/ Congregation	Date of Appointment	Academic Degree in Canon Law
1. Fr. Philip Nelpuraparambil	Changanacherry	20.12.2010	D.O.C.L.
2. Sr. Asha John	CHF	"	D.O.C.L.
3. Sr. Sibi	CMC	"	D.O.C.L.
4. Fr. Varghese Koluthara	CMI	"	D.C.L.
5. Fr. Jose Paul Nellissery	Ernakulam-Ang.	"	M.C.L.
6. Fr. Jose Marattil	Idukki	"	D.C.L.
7. Fr. Kurian Thamarassery	Kanjirappally	"	D.O.C.L.
8. Fr. Abraham Kulamakkal	Palai	"	M.O.C.L.
9. Sr. Sherin	SH	"	D.O.C.L.
10. Sr. Mercilit	SVM	"	D.O.C.L.
11. Fr. Jose Vettickal	Tellicherry	"	D.O.C.L.
12. Fr. Vincent Cheruvathoor	Trichur	"	D.O.C.L.
13. Fr. Philip Nedumthuruthil	VC	"	D.O.C.L.

2. ACTIVITIES OF THE LOWER TRIBUNALS IN THE YEAR 2020

Cases Processed by the Tribunals of the First Instance during the Year 2020												
Tribunals		Cases for Process			Cases Disposed							Cases Pending
Sl. No.	Eparchial and Metropolitan Tribunals (First Instance)	Cases Pending	Cases Introduced	Total	Affirmative Sentences	Negative Sentences	Total Sentences	Cases Abandoned	Penal Cases	Ratified and Non-consum	Total	
1	Belthangady	01	07	08	06	01	07	--	--	--	--	01
2	Bhadravathi	00	00	00	00	00	00	--	--	--	--	00
3	Changanacherry	22	82	104	86	01	87	01	--	--	01	16
4	Ernakulam-Ang	20	54	74	56	--	56	05	--	--	05	13
5	Idukki	25	24	49	35	--	35	--	--	--	--	14
6	Irinjalakkuda	63	32	95	45	07	52	--	--	--	--	43
7	Kanjirappally	16	28	44	25	01	26	--	--	--	--	18
8	Kothamangalam	35	24	59	28	01	29	--	--	--	--	30
9	Kottayam	04	20	24	22	--	22	--	--	--	--	02
10	Mananthavady	05	40	45	39	--	39	--	--	--	--	06
11	Mandya	06	04	10	05	--	05	--	--	--	--	05
12	Palai	35	48	83	33	05	38	08	--	--	08	37
13	Palaghat	23	17	40	09	--	09	00	--	--	00	31
14	Tellicherry	33	64	97	48	00	48	06	--	--	06	43
15	Thamarassery	18	42	60	34	--	34	00	--	--	00	26
16	Thuckalay	02	01	03	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	03
17	Trichur	49	46	95	47	02	49	03	--	--	03	43
18	Ramanathapuram	01	02	03	01	--	01	--	--	--	--	02
	Total	358	535	893	519	18	537	23	00	00	23	333

Cases Processed by the Tribunals of the Second Instance during the Year 2020										
Tribunals		Cases for Process			Cases Disposed					
Sl. No.	Metropolitan Tribunals (Second Instance)	Cases Pending	Cases Introduced	Total	Decrees of Ratification	Affirmative Sentences	Negative Sentences	Cases Abandoned	Total	Cases Pending
1	Changanacherry	00	06	06	--	03	01	--	04	02
2	Ernakulam-Ang	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3	Tellicherry	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	Trichur	07	06	13	01	05	02	--	08	05
	Total	07	12	19	01	08	03	--	12	07

3. ACTIVITIES OF THE MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL TRIBUNAL

3.1. IN SECOND INSTANCES - Cases of Matrimonial Nullity Handled after Ordinary Process in the First Instance.

I	Cases pending at the beginning of the year	12
II	Cases introduced this year:	03
III	Decrees of ratification (total number):	Nil
IV	Sentences given (after an ordinary examination):	13
	a) In favour of nullity ("constat de nullitate", at least on one ground)	12
	b) In favour of the bond ("non constat de nullitate": on every ground alleged)	01
V	Grounds of nullity considered in the sentences (if a sentence considered several grounds of nullity, these are to be indicated separately; thus, the number of decisions under 5 may be greater than that under 4)	
		Affirmative <i>constatde nullitate</i>
		Negative <i>non constat de nullitate</i>
	CCEO c. 818 §2 (Grave lack of discretion)	02
	CCEO c. 820 §2 (Error of quality)	07
	CCEO c. 822 (Fraud)	01
	CCEO c. 824/ 2 (Bonum Coniugum)	02
		01

VI	Cases abandoned:	
	a) Through renunciation	Nil
	b) Through abatement (<i>Peremptio</i>)	Nil
VII	Cases pending at the end of the year	02

3.2. IN THIRD & SUBSEQUENT INSTANCES - Cases of Matrimonial Nullity Handled after a Process in Second Instance

I	Causes pending at the beginning of the year	02
II	Causes introduced this year:	04
III	Decrees of ratification (total number):	Nil
IV	Sentences given (after an ordinary examination):	06
	a) In favour of nullity ("constat de nullitate", at least on one ground)	03
	b) In favour of the bond ("non constat de nullitate": on every ground alleged)	03
V	Grounds of nullity considered in the sentences (if a sentence considered several grounds of nullity, these are to be indicated separately; thus, the number of decisions under 5 may be greater than that under 4)	
		Affirmative <i>constat de nullitate</i>
		Negative <i>non constat de nullitate</i>
	CCEO c. 820 §2 Error of quality	02
	CCEO c. 824 §2 (Bonum Coniugum)	01
		03
VI	Cases abandoned:	
	a) Through renunciation	Nil
	b) Through abatement (<i>Peremptio</i>)	Nil
VII	Cases pending at the end of the year	Nil

Fr. Thomas Adoppillil

President, Major Archiepiscopal Tribunal

MAJOR ARCHIEPISCOPAL CURIA SUMMARY OF THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2021

2019-2020		PARTICULARS	2020-21	
RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS		RECEIPTS	PAYMENTS
I. INCOME & EXPENDITURE				
8,311,797		Syro Malabar Sabhadinam	6,511,904	
7,832,269		Contribution and Donations	3,681,073	
3,624,436		Administrative Receipts	4,697,032	
402,238		Synodal and Commission Meetings	34,003	
381,889		Agriculture Income	685,716	
111,357		Major Tribunal Collection	84,391	
126,416		Synodal News Collection	104,514	
2,700		Chancery Income	85	
150,458		Commission for Litergy		77,153
840,465		Catechetical Commission	800,914	
	515,042	Liturgical Research Centre	660,624	
	118,010	Internet Mission	357,246	
	74,588	S.M. Youth Commission		80,849
	3,397,234	S.M. Mission Fund	1,277,052	
605,094	4,550,031	Charity Fund	564,000	1,350,000
	8,818,356	Administrative Expenses & Curia Running		13,031,807
	1,067,226	Synodal & Commission Meetings		464,674
	273,128	Agricultural Expenses		267,704
	164,951	Major Tribunal Expenses		163,138
	144,481	Synodal News Expenses		107,381
	67,240	Chancery Expenses		632
22,389,119	19,190,287	Sub-Total	19,458,554	15,543,338

II. CAPITAL RECEIPTS & INVESTMENTS				
15,598,366		Special Contribution Received	7,255,092	
	83,350	Land & Building		60,460
	6,039,885	Museum Building		15,160,176
	875,241	Furniture & Equipments		2,206,302
	3,950	Other Fixed Assets		1,848
15,598,366	7,002,426	Sub-Total	7,255,092	17,428,786
III. CURRENT LIABILITIES & ASSETS				
449,543		Commission for Liturgy	77,153	
655,917		Catechetical Commission		800,914
94,525		Liturgical Research Centre		545,205
143,010		Syro Malabar Internet Mission		350,076
3,476,469		S.M. Mission Fund		1,106,504
74,588		S.M. Youth Commission	66,671	
24,184		Mass Obligation	137,197	
51,600		Advance Account	80,000	
802,214		Major Arch Bishop's Fund	2,104,280	
	332,770	Curia Bishop's Fund		155,506
16,223,433		Apostolic Visitor Fund	2,206,665	
-		SIB - Card		27,616
-	611,921	Current Assets - TDS		492,154
21,995,483	944,691	Sub-Total	4,671,966	3,477,975
IV. BANK & CASH BALANCES				
58,626,110	91,047,929	Bank : Fixed Deposits	91,047,929	87,010,995
2,345,323	2,935,715	Bank : S.B. Accounts	2,935,715	1,998,039
358,104	340,039	Bank & Cash : Synodal News	340,039	335,292
968,313	903,496	Bank & Cash : Tribunal	903,496	824,640
68,831	4,291	Bank & Cash : Chaneery	4,291	3,744
52,840	33,615	Cash in Hand	33,615	27,888
62,419,521	95,265,085	Sub-Total	95,265,085	90,200,598
122,402,489	122,402,489	GRAND TOTAL	126,650,697	126,650,697

Fr. Joseph Tholanickal
Finance Officer

C.J. Romid FCA
Chartered Accountant

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