



Prot. No. 0597/2023

Post-Synodal Circular - June 2023

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.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

A Special Session of the Syro-Malabar Synod was held from June 12-16, 2023 at Mount St Thomas, Kakkanad. The Bishops in the Synod were making an attempt to make a prayerful study on the contemporary issues affecting the Church and the society and to seek the will of God in all these matters. I thank you all cordially for your sincere prayers for the success of the Synod.

Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly

The prime intention for convening this Synod was to find a lasting solution to the prevailing issues related to uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* in the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. The members of the Permanent Synod of our Church met Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Secretary of the State, and Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, the Prefect of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches at Vatican and held extensive discussion on the current issues. The discussions in the Synod in these days were guided by the suggestions recommended by the interdicasterial meeting held at Vatican, aiming at a solution to the prevailing problem. The Synod reiterates firmly that the uniform mode of the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* decided by the Syro-Malabar Synod, approved by the Apostolic See and exhorted by the Holy Father Pope Francis will continue without any change in our Church. The difficulty faced by any Eparchy in implementing this in no way destabilizes or nullify the decision of the Synod. This decision has led all other eparchies towards greater unity and to alter it would lead to anarchy in the Church. Realizing this truth, the Synod repeatedly urges those who have difference of opinion to embrace the path of communion. We shall not dishonour the adorable legacy of our Church which enabled us to stay united with the Catholic Church amidst adversities.

Differences of opinion are to be remedied through dialogue and discussions. The representatives of the Synod have made discussions at various levels with the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. We have appealed to the Holy Father to arrange necessary avenues to continue these discussions more effectively. The Synod has recommended a Papal Delegate for the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly in order to facilitate further dialogue and to rectify the anti-ecclesial dispositions, while convincing them the importance of 'walking together' (Synodality). Holy Father has agreed to consider this recommendation of the Synod with benevolent attention. We hope that all the issues related to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly shall find an amicable solution with the help of the new system in place in due course.

By the Grace of God, our Church is growing globally and this situation has increased the responsibility of the Major Archbishop. In this scenario, the Synod of the Church is of the opinion that to continue to hold the administrative responsibility of a very vast Archeparchy like Ernakulam-Angamaly by the Major Archbishop would be burdensome. At the same time the Synod has no intention either to bifurcate or to alter the geographical borders of the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. Be careful not to be lead astray by the rumours regarding this. The Synod Fathers wish to assign an Archbishop with independent charge to the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly and the same request is placed before the Apostolic See for due consideration.

The Synod of the Church has no plan to reach a temporary solution in the complex issues faced by the Archeparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly, instead looks ahead for a plan of action which will lead to permanent solutions assuring the greater good of this Archeparchy. As the permission of the Apostolic See is required to implement the above said changes in the existing order, the Synod cannot declare specific decisions now. The Synod of the Church is hopeful in finding a lasting remedy for all the present difficulties in the near future. For this, the Synod Fathers lovingly requests the Church to be united in prayer.

Ernakulam Basilica

St Mary's Basilica Ernakulam, the Cathedral of the Major Archbishop, being closed down since a few months is a matter of great sorrow to the whole Church. The tension between the supporters and dissenters of the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* grew into law and order issue and thus initially the district administration and later the police department closed the Basilica. The incidents those happened around this, tarnished the image of the Church among the public and it has become an unforgettable blemish to the Church.

There is a consensus to open the Basilica and to begin administering sacraments and sacramentals, except the celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. This Basilica being the Cathedral Church, as the Apostolic See has directed, there shall only be the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana*. The assurance of the Vicar and the Trustees of Basilica that they would abide by the uniform mode of celebration of the Holy *Qurbana* and will not offer the Holy *Qurbana* facing the people has led to the decision of opening the Basilica. The Synod has decided to take canonical action against those who violate this. All shall consciously try to foster mutual trust and love to heal the wounds and ignore those who spread wrong ideas regarding this.

Manipur Riot

The persecution of the Christians in India is on the increase and it is a matter of deep concern and anxiety to all of us. The Manipur riot began as a tribal rivalry, but it has turned to be communal since weeks, but there is no attempt from the concerned to mitigate the casualties. Even if hundreds of people are massacred in this communal insurgency, the government could neither control the attacks nor contain the wicked activities. It is deplorable that even after destroying almost 300 churches and thousands became homeless, the people in power are not yet ready to condemn the activities and disown the rioters.

The legislation of laws which limits the freedom of religion promised by the Constitution and thereby silencing the minority is not desirable to democracy. This is the responsibility of the government to protect the minority and to make sure that the constitutional values are not flouted with the support of the majority. Even in Kerala, targeting Christian educational institutions with a communal aim is dreadful.

Agrarian Issues

The State and Central governments are to be pro-active in the problems faced by the farmers in Kerala. The State government shall be sensitive that even after the verdict of Supreme Court of India, the anxieties of the farmers related to Buffer Zone are not addressed adequately. The wild animals infiltrating into the farm lands of the farmers are a threat to the life and wealth of the farmers, but the government makes no move to protect the farmers. The casualties due to wild animal attack are on the increase and it leaves the farmers in utter gloom.

The government should acknowledge that the falling price of the agricultural products lead the farmers' families to debt and privation. The promise given in the election manifesto regarding the support price for the agricultural products

often end up with the manifesto should be an eye opener to the ruling government. There shall be quick action to help the paddy farmers of Kuttanadu from the part of the government. The realization that the survival is almost impossible in this land compels the mass migration of the youth and this is certainly an infamy to the government.

Let us thank God for his caring providence. The intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our mother, and of St Thomas, our father in faith be a refuge to us. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Given this from the Major Archiepiscopal Curia of the Syro-Malabar Church at Mount St. Thomas, Kakkanad on June 16, 2023.



Cardinal George Alencherry
Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Church



This circular shall be read in all the parish churches, institutions, religious houses, formation centres and the major seminaries of the Syro-Malabar Church during the Holy *Qurbana* on Sunday, June 25, 2023.